

The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in a white, sans-serif font on a dark blue rectangular background. The background of the entire page is a photograph of a lush green field in the foreground, with a dense forest of tall trees in the middle ground, and a blue sky with wispy white clouds in the upper portion.

Edmonton

OLESKIW

RIVER VALLEY PARK

MASTER PLAN

What We Heard Report
Phase 1: Inventory & Analysis
November 2016

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Project Overview

The Oleskiw River Valley Park Master Plan project is an opportunity for Edmontonians to work with the City of Edmonton to develop a 25-year vision and guiding principles for the park. As an important link for people and wildlife in the city's green space network, the Oleskiw River Valley Park is an essential outdoor place for Edmontonians to relax, learn, explore and reconnect to the North Saskatchewan River Valley.

The Oleskiw River Valley Park is an important link in Edmonton's river valley park network. With the construction of a new multi-use trail and the Terwillegar Park Footbridge, the park area is expected to experience a greater intensity of use over the next few years. As a result, the City of Edmonton has identified the need for this first formal planning process for the park: a Master Plan to guide and coordinate future development and activity.

The area of land within the project boundaries does not currently have a plan guiding its development, nor does it have an official name. The City has started a Master Plan process to establish a 25-year vision and management plan for the park area. As part of the 10-Year Capital Investment Agenda, The River Valley Park Renewal program has identified Oleskiw River Valley Park Master Plan as a key project that will direct investment for the park.

Once known as Wolf Willow Farm, the project area is about 82 hectares in size and located in the west end of the city, south of the Fort Edmonton Footbridge and adjacent to the Edmonton Golf and Country Club. The elevation drops 45 metres from the top of bank on the west side of the park area to the river shoreline on the east. No public vehicle entry into the project area is currently available. The Terwillegar Park Footbridge and West End Trails projects, which include the new asphalt, shared-use pathway that runs through the project area, are expected to increase the number of visitors into the Oleskiw River Valley Park.

Through community consultation that reaches a broad audience using a variety of engagement tools and techniques, the City will develop a vision for Oleskiw River Valley Park and establish the guiding principles that will form the basis of the Master Plan.

This report summarizes What We Heard from the first round of public engagement for the Oleskiw River Valley Park Master Plan, and outlines the following:

- » The Master Plan process,
- » The phases of public engagement, and,
- » The feedback that was received during the first phase of engagement: **Project Introduction, Inventory and Analysis.**





The Master Plan Process

The Master Plan will establish a vision and management plan for the next 25 years, and build upon existing plans, policies and initiatives while identifying public needs and priorities. It will provide direction for environmental management, as well as recommendations for civic, cultural and recreational uses that are appropriate to the park.

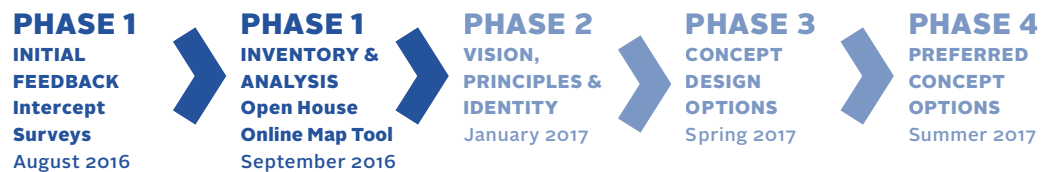
The City of Edmonton is currently in the CONCEPT Phase of the project timeline. In this phase, public consultation will be critical to informing the Master Plan from now until its

completion in the Fall of 2017. The City has hired O2 Planning + Design Inc., a planning and landscape architecture firm, to complete the Master Plan and assist with the consultation process. Existing policy, City Administration and public input will inform the process and outcome of the CONCEPT Phase, at the end of which the Master Plan report and concept design will be submitted to City Council as part of the 2019–2022 budget cycle to seek funding for implementation.

City of Edmonton's Park and Facility Development Process. This project is in the CONCEPT phase.



Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine: Engagement timeline



Planning Context

The Master Plan for Oleskiw River Valley Park will exist within a framework of environmental and social policy. The direction of the Master Plan, including the activities, amenities and events that will take place in the park as well as the design and maintenance of park features, will be influenced by the following plans and policies.

City-Wide Plans and Policies

The Ways Strategic Plans:

- » The Way Ahead, 2009-2018
- » The Way We Grow, 2010
- » The Way We Live, 2010
- » The Way We Move, 2010

These are the City of Edmonton's high-level strategic plans that outline how the City will achieve its vision. They help to focus the City's efforts to deliver services and infrastructure that are most important to Edmontonians while managing the opportunities and challenges of our ever-changing city.

- » 10-Year Capital Investment Agenda 2012-2021

Understanding that investment in city infrastructure requires a long-term vision, the City of Edmonton created the 10-Year Capital Investment Agenda to steer city spending. The Agenda is aligned with the goals and priorities of the City's Strategic Plan, The Way Ahead.

Parkland Bylaw (C2202), Consolidated 2003

The Parkland Bylaw defines the uses and activities that are appropriate for parkland in the City of Edmonton. The purpose of the Bylaw is to promote safe, enjoyable and reasonable use of parks and to protect and preserve natural ecosystems in the City.

Edmonton's Urban Parks Management Plan (UPMP), 2006

The UPMP provides strategic direction for the acquisition, design, construction, maintenance, preservation and animation of parks in the City of Edmonton. The Plan has three specific goals:

- » To provide a vision specific to Edmonton's park system
- » To develop strategic direction that will guide decision-making
- » To develop park management instructions that support the vision, service themes and policies and ensure consistency in implementation

Breathe: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy, Under development 2016–2017

Breathe is a transformative strategic plan to support each neighbourhood with an accessible network of parks and open space as the city grows. The main goal of the Green Network Strategy is to plan and sustain a healthy city by encouraging the connection and integration of open space. Breathe will replace and expand on the Urban Parks Management Plan and Natural Connections Strategic Plan.

Environmental Plans & Policies

- » Natural Area Systems Policy (C531), 2007
- » Corporate Tree Management Policy, 2010
- » Urban Forest Management Plan, 2012

These plans and policies provide direction for all natural areas and parkland in Edmonton.

Bicycle Transportation Plan, 1992, Updated in 2009

This plan is integral to creating a bike friendly city and is an important part of the implementation of the Transportation Master Plan, The Way We Move. The plan proposes to expand city-wide bike routes, including increasing the number of marked on-street bike routes, expanding bicycle racks to all transit buses, expanding bicycle parking facilities and increasing education and awareness around city biking. The plan also proposes an improved maintenance and street sweeping/snow clearing schedule.

For the Love of Winter: Strategy for Transforming Edmonton into a World-Leading Winter City, 2012

Developed over the course of several years using a community-led approach, the Winter City Strategy aims to enhance Edmonton's culture, urban design, civic life and economy by embracing the opportunities and challenges that come along with being a Northern capital city. Accompanying the Strategy is an Implementation Plan that provides recommended actions and partners to aid in the implementation of the Strategy throughout the City of Edmonton.

Dogs in Open Spaces Strategy, 2016

The Dogs in Open Spaces Strategy provides planning, design and management recommendations for existing and future off-leash dog areas in the City of Edmonton. It also provides a summary of requirements for Neighbourhood, District and River Valley & Ravine off-leash areas.

River Valley Plans and Policies

Development Setbacks from River Valley/ Ravine Crests (Top of Bank Policy C542), 2010

Accompanied by City procedures, the Top of Bank Policy was updated in 2010 to ensure that private and public property is safe from slope and stability failure and that the river valley and ravine system is protected from development that may compromise the long term stability of its banks. The policy also helps to ensure that the top of bank portions of the river valley are accessible to the public and the ravine system remains a natural, ecological and recreational amenity for the people of Edmonton.

North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan (Bylaw 7188), 1985, Consolidated 2014

Provides a comprehensive River Valley and Ravine management program to protect the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System. The goal of this bylaw is to "create a recreation-oriented land use system which incorporates formal and informal parks and mature areas which are linked through a series of paths, trails and open spaces." It restricts development within the river valley and defines features that should be protected, such as rare or endangered flora or fauna or historic/archaeological resources. The Area Redevelopment Plan also sets out park development guidelines and standards for parkland located within the river valley.

River Access Guiding Principles Policy C586, 2015

Understanding that the North Saskatchewan River is important to Edmontonians' quality of life, the River Access Guiding Principles help to ensure that people can access the river for recreation and enjoyment. They also ensure that activities that occur in the river and the river valley are appropriate, safe and ecologically responsible.

Ribbon of Green

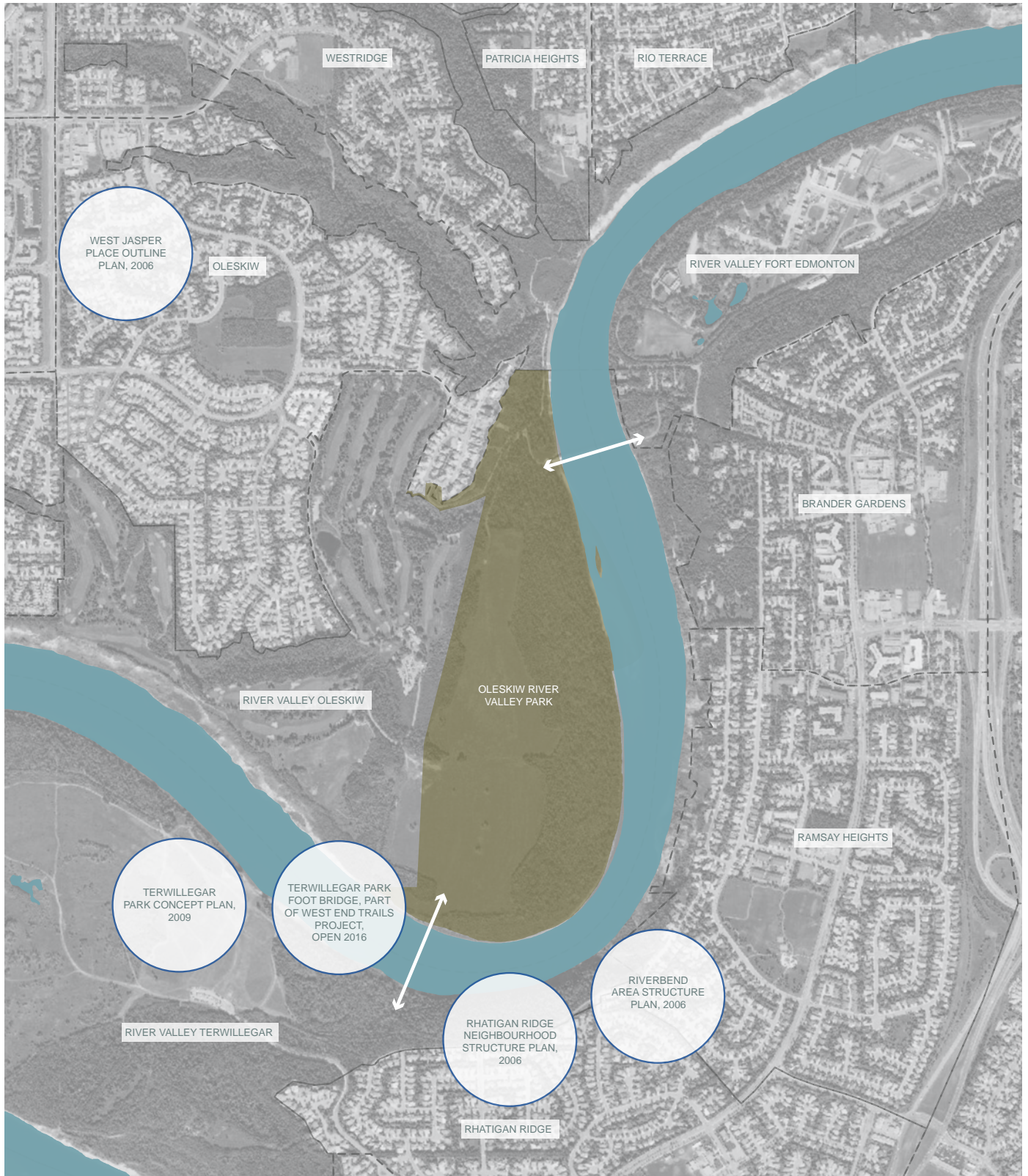
- » Concept Plan, 1990
- » Master Plan, 1992
- » Southwest Priority 2 Area, Under development

The Ribbon of Green Master Plan establishes policy guidelines for the long-term development, use and care of the entire valley. It limits development within the river valley to an integrated trail system, providing river accessibility, but protecting the valley landscape and wildlife. The work being completed for the Southwest Priority 2 Area, which includes Oleskiw River Valley Park, will update, consolidate, and expand on the Ribbon of Green Concept Plan (1990) and the Ribbon of Green Master Plan (1992). The Southwest Priority 2 Area also outlines park development guidelines that will be applicable to the planning and design at Oleskiw River Valley Park.

Neighbourhood Plans

- » Terwillegar Park Concept Plan, 2009
- » West End Trails Project
- » Rhatigan Ridge Neighbourhood Structure Plan, 2006
- » West Jasper Place Outline Plan, 2006 Consolidation
- » Riverbend Area Structure Plan, 2006 Consolidation

Oleskiw River Valley Park Planning Context



Engagement Plan

An engagement strategy using multiple consultation techniques will facilitate the ability for the community to provide input into the development of the Oleskiw River Valley Park Master Plan. Four phases of public engagement will help us develop a Master Plan for the park that responds to community needs and City priorities.

Policy C513 for Public Involvement is guided by the City of Edmonton's Public Involvement Framework which outlines the strategic approach to be used in all City hosted public involvement processes. As outlined in Policy C513, the City of Edmonton is committed to involving stakeholders and the public in the Master Planning process. During the engagement, Edmontonians will be asked to identify key uses, needs and strategies for the park and participate in an ongoing dialogue about what the Oleskiw River Valley Park might look like in the future. Ecological and infrastructure needs, as well as how this space can support the surrounding neighbourhoods and the larger Edmonton community will be discussed.

The public is invited to be involved in four phases of engagement to help develop the Master Plan for the Oleskiw River Valley Park. Each phase will include internal and external stakeholder sessions, online engagement and public open houses. External stakeholders include interest groups, neighbourhood groups and other organizations who have expressed an interest in being more deeply involved in the Master Plan process. Internal stakeholders are City of Edmonton employees who can provide input or advice on specific aspects of the park.

Online engagement, in the form of surveys, interactive mapping and activities, gives the public an opportunity to provide their input at their convenience. This option is offered to facilitate input from those who are unable to attend in-person sessions and for those who want to provide additional comments. Material shared at public events will also be available online: edmonton.ca/oleskiwparkmasterplan

PHASE 1: Project Introduction, Inventory & Analysis **August - September 2016**

In Phase 1, the City sought initial feedback on the existing conditions of the project area. We asked the public: what do you like about the park space, why it is important to you and what you want to see in the future?

The first phase of public engagement has closed. Information presented to the public and stakeholders included the project scope and boundaries; key existing features, systems and functions of the park; and the relationship of the Oleskiw River Valley Park Master Plan with parallel projects such as the Southwest Priority 2 Area Ribbon of Green Master Plan and BREATHE: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy.

Public and stakeholder input identified key dreams, desires, issues and themes. This input will inform the development of a park vision, identity and program, as well as one or more concept design options.

A short report on our inventory and analysis findings is included in the following section, and a summary of the feedback we received is contained in the What We Heard section.

Discover

As part of the 10-Year Capital Investment Agenda, The River Valley Park Renewal Program has identified Oleskiw River Valley Park for Master Plan development to direct investment for the park.

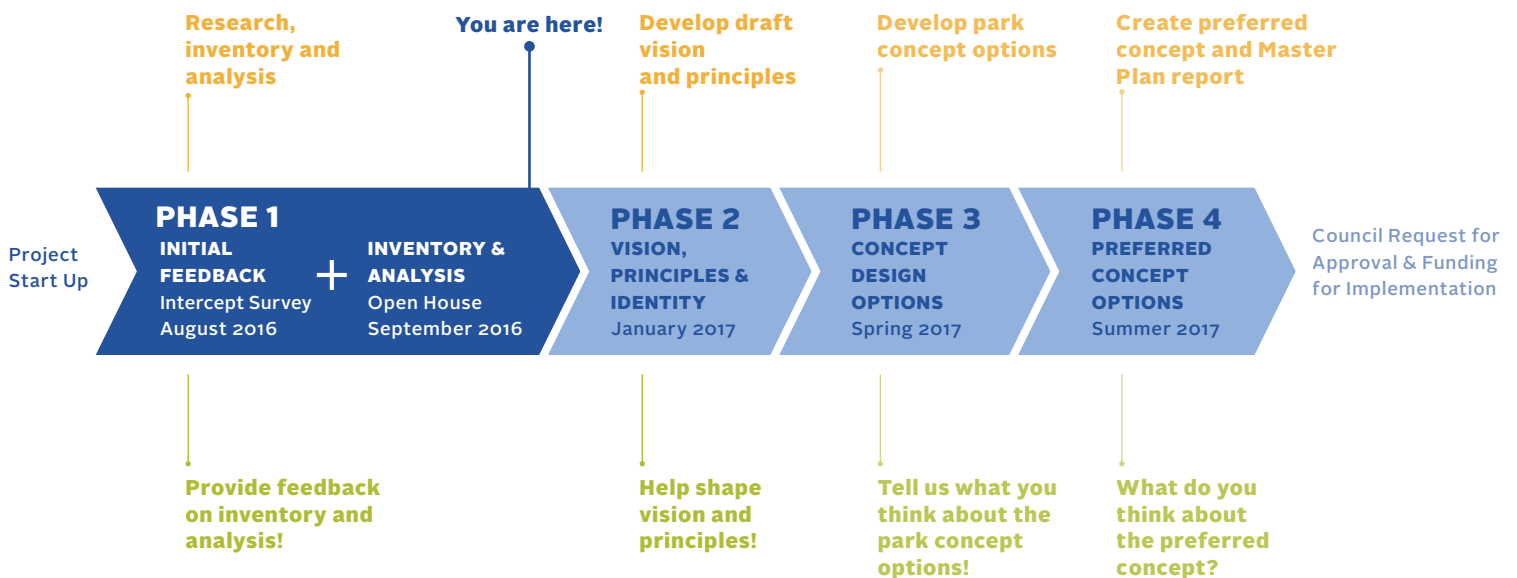
Develop

Along with City priorities and technical data, public input will be used at each stage in the process to develop the Master Plan.

Deliver

The goal is to fund the next stages of implementation as part of the 2019–22 budget cycle.

City team



Public, Stakeholders and Internal Staff

Public Involvement in the Master Plan Process

The City of Edmonton prioritizes public engagement as part of the Master Plan process. It is integral at each stage to help make informed decisions.

PHASE 2: Vision, Principles & Identity **January 2017**

In Phase 2, the City will be looking for the public to help improve their understanding of the opportunities and constraints in the park. These will help to inform the vision. In addition, the themes and concerns that emerged from Phase 1 will be available to the public in a What We Heard Report and will be integrated into the proposed vision, principles, identity and program.

The public and stakeholders will be able to provide input on the material presented and will be asked to prioritize elements of the vision statement and concept design options.

Feedback from Phase 2 engagement will be summarized in a What We Heard report.

PHASE 3: Concept Design Options **March 2017**

The City will be looking for feedback on more developed concept design options for the park in Phase 3. Two distinct designs will be presented. The refined themes and concerns that emerged during Phase 2 will be shared in a What We Heard Report and will be integrated into the concept designs.

We will present two variations on proposed activities, features and design elements for the park within two concept plans. The public and stakeholders will be asked to choose which option they prefer, and to prioritize the various proposed elements in each.

Feedback will be summarized in a What We Heard report.

PHASE 4: Preferred Concept Design **August – September 2017**

In Phase 4, the City will present a refined concept design for the park that integrates the priorities and feedback received in Phase 3.

The public and stakeholders will be provided with the opportunity to give feedback on the preferred concept design to help fine-tune the program and design. This will support the development of a preferred concept that responds to the needs of the community and park users.

Feedback from Phase 4 will be summarized in a What We Heard report. The public will also be provided with information about next steps and how they can stay involved.

Site Inventory & Analysis

The City of Edmonton conducted an inventory of site elements and an analysis of factors that provide some background for Phase 1 participants. This material was presented to the public, stakeholders and internal staff to help facilitate a dialogue around the existing conditions of the park. The feedback from this phase of engagement helped us to gain an even better understanding of the park based on public knowledge and experiences.

Summary

Oleskiw River Valley Park is a 193 acre park located to the east of the Edmonton Country Club and connected by the Fort Edmonton Footbridge. At present there is no vehicle entry into the park and permanent access to the park will be explored through the Master Plan process. The area has various natural vegetation communities that include an open field area and a large upland deciduous tree stand along the east edge of the former agricultural field. Oleskiw River Valley Park is zoned 'A' Metropolitan Recreation Zone and classified as a River Valley and Ravine Park under the Urban Parks Management Plan which both require the preservation of natural areas and parkland along the river, creeks, and ravines, as well as providing designated areas for active and passive recreation. The site is connected to the trail system by a formal trail and several informal trails that link to the Fort Edmonton Footbridge to the north and the recently completed Terwilligar Park Footbridge to the south.

Site History

Settlement in the region of present-day Edmonton began about 13,000 years ago, when the North Saskatchewan River started carving through the landscape. The early peoples hunted bison who lived in the unique ecosystem between the northern boreal forest and the great southern plains. The river escarpment allowed the potential to observe wildlife and other people from great heights.

The area that now makes up the City of Edmonton was originally occupied by various Indigenous groups including the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot and Nakota Sioux. Archaeological investigations indicate that Indigenous peoples have inhabited the Edmonton area for thousands of years. In 1795, Europeans began to settle in the region and set up the most important Hudson Bay Company post west of Winnipeg. First Nations and Metis in the Edmonton area were essential to the success of the western fur trade, as they scouted, hunted, trapped and traded with the European newcomers. With the signing of Treaty 6 (1876), with adhesion at Fort Edmonton in 1877 and with Treaty 7 (1877) at Blackfoot Crossing, Indigenous people were forced onto reserves and much of the area was taken up for settlement.

In 1892, Edmonton incorporated as a town. Five years later, there was an explosion of activity in the region caused by the Klondike gold rush. Many prospectors passed through Edmonton during this time. Alberta became a province in 1905 and Edmonton was named the capital city in 1906.

At about the same time as the gold rush began, Dr. Joseph Oleskiw (1860-1903) visited Edmonton (1895). He was a Ukrainian professor who, after returning home from his visit to western Canada, wrote and distributed a pamphlet encouraging Ukrainians to emigrate to Canada. In 1896, Ukrainians began arriving in Alberta as a result of Dr. Oleskiw's efforts.

From 1906-1907, Frederick G. Todd, the first residential landscape architect in Canada who spent much of his career working on structuring urban development in many cities, provided recommendations for limited development in Edmonton's river valley. This was the first vision for a river valley park system in Edmonton, and was very influential in how the city developed.

Some years later, in 1910, the Edmonton Country Club acquired 426 acres of land in the area where Oleskiw River Valley Park is currently located, making it the third oldest golf course in Canada. In 1913, the lower holes were opened on the southern portion of the Oleskiw River Valley Park and remained there until 1930 when they were moved upland. In the late 1940s, another influential landscape designer, Stanley Thompson, made recommendations for alterations to the landscape on the golf course. The Club membership included some of Edmonton's and Alberta's most prominent citizens, including Premiers Rutherford and Sifton.

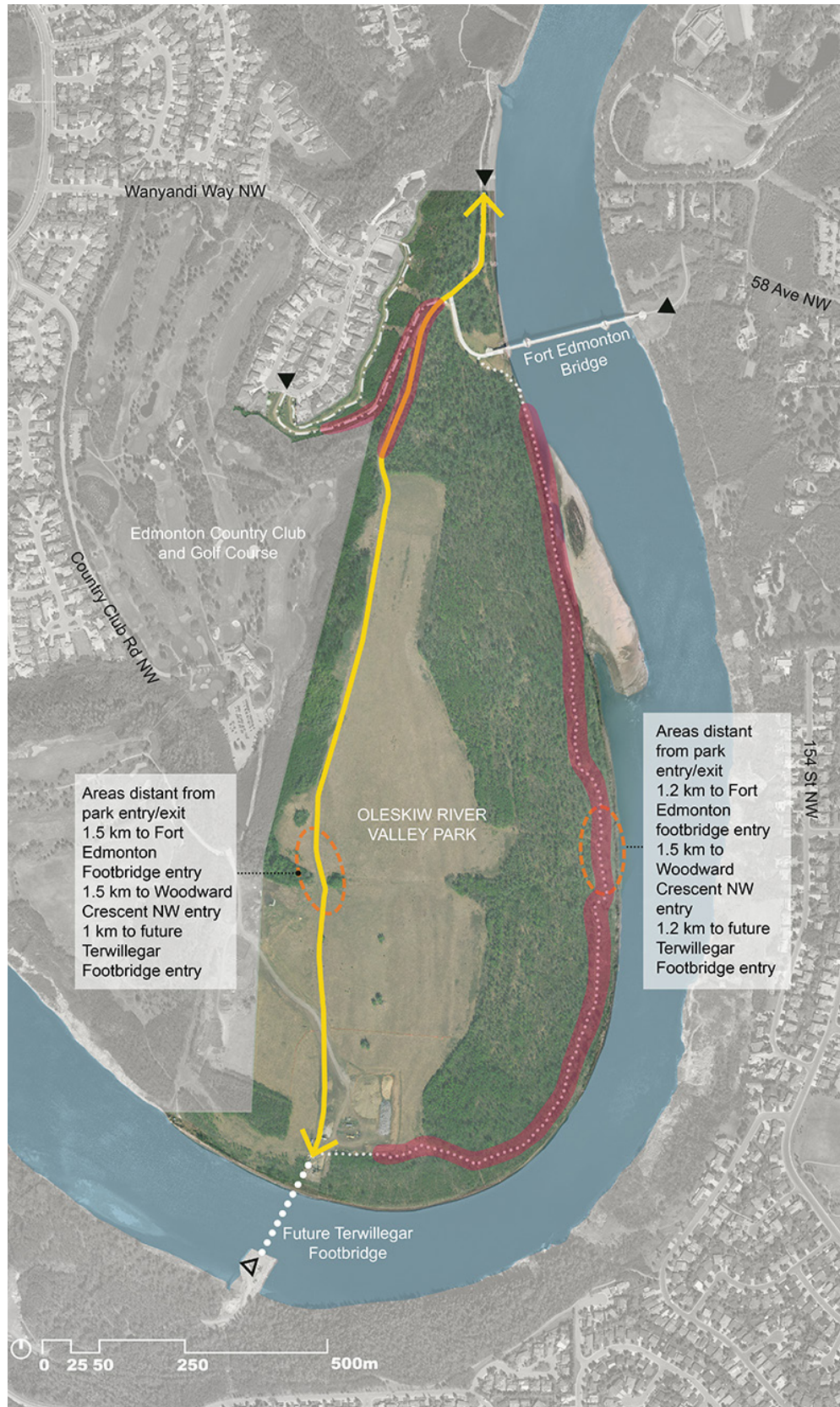
Curtis and Edith Munson started the Wolf Willow Farm on about 480 acres of land in the Oleskiw River Valley Park in 1930 when the golf course was moved. Curtis Munson was born in the United States and attended Yale University. He served in the U.S. Army during World War I. The farm produced hay on the open fields and maintained the tree stand to the east of the site. The couple ran the farm until it closed in 1970.

The course of Edmonton's history changed in 1947 with the discovery of oil at Leduc. Agriculture and the oil boom contributed to economic growth in the region. Services in Edmonton improved as the urban region continued to grow. Many people moved to Edmonton and other western cities after the 1970s. Edmonton showed its prosperity to the world in 1978 when it hosted the Commonwealth Games.

Access & Circulation


This park is accessible by foot and by bike from adjacent parks and neighbourhoods. With the construction of a new multi-use paved pathway and the completion of the Terwillegar Park Footbridge, the park areas will be easier to access. There is currently no public vehicle entry into the park. The feasibility of vehicle access to support adjacent neighbourhood development is being explored as part of this project.






Maintenance & Safety

Aside from a few points outside the park boundaries where the site is visible from a distance, many areas of the park have poor sight lines to the surrounding neighbourhoods and green spaces. It is nearly impossible to see the park area from across the river because of dense vegetation. Pathways in the park area are generally accessible, but they are limited. Without more pathway options or park entrances, visitors could feel trapped in the park.

 Paths that are less visible from public spaces as well as with limited visibility from path

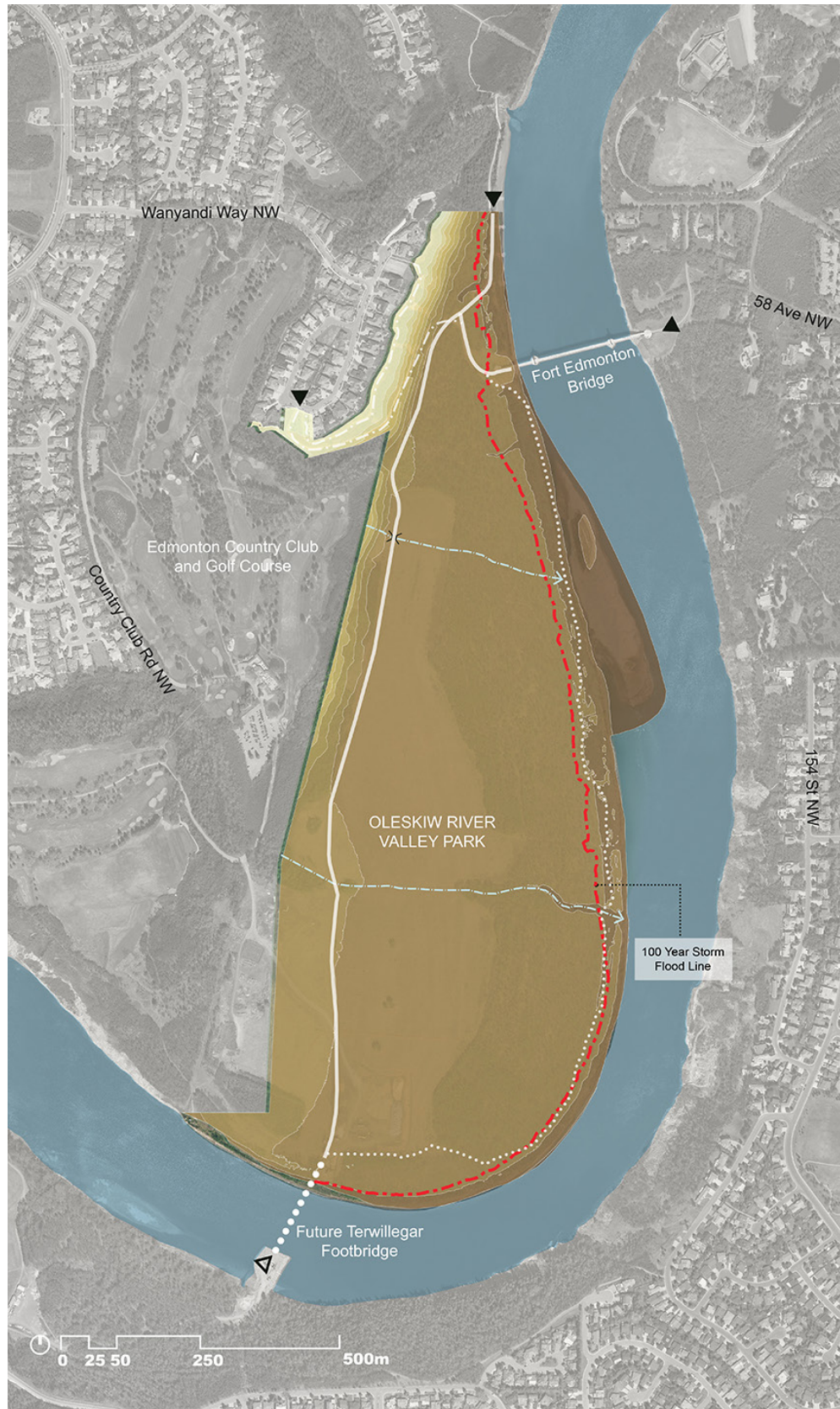
 Areas significant distant from park entry / exit with limit direct park exit options

Utilities & Servicing

The Oleskiw River Valley Park does not have any significant utilities or servicing features except for a power line extension that runs through the western side of the park. Although the adjacent neighbourhoods and golf course are serviced with electricity, water and sewers, extending service into this area faces the constraints of natural disturbance and financial cost.
















- Storm Water Pipes (Below Surface)
- - - Sewage Pipes (Below Surface)
- Water Supply Pipes (Below Surface)
- Streetlight Cables (Below Surface)
- Electrical Poles



Natural Features: Topography & Hydrology

The park area is relatively flat and well vegetated. The land generally slopes southeast towards the river. Two ephemeral streams run east to west across the Oleskiw River Valley Park. A comparison of historical bank lines for the North Saskatchewan River spanning a period of 1969 to 2008, shows little movement of the east bank in the Oleskiw River Valley Park. However, the bank line along the southern extent of the bend in the river has been eroding over time, producing steep banks about two to three metres high. Proposed developments should be located outside of the 100-year flood line, or appropriate flood proofing measures will be required.

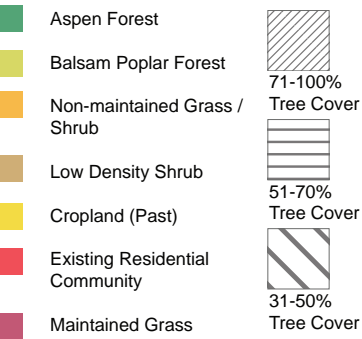
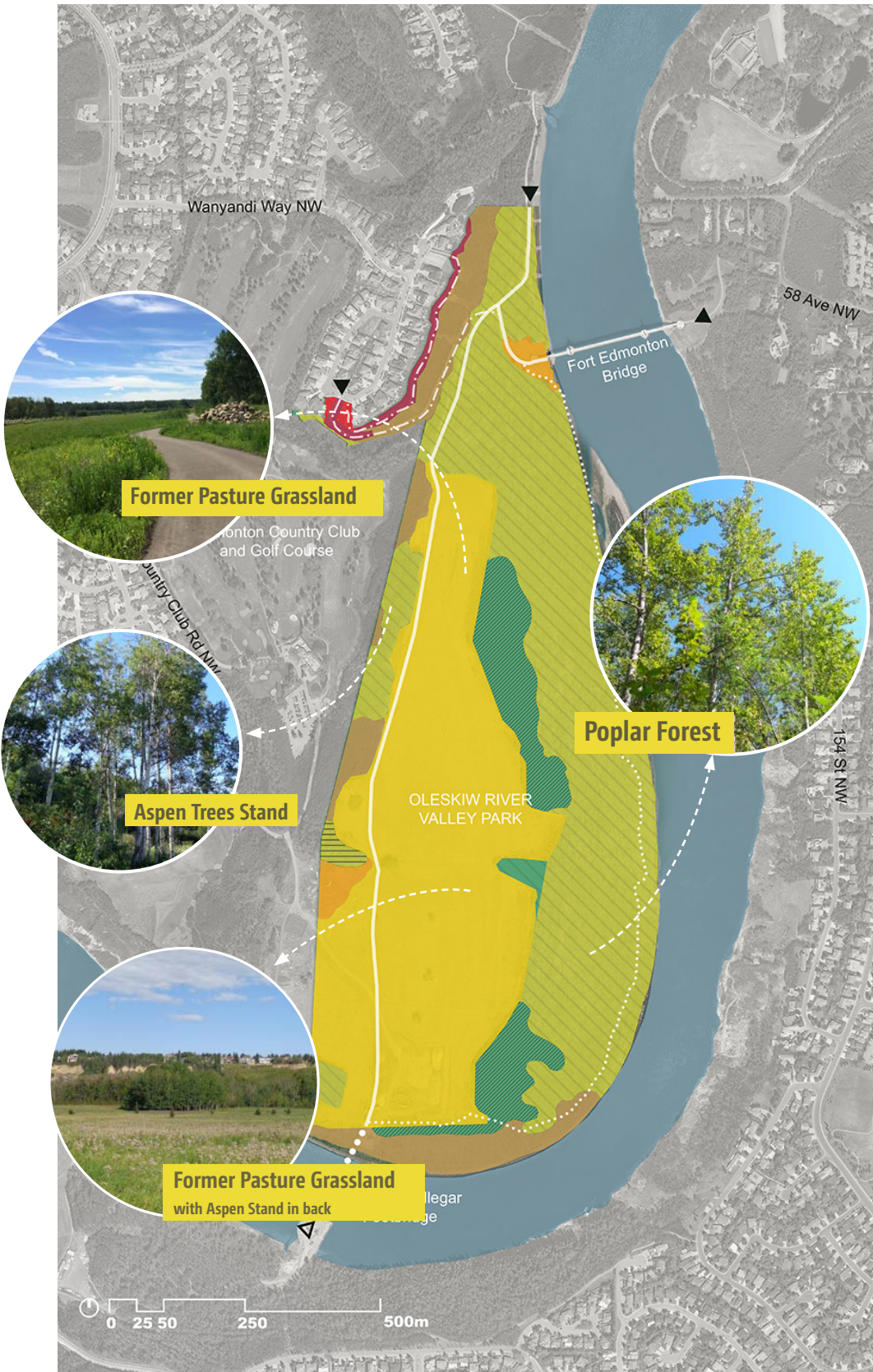
Elevation (metres)

	615 - 620		640 - 645
	620 - 625		645 - 650
	625 - 630		650 - 655
	630 - 635		655 - 660
	635 - 640		665 - 670
	Flood Line		Culvert
	Ephemeral Stream		

Natural Features: Vegetation & Open Space

The Oleskiw River Valley Park lies in the Central Parkland Subregion, a classification of Alberta's Natural Regions (Natural Regions Committee, 2006). Vegetation native to this subregion includes aspen, balsam poplar and white spruce trees. Plants such as Labrador tea, feathermoss, willow, bunchberry, wild lily of the valley, wild sarsaparilla and beaked hazelnut typically characterize the forest floor. Plants that typically grow on the riverbank in this subregion include willows, bulrushes and common cattail.

Stands of native trees (aspen and balsam poplar) are growing along the bank of the North Saskatchewan River on the park's eastern portion. The central area of the park has been cultivated in recent history and remains an open grass field dotted with small groupings of trees. Large stands of caragana have established along the western portion of the park, likely due to site disturbance.





Natural Features: Wildlife & Habitats

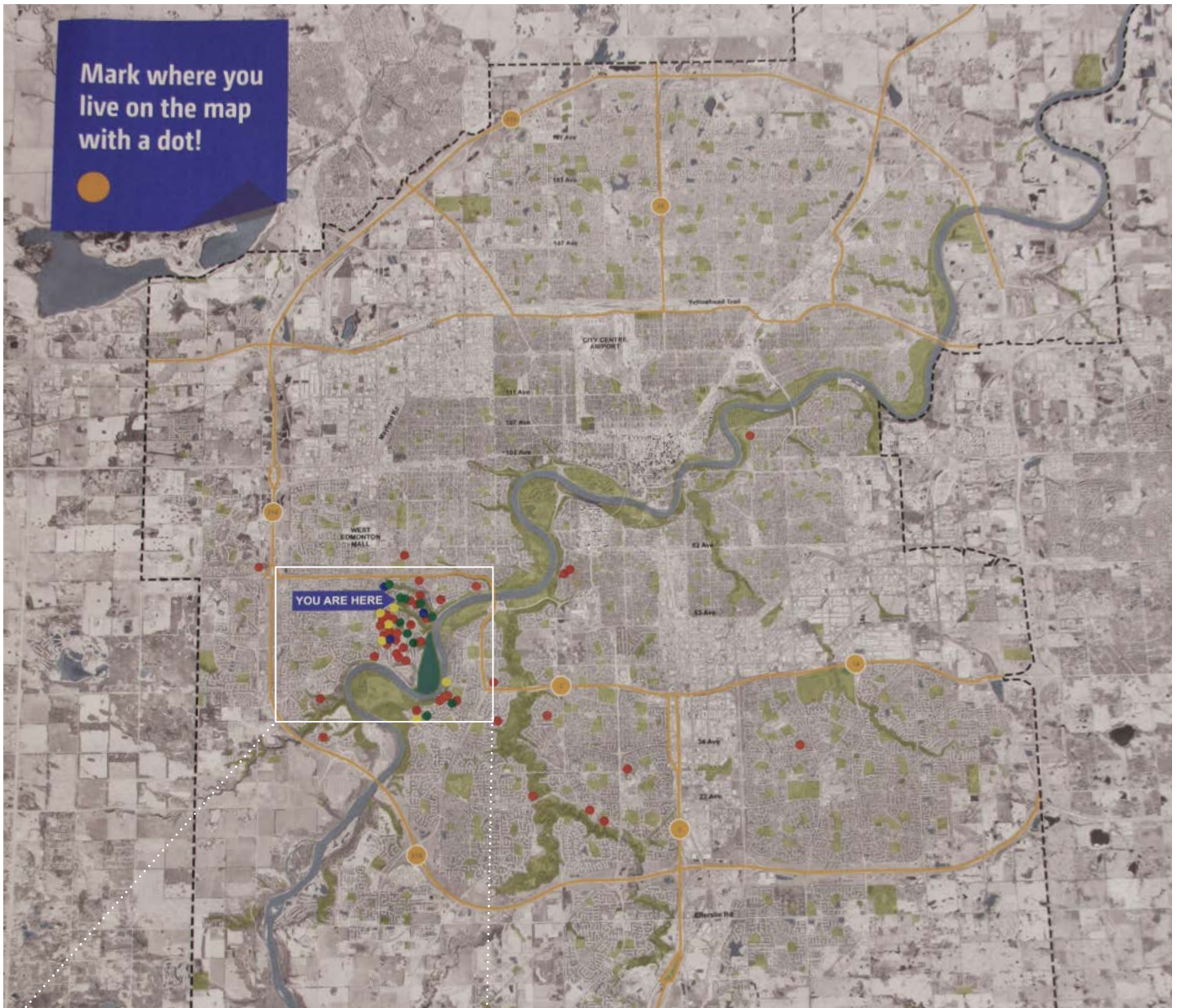
The North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine system is considered a national environmentally sensitive area as it provides critical habitat, corridors and linkages for a diverse range of wildlife species. The park is part of the Regional Biological corridor of the system.

The park area is to date not as heavily used by the public due to its history as a portion of the adjacent golf course and as a farmed plot. Its habitat value lies in the stand of aspen and balsam poplar along the eastern edge of the site and its open grass area of the former agricultural field. The open field can be used for foraging by various bird species.

During field observations 22 different species of birds have been observed and the presence of coyotes and deer was established based on the presence of dens and deer tracks. Audio identification confirmed the presence of the least flycatcher which is a provincially listed that is considered sensitive in Alberta.

Wildlife species of conservation concern that have the potential to occur within the park area include Canadian toad, peregrine falcon and short-eared owl.

Phase 1 Open House Participant Locations



Public Involvement at the Open House

During the first open house for the Oleskiw River Valley Park Master Plan, we asked you to mark where you live on a map. Many people travelled from various neighbourhoods to give their input on the future of the park!

Note: Coloured dots represent people's locations and larger orange dots are highway labels.

Phase 1: What We Did

In August and September 2016, the City of Edmonton asked citizens to share their thoughts about Oleskiw River Valley Park. A variety of engagement tools were used to provide citizens with convenient opportunities for providing feedback and insight.

Purpose of Engagement

Public engagement is critical to the success of the Master Plan. During the first phase of engagement, each activity asked the following questions, in addition to questions specific to Inventory and Analysis topics:

1. **What is your favourite thing to do in this park?**
2. **What would you like in the future?**

The following engagement methods were used in Phase 1: Inventory and Analysis:

195
comments
Intercept Surveys

409
online pins
Online Map Tool

354
comments
Open House

11
participants
External Workshop

29
participants
Internal Workshop

How were the engagement opportunities advertised?



3950
mailed flyers



Edmonton
Examiner
print ad
157k
readers



152k
followers



66k
followers



1
project web
page



2
road signs



2
public service
announcements



email
invitations

311
script update

Online Participant Demographics

The following statistics outline the demographics of the people who used our online mapping tool to provide their input during Phase 1 of engagement. The Edmonton Insight Community is an inclusive and accessible online citizen panel made up of diverse Edmontonians who provide feedback on City policies, initiatives and issues.

INSIGHT COMMUNITY

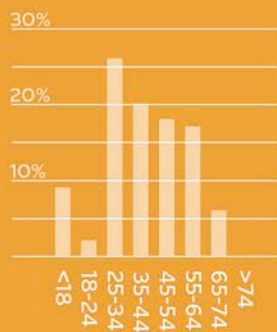
YEARS AS AN EDMONTON RESIDENT



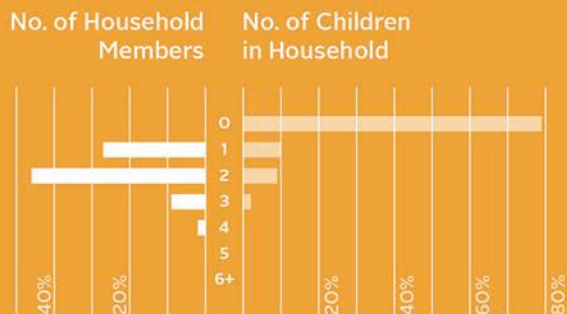
GENDER



AGE

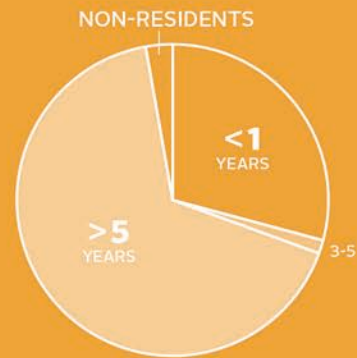


HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



ALL OTHER USERS

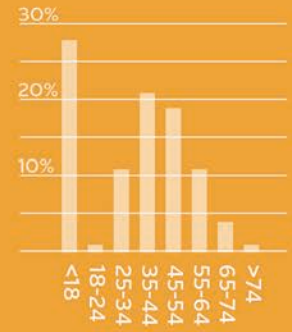
YEARS AS AN EDMONTON RESIDENT



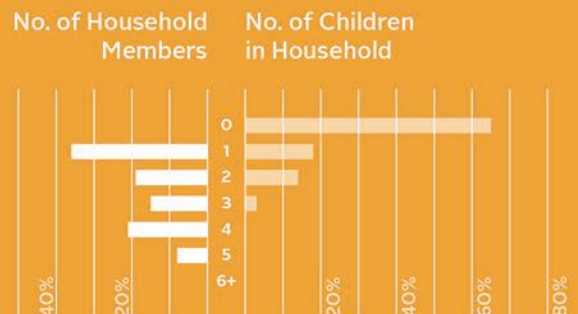
GENDER



AGE



HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS



*Figure for <18 year olds may be exaggerated because it was the default age on the online survey

Intercept Surveys

195 comments

The City of Edmonton interviewed people visiting the Oleskiw River Valley Park and immediate vicinity in August 2016. We spoke to park users on Sunday, August 14 between the hours of 1–3pm, Friday, August 19 from 5:20–7:20pm and Saturday, August 20 from 10:10am–12:15pm.

Participants of the intercept surveys were walking, cycling, walking their dog or visiting the sand bar on the east side of the Oleskiw River Valley Park. We spoke with participants for anywhere between five to fifteen minutes to gather answers to the following questions:

- » Have you ever visited this park space?
- » What would you like to do in this park space?

Overall, major concerns related to parking, amenities and keeping the park in a natural state. People discussed how they currently used the park area — whether for walking their dog, exercising or boating / kayaking, among other activities. Participants saw the value of inviting more people from the community to enjoy the park space and connection into the River Valley, understanding there is some complexity surrounding access.



In the future I would like to...

**“ Leave it natural,
simple, manageable,
sustainable. ”**

Online Map Tool

332 comments from Insight community opt in
87 comments from all other users

The online map tool was used as an option for people to provide their input without needing to come out to a public event. The tool consists of an interactive online map that can be accessed through the City of Edmonton project website. The online map tool was made available to the City of Edmonton Insight community from August 29 to September 12. After that period, the tool was opened to the public from September 13 to September 26. The online map tool was advertised on the project website, on the open house flyer and presentation boards, as well as through an Insight email opt-in.

Users were able to respond to the following statements by placing a pin on the map of the project area:

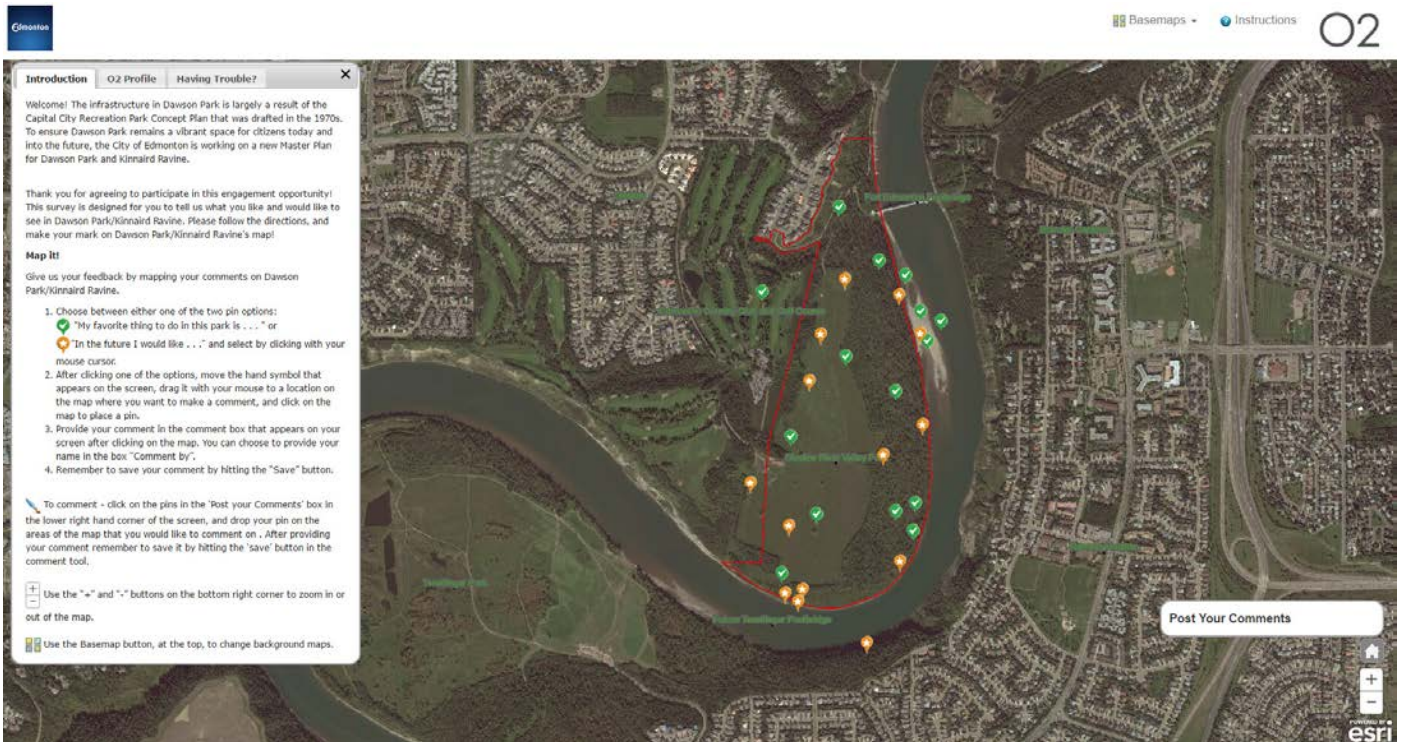
- » My favourite thing to do in this park is...
- » In the future I would like...

Not only were people able attach comments to their pins, they could also reply to and 'like' other people's comments. The online platform gave people the opportunity to provide longer responses relating to many factors within the park.

Participants gave location-specific feedback on activities they do - or would like to do - in the park (walking, running, dog-walking, etc.) and changes to the park that could improve their experience, such as easier access to the river. We also heard that people are already thinking about potential user conflict within the park, and are looking for ways to mitigate that conflict, such as with better signage. Finally, a discussion around access into the park and the potential for parking developed and there were a variety of ideas on this issue.

“Improve the trail beside the river so that cycling and hiking can coexist.”

“Like idea that better parking would be an issue of limited usability. Agree with no cars.”





Open House 143 attendees

An open house was held for the general public on Wednesday September 14 from 5–8pm in the gymnasium at the Westridge Wolf Willow Country Club Community League. The event was advertised through a mail-out flyer, email invitations from City of Edmonton community liaisons, on the project website, in a Riverdalian newspaper article and during the intercept surveys.

Presentation boards providing an initial understanding of existing conditions were available for review comment on throughout the evening. Boards included the following information:

- » Master Plan and Engagement Process
- » Related policies and plans
- » Park, pathway and footbridge development connecting Fort Edmonton Park to Terwillegar Park
- » First look at the history of the site
- » Access and Circulation
- » Amenities and Nodes
- » Activities and Festivals
- » Maintenance and Safety
- » Service and Utilities
- » Topography and Hydrology
- » Vegetation and Open Space
- » Wildlife and Habitats

Attendees were asked if any existing conditions information had been missed. Other major questions included:

- » What is your favourite thing to do in this park? Why?
- » What would you like to do in this park in the future? Why?
- » Why is this park important to you?

Comments represented viewpoints from various community groups and stakeholders, including residents and interest groups. Because of the impressive turnout, we were able to talk to many members of the community and listen to their concerns. Two topics of special concern were the impact of increased access into the park on the surrounding neighbourhoods and the impact of future development on the natural features in the park.

Suggestions for improvement included improved signage, better trail maintenance and erosion control (especially on the north end of the park), natural area protection, and finding a parking solution that creates the least amount of issues for surrounding neighbourhoods. Most of the suggested activities and amenities for the Oleskiw River Valley Park were low-impact, including walking, running, cycling and installing small amenities such as benches or composting washrooms.

External Stakeholder Workshop

11 Participants

An evening of focused discussion and workshop activities for external stakeholders took place on Thursday September 15 from 5:30-7:30pm at the Alfred Savage Centre. Stakeholders were asked to send one or two representatives from their group to attend. Invited groups included:

- » Beth Israel Synagogue
- » Edmonton Catholic School District
- » Edmonton Bike Commuters Society
- » Edmonton Country Club
- » Edmonton Mountain Bike Alliance
- » Edmonton Native Plant Group
- » Edmonton Nature Club
- » Edmonton Nordic Ski Club
- » Edmonton Public School Board
- » Federation of Alberta Naturalists
- » Friends of Terwillegar Park
- » North Saskatchewan River Valley Conservation Society
- » North Saskatchewan Riverkeeper
- » North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance
- » River Watch
- » Riverbend Community League
- » Schools in the Oleskiw catchment (Rio Terrace, Patricia Heights, Hill Crest, Jasper Place, Our Lady of Victories, H.E. Beriault, Blessed Oscar Romero)
- » Sierra Club Canada
- » Sierra Club Prairie
- » South West Edmonton Seniors Association
- » Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council
- » Trails Paths & Routes Advisory Committee
- » Westridge Wolf Willow Country Club Community League
- » Wolf Willow Ridge Homeowners Association

Representatives from the following organizations were in attendance:

- » Edmonton Golf and Country Club
- » Edmonton Nature Club
- » Edmonton Mountain Bike Alliance
- » Friends of Terwillegar
- » North Saskatchewan River Valley Conservation Society
- » Westridge Wolf Willow Country Club Community League
- » Wolf Willow Ridge Homeowners Association

The format of the evening included workshop activities that broke out into focused conversations around specific opportunities and constraints in the Oleskiw River Valley Park. Comments were recorded by participants and moderators on sticky notes, index cards and moderator notebooks.

Because the external stakeholders came with various backgrounds and areas of expertise, we heard about many aspects of the park area. We received feedback on the concerns of neighbourhood groups, including existing unwanted behaviour within the park that is creating a fear of crime and risk of fire in the community.

We heard that ecological restoration would be a costly and time intensive process, but that it has potential to create very positive environmental impacts in the region. Environmental restoration projects could also create opportunities for public programming. Suggestions included an arboretum, memorial garden or bird sanctuary. Representatives from each of the external stakeholder groups in attendance also shared their personal experiences in the park and discussed the value of feeling far away from the city in the Oleskiw River Valley Park.

“ A place where people can appreciate wildlife, connectivity and low impact activities in the quiet of nature. ”



External Stakeholder Toolkits

A take-home information package and survey was made available for stakeholder groups who were unable to attend the stakeholder session in person. A large map of the project area, small-scale information boards and survey were included in the package.

The survey asked participants to provide feedback on the information that was presented at the Oleskiw River Valley Park Master Plan open house and stakeholder session. Toolkits were sent out after the open house sessions and the City of Edmonton is in the process of gathering this feedback. When all of the feedback is collected and recorded, it will become an appendix to this document.

Dawson Park + Kinnaird Ravine Park Master Plan Consultation
Toolkit Instructions + Survey

- What are the top three opportunities for the park?
- Accessibility for mobility challenged
- More Picnic Areas
- What are the top three constraints (or challenges) in the park?
- Safety
- un safe steep and Eroded Paths
- Garbage
- If you were to think of a slogan for the future Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine, what would it be?
- Edmonton's "Natural" Parks

Developing Communities

- How do you think future development in the surrounding area will affect Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine?
- Bring more foot traffic/People to the Parks

Internal Stakeholder Session

29 Participants

An Internal Stakeholder Session took place from 10am-3pm on Wednesday September 14, 2016 at the Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre. The format of this session was an open house, drop-in style event where City of Edmonton employees could view the presentation boards for the park and speak to us about specific opportunities and constraints for Oleskiw River Valley Park based on their expertise.

We received feedback on park maintenance, operations, technical information, drainage issues, usage trends, public amenities, park user trends and community development in the area. We recorded comments on sticky notes and took detailed notes during the session. Attendees were from the following City departments:

- » Citizen Services, Urban Forestry
- » Citizen Services, Beautification and Greening Initiatives
- » Citizen Services, Community and Recreation Facilities, River Valley Parks and Facilities
- » Citizen Services, Community and Recreation Facilities, Civic Events and Partnerships
- » Citizen Services, Neighbourhoods Branch
- » Citizen Services, Family and Community Supports
- » Sustainable Development, City Planning, Parks & Biodiversity
- » Sustainable Development, City Planning, Planning and Design
- » Sustainable Development, City Planning, Drainage Planning
- » City Operations, Building and Parks Operations
- » Integrated Infrastructure Services, Facility and Landscape Infrastructure, Program and Project Development
- » Integrated Infrastructure Services, Facility and Landscape Infrastructure, Facility Maintenance Services
- » Integrated Infrastructure Services, Facility and Landscape Infrastructure, Project Review Team

Feedback from this event will be used to inform and determine the feasibility of future recommendations and concept design strategies.

What did we learn?

We collected feedback surveys at the open house and external stakeholder session. The feedback we received was very positive overall. The City advertised these events in a few different ways (for example, on the project website and with mail-out flyers), and community groups helped to spread the word. People appreciated having multiple platforms (on-line, in the mail and in person) to hear about the events and contribute their input. We heard that, overall, people felt like their views were heard and the material presented showed the important aspects of the park.

We also heard that it was not entirely clear how we will be using the feedback we received in the next phase or what the next steps are for those wanting to stay involved. We will work to improve on this process in the next project phases.

“ Gravel trail has bird habitats — perhaps there could be opportunity for class/educational aspects. ”

“ Restoration (to former flood plain species) of fescue grassland. ”

Phase 1: What We Heard

From the various engagement techniques, a total of 1130 comments were received. These qualitative responses were analyzed using an in-depth insight analysis process.

We received 1130 comments as a result of the phase 1 engagement. Feedback provided insight into the history of the park and activities that occur within the Oleskiw River Valley Park. Speaking with and engaging the public helped us develop a clearer and more accurate understanding of the identity and functions of the area, especially regarding the role of the Edmonton Country Club and Wolf Willow Farm in shaping the landscape to be what it is today.

How did we analyze the feedback?

Responses were analyzed with the goal of uncovering emerging themes, outlying ideas and points of contention. To start the analysis, responses were individually analyzed for sentiments and actionable recommendations. As this analysis progressed, similar ideas, points of contention, themes and outliers emerged. These were grouped, then further grouped, resulting in five main themes. Comment counts by theme add up to more than the grand total because comments that touched on several themes were assigned to multiple categories.

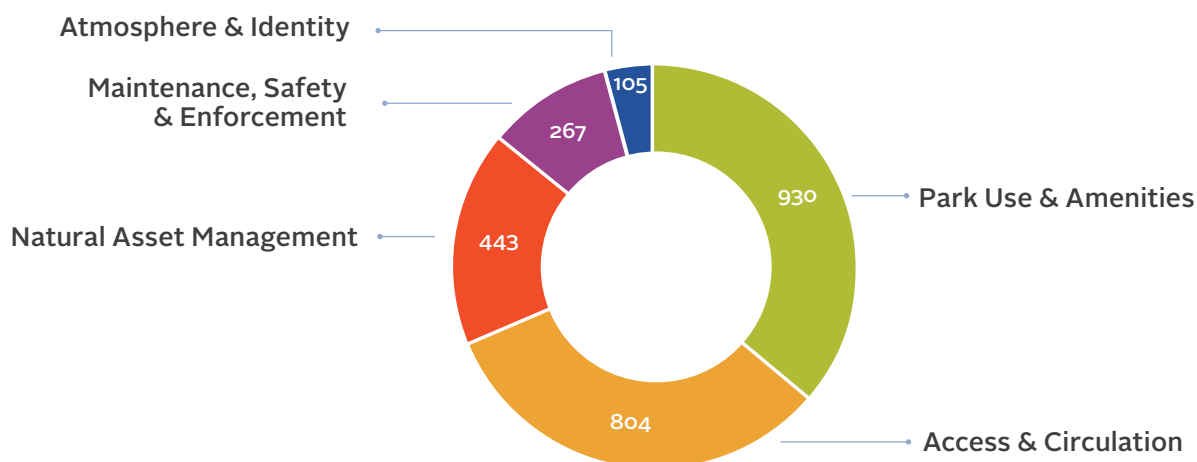
Comments from each engagement session during Phase 1 (intercept surveys, open house, external stakeholder workshop and online mapping tool) were counted and summarized into themes.* All opinions will contribute to the creation of a comprehensive Master Plan.

What were the results?

The five themes, listed in order of most to least comment frequency, are:

- » Park Use and Amenities
- » Access and Circulation
- » Natural Asset Management
- » Maintenance, Safety and Enforcement
- » Atmosphere and Identity

A description of the feedback received under each theme has been provided in this section. Conflicting comments provide direction into areas that require further or closer study.



* Individual comments may appear in multiple themes.

Theme #1: Park Use and Amenities

930 comments

Amenities are physical features in the park that provide a service to park users. For example, benches, washrooms, picnic areas and tree shade can all be considered amenities. The largest proportion of comments received during the first round of engagement related to park use and amenities because the main questions were centred around this theme.

We heard from people familiar with Oleskiw River Valley Park that they are passionate about making sure it not only remains a place people can enjoy for years to come, but that it is also appropriately used as part of the river valley— it is desired from most that any development be minimal and limited in scope. People told us the most popular activities in the park area include cycling, walking and jogging, and that there is a desire to increase activities to include more opportunities for mountain biking, picnicking and cross country skiing, among others. People also made recommendations for new amenities including benches, picnic tables and a low-impact washroom such as a composting washroom.

Current Park Use and Observations:

Walking / Jogging / Hiking	71
Cycling	63
Visiting the beach / sand bar	20
Sharing trails with many types of park users	18
Mountain biking	17
Dog-walking	16
Off-leash dog-walking	7

Future Desires for the Park:

No off-leash dog use	99
Cycling	73
Winter activities (e.g. cross-country skiing)	72
Limit development in the park	70
Walking / Jogging / Hiking	67



Washroom	50
Increase amenities	46
Mountain biking	43
Need separation of trail users	36
Maintain trails for multiple users	35
Picnic tables	29
Greater access to the sand bar	22
Benches	21
Drinking fountain	16
BBQ / fire pits	10
Stairs	10
Off-leash dog-walking	9
Dog-walking	5
Remove vegetable garden (near golf course)	3
Exercise	2
Water park	1



Theme #2: Access and Circulation

804 comments

Access refers to how people get to the Oleskiw River Valley Park from surrounding neighbourhoods and other parks, physical implications (trails, pathways, stairs, roads, etc.), and overall circulation. An important factor of park circulation is also the condition of trails and signage in the park.

We heard that people want universal access (for all people with and without disabilities), more trail connections and well-maintained pathways. The trail leading into the park from Woodward Crescent is in need of repair and was identified as a safety hazard. Participants disagreed on the level of vehicle access and parking needed, as well as the intensity of future park use. Neighbouring communities voiced concerns over issues that could arise from increasing park access and the problems street parking would cause for their communities, while other park users expressed the desire to have greater access to the park area. The natural trail along the east side of the park is valued and used by many people including mountain bikers, dog walkers and hikers. However, trail development at the expense of natural features, such as the forest or river edge, is not desirable. We also heard that people want easier access to the river for passive use and boating.

Current park use and observations:

Using the natural trail close to the river 33

Using the paved trail 12

Future desires for the park:

Increase trail connectivity	61
Keep and develop natural trails	61
Create parking inside or adjacent to the park	57
Use the footbridges as the main access points	48
Do not make parking near or in the park	44
Improve trails for safety and ease of use	43
Do not create trails or amenities at the expense of nature	40
Create river access (for people and emergency personnel)	37
Increase access to the park	36
Consider other community locations for parking	35
Create river access (for non-motorized watercraft)	35
More paved trails / maintain paved trail	33
Create more trails	32
Create barrier-free / accessible entrances into the park area	31
Limit vehicle access	31
Consider parking issues for surrounding neighbourhoods	29
Create access for emergency personnel	20
Keep as a recreational and ecological connector	19
Develop gravel trails	12
Create access through the golf course	9
Limit access into the park in general	8
Make trails wider	8
Do not create access through the golf course	8
Do not provide access through the neighbourhoods	3
Increase access from communities	2
Increase visibility on trails	2

Theme #3: Natural Asset Management

443 comments

Natural asset management refers to the maintenance and management of vegetation, drainage systems, steep slopes and wildlife within the park area.

The main sentiment we heard from participants was that they want to keep the park natural. Some even said that they do not want to see any changes at all. The general perception is that the park is natural, but we heard from some participants that the historical use of the landscape as a golf course and farm disturbed the landscape to the point that it is no longer in its original ecological state. Some recommended that a plan for ecological restoration and invasive species removal be created. Others recommended some form of wildlife conservation or wildlife program for the park, such as a bird sanctuary.

We heard that stormwater management along the slope and across the entire site is important to include as part of the park management plan, including addressing erosion and flooding issues within the park. Wetlands, rain gardens and other low impact development options were suggested as potential solutions to managing storm water.

We asked the public to tell us about wildlife they observed in the Oleskiw River Valley Park. Participants told us that they had seen coyote dens and other birds and animals in the park. They also told us about rare plants in the area and the native tree and grassland species that could grow in the park if we worked to restore the native ecology.

Current observations:

Natural features are sensitive 12

Future desires for the park:

Keep the park natural 208

Preserve natural features 86

Do nothing 54

Restore ecology 40

Create wildlife programming (ie. bird sanctuary) 15

Manage runoff and drainage 13

Maintain the river edge 8

Other * 7

* Example: Remove invasive species and weeds, and use natural maintenance practices.



Theme #4: Maintenance, Safety, and Enforcement

267 comments

Participants shared their concerns over physical hazards as well as unwanted activity that was taking place in the Oleskiw River Valley Park. We heard that participants want to see increased enforcement of unwanted behaviour within the park, such as after hours gathering and the impacts of this activity. There was also concern over fire hazards within the park and the risk they could present to neighbouring residents.

The repair and maintenance of the trail leading into the park from Woodward Crescent was a topic of concern for many participants. We heard that people wanted well-maintained trails and improved wayfinding at park entrances and within the park. There is a desire to keep the park clean and manage conflicting park uses, such as between dog walkers and cyclists.

Current observations:

Already feels safe

2

Future desires for the park:

Trail maintenance to improve safety	61
Wayfinding improvements	35
Signage and emergency phone for safety	30
Increase enforcement of unwanted activity	23
Clean up after dogs	16
Clean up garbage	16
Signage for informing of shared use	14
Address fire safety concerns	10
Create access to potable water	9
Increase lighting	8
Avoid light pollution	7
No more signs	1





Theme #5: Atmosphere and Identity

105 comments

Many participants wanted to share their experiences in the park and what it feels like to visit the Oleskiw River Valley Park. People talked about feeling like they were escaping the city when visiting the park, and the enjoyment of experiencing wildlife and nature. There is a desire to retain intangible aspects of the park, such as the quiet, the feeling of solitude, the seasonality and the history of the site.

Historical and ecological interpretation were recommended as ways to commemorate the natural and cultural heritage of the site. Specifically, people were interested in the history of Wolf Willow Farm and the Edmonton Golf and Country Club.

Comments that we heard, in order of frequency:

Experiencing and viewing wildlife	54
Ecological interpretation	18
Feeling of refuge from the city	14
Historical interpretation	11
Other *	8

* Example: Intangible aspects of the park, and incorporate indigenous land use

Have you visited the park space? What is your favourite thing to do in this park?

Hear and see ice floes break up in spring. Watch seasons change

see coyote + deer secret location for saskatoon berry picking

This bridge is a great connector, allowing me to access the stairs or to do my "west end loop" on my bike (connecting through Wolf Willow and coming back under the Henday)

I love how natural it is

I have to agree with this comment. This bridge makes a great connector and is a nice break in the ride as far as scenery goes

paddleboard sand bar kayak off the footbridge

The bridge is great, but to access it regularly you need to live in the neighborhood, as parking is very very limited, and almost always full. So we have a park for river bend cyclist and wolf willow residence.

area has birds, fox, coyotes, beavers

What would you like to do in this park space in the future?

Please fix this gravel trail!

Public interpretation, fascinating history of amateur golf + landscape change in Edmonton. Connect to stories of Edmonton Golf + Country club

Please consult credible environmental and conservation groups. Wealth of expertise in Edmonton.

University research on wildlife, ecology, hydrology, history, etc.

Please keep this natural – no further development is needed. Protect our wildlife!

Keep this whole area for walking, hiking and biking only, no cars, quads, playgrounds, soccer fields, etc.

Gravel trail has bird habitats – perhaps there could be opportunity for class/educational aspects

Please keep river's edge trails natural and low impact. Allow for view points to enable a rivers edge experience.

Allow natural regeneration to produce a hybrid – semi natural, aesthetic community

Discourage this as a place to drive to

Single track trails for trail running, hiking and mountain biking. These also need to be signed so emergency personnel can locate people.

This is the only park that isn't accessible by car and it should be kept that way for those of us who need reprieve from the autocratic city. Develop Laurier Park for those who want to drive to the river.

Going Forward

Thank you for sharing your ideas with us during this first phase of engagement! Moving forward, your input will be used to shape the draft Vision, Principles and Identity of the park. In 2017, the City will host engagement sessions to see what you think about the proposed direction.

Edmontonians who participated in the first phase of engagement have shared their opinions, dreams and wishes for the future of Oleskiw River Valley Park — giving the City of Edmonton clear direction for moving forward.

Some topics of conversation came up frequently, but we also heard many unique, outlying comments; both types of comments provided direction on key issues that need to be considered as part of the Master Plan.

Based on what we heard in Phase 1 of engagement, we have summarized the participants' main values and wishes as presented in this section. These values will be used to inform the development of the Vision, Principles and Identity of the park. In the next phase of engagement, participants will be provided with an opportunity to provide feedback on these new ideas and materials in 2017.

Values

Participants want to ensure that any development will have a **low impact on existing natural systems** within the park. There is a love and respect for the landscape, which ignites a sense of **stewardship and responsibility** for

the park area among neighbours and park visitors. Participants want to preserve and responsibly manage the ecological features and functions in the park.

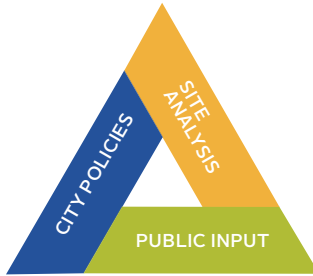
Participants seek a level of **harmony among park users**, allowing everyone to enjoy the existing natural features. They believe that access into the park should be **universally accessible** (for everyone of all ages and abilities) and should not place a large burden on any single group (for example, in the case of neighbourhood parking). Participants want to see a greater level of **connectivity within the River Valley**, and understand that the Oleskiw River Valley Park will become an important link.

There is a desire to reduce unwanted activity within the park and reduce user conflict to **increase the sense of safety** in the Oleskiw River Valley Park. Participants also want to reduce the risk of harm and have suggested the use of signage and proper trail maintenance as possible strategies.

Finally, participants see an opportunity to **share and celebrate the history** of the Oleskiw River Valley Park. While more people may visit the park in the future, we heard that it is important to **maintain the identity and character** of the park that so many people enjoy today.

Building off of What We Heard

The project comprises three decision-making components: the public's needs and desires, technical recommendations (including environmental opportunities and constraints) and City policies and priorities. Together, these inputs steer the project direction.



What we heard during phase one, including the five themes and the values that emerged, along with the identified City priorities and Inventory & Analysis research, informs the development of the next set of deliverables.

Phase 2: Vision, Principles & Identity

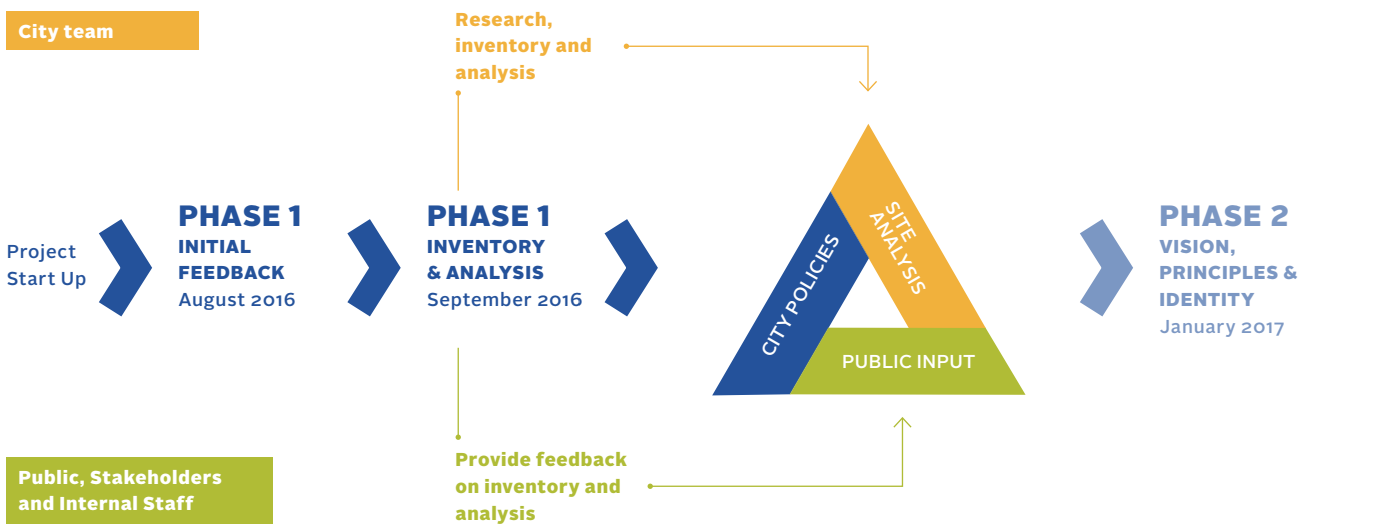
During Phase 2 of engagement, the City will organize a series of engagement opportunities, similar in format to Phase 1. Opportunities for engagement will include an open house, an External Stakeholder workshop, an Internal Stakeholder session and online consultation. Material presented will include:

- » Project summary and progress updates
- » Summary of themes and values heard during Phase 1
- » Opportunities and constraints that will inform park design
- » Visual precedents of park features, activities and programs
- » Engagement technique that guides the development of a vision statement

Stay connected for upcoming engagement opportunities: edmonton.ca/oleskiwparkmasterplan

Discover

Develop



Phase 1 Inputs and Results

Site Inventory and Analysis material was presented to all stakeholders and the public. What We Heard during the first phase of engagement, along with our site analysis, discovered opportunities and constraints and City priorities, will support the development of the Vision and Principles. This material will be presented to the public during Phase 2 of engagement.

