



What We Did & What We Heard Report: Touch the Water Promenade Stage 1

March 2020

| **SHARE** YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

Background

Project at a Glance			
Name	Touch the Water Promenade Stage 1, Creating a Vision, Concept Phase		
Locations & Dates	<p>Pop-up events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Edmonton Tower (October 31, 2019)+ Commonwealth Stadium (November 9, 2019)+ Kinsmen Recreation Centre (November 16, 2019) <p>Graffiti boards were left for one (1) week at each of the below locations for passive interaction and collection of additional feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Edmonton Tower (October 31, 2019)+ Ezio Farone Park (November 8, 2019)+ Commonwealth Stadium (November 9, 2019)+ LRT Bridge (November 15, 2019)+ Kinsmen Recreation Centre (November 16, 2019) <p>An online survey was open between November 8 and 22, 2019.</p>		
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What We Heard & What We Did Report: Touch the Water Promenade

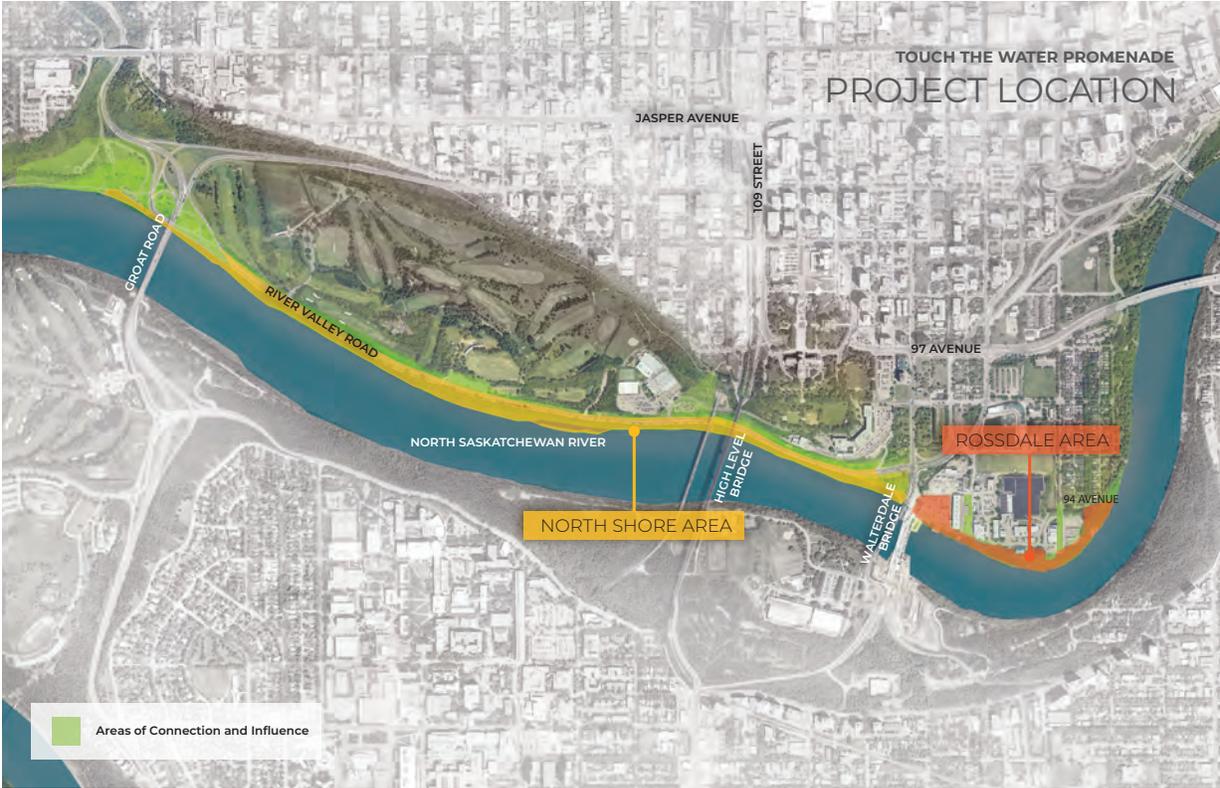
Introduction

Between 2012 and 2017, the City explored opportunities for a promenade along the North Saskatchewan River with some initial public and regional Indigenous engagement. In the Winter of 2018 City Council combined two projects, Touch the Water in the Rossdale neighbourhood, and the North Shore Promenade between Government House Park and the Walterdale Bridge for engagement and design efficiencies. The combined project area now spans a 4 km stretch of downtown river valley from the Groat Road Bridge up to and including the Rossdale neighbourhood near the Walterdale Bridge.

The Touch the Water Promenade Project is intended to improve access to and within the river valley, and create enhanced opportunities for recreation, celebration, heritage interpretation and social gathering. Improving the ecological condition along the North Saskatchewan River where possible is a key consideration for this project. Through this work, the project team is looking to define what a signature promenade experience would look like as directed by Council. There is interest from Council and Administration for the promenade to serve as a regional destination.

Together, Council direction, the supporting strategy documents, and the river valley site, create a unique placemaking opportunity that will celebrate and build upon the relationship that many Edmontonians have with the river and the diverse heritage that this section of river valley contains. It is in this space that engagement is needed to build the conversation around possibilities for a new riverfront promenade in the heart of our City.

Project Location



Decision Making

The City of Edmonton values public engagement processes and activities that contribute to project decisions by providing City Council and Administration with the best possible information to support decision making. Public and Stakeholder Engagement is one factor in the decision making process.

The City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum.



Description:

Stage 1 of Public Engagement was held to provide opportunities for the public to **CREATE** the project vision and design principles, as well as understand uses for the Touch the Water Promenade.

Engagement with regional Indigenous communities, City plan and policies, and outcomes of technical and environmental studies will also factor into the decision making process.

Mayor & Council: Key Funding Decisions & Approval



The project is aligned with the City of Edmonton's Breathe Strategy, which seeks to enhance Edmontonians' connection to open park spaces within our city. In addition, the project is influenced by many other City of Edmonton plans and policies including but not limited to:

- + **Ribbon of Green:** Provides strategic direction to guide the protection and responsible use of Edmonton's river valley and the ravine system over the next 20 years.
- + **ConnectEdmonton and City Plan:** The City of Edmonton's 10 year strategic plan, as well as the guiding values, intentions, and directions, provide the foundation for how our city will grow.
- + **River Crossing Business Plan:** Provides a business case and implementation plan for integrated urban places investment and economically-sound development in the Rosedale neighbourhood.
- + **River Crossing Heritage Interpretive Plan:** Provides an approach to reflect the rich Indigenous and settler history of the site with a dynamic urban future.
- + **River Access Strategy:** Provides direction to address increasing demands for river recreation while protecting the river valley as the City's signature natural, cultural and recreational resource.
- + **River Access Guiding Principles:** The City of Edmonton will ensure environmental stewardship while encouraging a broader appreciation for activities on or alongside the river, and will provide direction regarding the safe use, programming, partnerships, operations, design and location of infrastructure that supports access to the river and activities associated with the river.
- + **North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan (Bylaw 7188):** Provides the environmental review framework and principles for future implementation plans and programmes for parks protection and development within the river valley & ravines.
- + **Downtown Public Places Plan (*currently in draft form):** Guides public space improvements to create a greener, healthier, and more family friendly Downtown.
- + **Open Spaces Policy and Breathe – Edmonton's Green Network Strategy:** As Edmonton's population grows and diversifies, neighbourhoods evolve and environmental conditions change, the City commits to maintaining a sustainable, inclusive, connected, multifunctional open space network that supports other city building objectives and responds to diverse needs. Key themes for open space function include Wellness, Ecology, and Celebration. +
- + **Capital Project Governance Policy:** Provides overall framework to guide the management of the City's capital projects, including phased approach to project development and delivery.
- + **Capital City Recreation Park Development Plan (1974):** Provides direction for the development of 16 kilometres of connected trails, pathways, and amenities in the central river valley. The trails and amenities here are among the most valued places in Edmonton to this day.

As one project the design has progressed through initial studies. In the Fall of 2019 the project team initiated Stage 1 of public engagement with the purpose of creating a vision and design principles to guide the development of concept options.

Stage 1 of Public and Stakeholder Engagement invited Edmontonians to CREATE the project vision and design principles that will guide the development of concept options for the Touch the Water Promenade. Understanding how people currently use the area, the public views and values regarding their use of the project area will allow the project team to begin designing an authentically Edmonton riverfront experience.

Engagement was undertaken throughout October and November of 2019 with engagement focused on raising awareness of the project, understanding how people currently use the area, and collecting ideas for future opportunities and possibilities. Engagement activities included pop-up events, stakeholder meetings, graffiti walls¹, and an online survey.

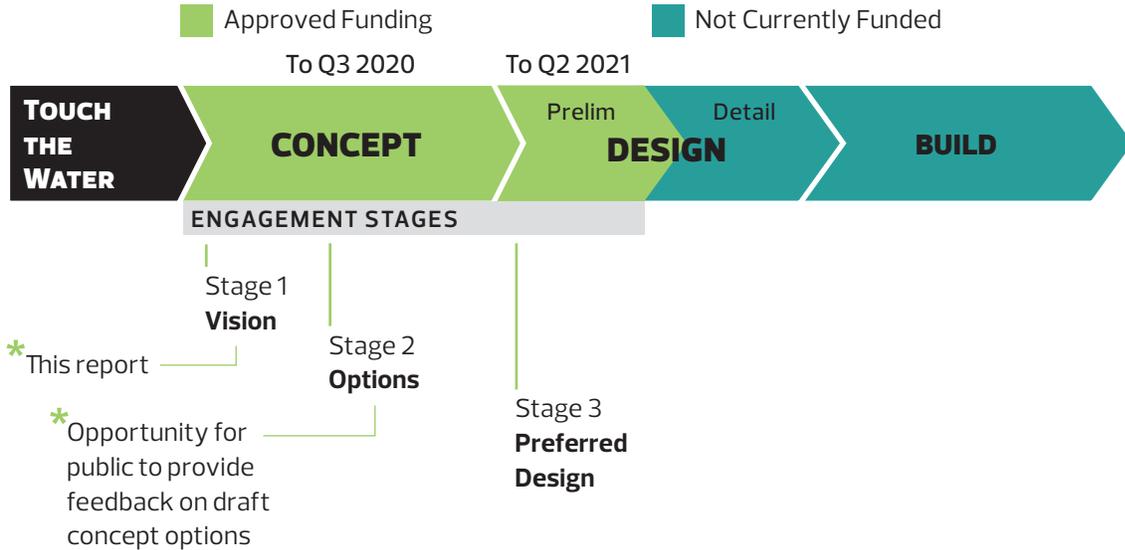
Through conversations with the public and data received from the survey, the project team heard the following themes emerge:

- + Edmontonians love the North Saskatchewan River Valley
- + Trees are cherished in the river valley
- + People use and want to continue to use the area for a wide range of activities from racing and training at one end to strolling and sitting to enjoy the view at the other end
- + Those who don't use this area of the river valley prefer to use the natural areas closer to their home or explained they did not have a reason to go to the area.
- + Safety concerns could be improved through enhanced pedestrian lighting and trail separation.
- + Access to the water, as well as access into and out of the river valley is challenging considering the steep banks.
- + Development interests were diverse and ranged from do not touch the river valley to interest in retail development in certain areas.
- + Park infrastructure enhancements such as garbage cans, washrooms, and lighting were generally supported.

¹ Graffiti walls for this project refer to graphically enhanced boards with questions encouraging responses from the public.

Timeline

A concept plan will be presented and refined upon completion of the public review later in 2020. Technical studies and approvals are scheduled to continue over the summer and fall, at which point Preliminary Design will begin for the Rosedale area only (funding not currently approved for North Shore Area to proceed past Concept).



Regional Indigenous Engagement

The City of Edmonton acknowledges the project area has deep historical and cultural connections to many Indigenous communities. In October 2019 the project team engaged with 21 Indigenous Communities from the region on the Touch the Water Promenade Project. Elders, Knowledge Holders, and Technicians, totaling 71 participants, walked the site with the project team to discuss future possibilities for the area. Their ongoing input will guide the project as it moves forward.



What Was Done

From the Breathe Strategy, the three main elements that shape the identity of parks in Edmonton are: ecological connections, celebration and wellness. These themes were used as a foundation to guide the direction for the project and public and stakeholder engagement. The focus of this first stage of engagement was to raise awareness of the project, understand how people currently use the area, and collect ideas for future opportunities and possibilities. Engagement activities were intended to be casual, imaginative, and informative.

Engagement events occurred in or near the project area in order to capture feedback from those in proximity to the project area, and an online survey was used to reach a city-wide audience who may not frequent the area. Engagement opportunities were advertised across the city using the following communications:

- + 14 road signs (across the city)
- + City digital display board notification (e.g. at Community Recreation Centres, Libraries)
- + City webpage
- + City Indigenous Relations Community Bulletin
- + Edmonton Metro Newspaper (print) advertisement
- + City of Edmonton Park Bench Newsletter
- + Email invitations to over 100 stakeholders, user groups, and organizations
- + City of Edmonton Social Media posts:



Twitter
13 tweets
69,556 impressions
967 engagements



Facebook
4 posts
34,239 impressions
1,293 engagements

In addition to the planned communications activities, the project received media coverage from Global News and CTV News at two engagement events which helped to raise project awareness in the community.

Stage 1 engagement took place with the public between October 31 and November 22, 2019. Feedback from the public was gathered through pop-up events, an online survey, and one-on-one meetings with stakeholders.

Conversations focused on creating a vision that the designers would use to develop concept options.

Evaluations forms were provided to participants at all engagement events, except the outdoor graffiti walls, to gather feedback on the methods of engagement and demographics. This information is used by the City in planning and developing future engagement opportunities.

Pop-Up Events

Three public engagement events were held in high traffic locations that attracted a total of 368 participants. Pop-up events were held indoors at Edmonton Tower, the Commonwealth Recreation Centre and Kinsmen Recreation Centre. To extend the conversations, graffiti walls were installed for a week at the Pop-Up event locations as well as outside at Ezio Faraone Park, and Dudley B. Menzies LRT bridge.

At pop-up events, a monitor looped through diagrams, maps and design ideas to attract people to the space to join the conversation and provide an understanding of the direction of the project. Team members answered questions and documented feedback.

Graffiti boards asked three questions of participants:

- + How can this project enhance the way you use and experience this area?
- + What kind of experiences would you like to have in this area of the river valley?
- + What is your favourite thing about this area?

Participants answered the questions by writing directly on the boards, speaking with staff, or leaving sticky notes to provide feedback.

The graffiti board remained in place for a week at each location. At the end of the week, the graffiti boards were removed and the comments were documented.

Outdoor Graffiti Boards

The graffiti boards used in the pop-up events were positioned outside in highly travelled areas to collect feedback from existing users. Dog walkers, cyclists, runners and those on the sidewalks and trails paused to write their comments with sharpies on the boards.



On November 8, 2019 from 7:00 am – 9:00 am members of the project team joined the organization YEG Coffee Outdoors in Ezio Farone Park to raise awareness of the project and hear their ideas.

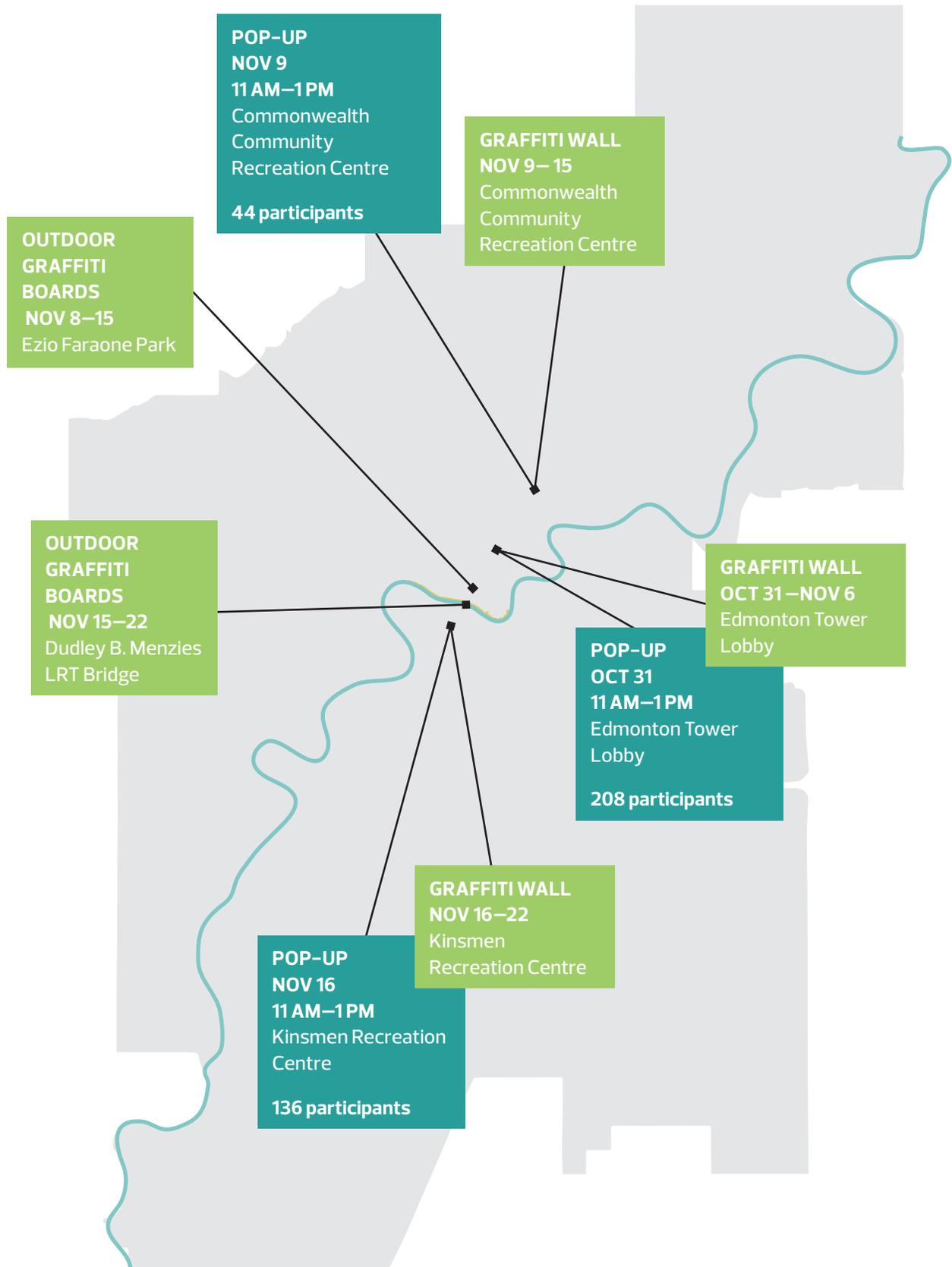


YEG Coffee Outside
@coffee_outside

Thx 🙏 to folks at @stantec for joining us this morning to talk about the Touch the Water plan. And cookies from @uptown_one. And low clouds over the water. Happy weekend, everyone!



POP-UP EVENTS + OUTDOOR GRAFFITI BOARDS



Stakeholder Meetings

Project team members conducted outreach by email to stakeholders who were adjacent to the project site. Meetings with five organizations took place throughout October and November. Meetings included a presentation of the project overview and discussion regarding interests and concerns. Thirty-eight individuals affiliated with the following organizations participated in the meetings.

- + Alberta Infrastructure, October 15, 2019
- + EPCOR, October 28, 2019
- + River Valley Alliance, October 30, 2019
- + Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee, November 7, 2019
- + Rosedale Community League, November 19, 2019

Online Survey

An online survey ran from November 8, 2019 to November 22nd, 2019 on two platforms: the City's Insight Community and the Project website. A total of 3,224 survey responses were received of which 224 responded using the open link that was posted on the project website and 3,000 responses came from the Edmonton Insight Community Panel monthly mixed topic survey. The City of Edmonton's Insight Panel is an inclusive and accessible online citizen panel made up of diverse Edmontonians who provide feedback on City policies, initiatives and issues through responses to monthly surveys. A QR code was posted on each graffiti wall to direct people to the survey. Please see Appendix A for demographic breakdown of survey respondents.

The intent of the survey was to provide an alternate and accessible avenue for the public to provide input to the project without having to attend an in-person engagement activity. The survey provided a brief project scope, aerial view and project area map. The Survey asked the following questions:

1. Have you visited the area in the last 12 months?
2. What mode of transportation do you currently use to get to this area?
3. What do you like most about this area?
4. What do you currently do/use in this area of the river valley?
5. What would you like to do/use in this area of the river valley?
6. Is there anything that limits your ability to enjoy the area?
7. What types of activities and/or experiences would encourage you to visit this area?
8. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us about this area of the river valley?

What We Heard

Throughout the engagement activities, people were asked what they appreciated about the area, how the project could enhance the way they use the area, and what kind of experiences would they like to have in the area. People want to continue doing what they currently do in the project area and envision doing these activities in a new way or with additional opportunities.

Common themes emerged from the feedback received including:

- + Edmontonians love the North Saskatchewan River Valley
- + Trees are cherished in the river valley
- + Activities – There is interest in a wide range of active uses from racing and training at one end to strolling and sitting to enjoy the view at the other end
- + Safety issues
- + Interest in better access to the water and access to the valley itself considering the steep banks
- + Development – interest in developing the river valley varied from wanting none to interest in retail development in certain areas
- + Protecting history
- + Budget

An additional theme came from the online survey, which was that some people do not go to the river valley because they either do not think there is anything to do there or they have natural areas closer to their home to enjoy.

More detail is provided below.

POP-UP EVENTS

Trees

At the pop-up events people revealed their passion for the trees in the river valley. Participants told the City to preserve the trees and parks, and keep it natural. The City was also instructed to plant more trees, and introduce native flowers and plants along the trail system. Participants found preserving the green space important to escaping the "concrete jungle".

Activities

When people were asked to name activities or programs they are interested in participating in the project area, a diverse list emerged. Some people want to continue to use the multi-use trail and corridor for racing, or training and/or urban fitness. Some want to continue to regularly jog or bike through the area. Dog walkers want to continue walking their dogs through the valley. Some suggested having the opportunity to stroll and look at the river is of interest. Some were interested in benches and viewing nooks to enhance their experience. A few people explained that current high level activities (running, cycling) deter them from regularly using the area and they'd like to see opportunities for less active programming. Some recommended to separate the pedestrians, cyclists, or widen the path.

The trail system was described by some as a route through as opposed to a destination.

 *They should have the golf course restaurant open during the winter. Bring back the management of food services at Victoria Golf Course year-round and for cross country skiers.* 

Fishing was raised regularly as an activity of interest. A few people said a pool, spa, or hot tubs would be nice.

There was curiosity about Winter activities such as a warming hut. Comments on the graffiti wall included:

- + "Could there be a shack by the cricket area for cross-country skiers?"
- + "Could the ski trail be extended along the pathway?"
- + "a playground or something for families with children tobogganing in the winter would be nice at government house"

Non-reserve picnic sites and BBQ areas at the Victoria Oval were also requested.

Other recommendations included:

- + Education both virtual and through signage,
- + Drop-in or pop-up programming
- + Programs to bring more diversity and people who have never been to the river valley
- + Tapping into traditional knowledge to build programming and education

Safety

The City was asked to improve pedestrian lighting for safety. Keeping the path near the road is perceived to improve pedestrian safety because the road helps to 'keep eyes on the path'. Some requested the crosswalks be improved to improve safety in the area.

Access

Access took different forms in conversations including transit, parking, easier access out of the river valley for bikers and pedestrians, and water access.

Recommendations included providing LRT access and improving public transit. One person suggested that the streetcar should be part of the transit system.

A Rosedale resident explained that the lots in their community are small and many don't have garages, so they rely on street parking. The resident expressed concern that development will make the Rosedale streets busier, and make residential parking more difficult.

There were requests for a better connection between Rosedale and the top of bank. The stairs to Ezio Faraone Park are considered too narrow and congested by some. One comment observed that there is no pedestrian access down the East side of 109 Street from the High Level Bridge.

Universal access in the area is limited; there is a lack of wheelchair accessibility in the area. It was pointed out that there is no pathway on the north side of River Valley Road, just trampled grass.

 *Program and education should be priority, don't burden City with additional infrastructure cost, spend to enhance diversity and tackle climate change rather than doing new construction. Any new infrastructure should be retrofitted and effective.* 

A path on the west side of Groat Road bridge was recommended. Some suggested improving the pedestrians crossings to and from Groat Bridge because of the tough sightlines around the bend where you can't see people. There was a suggestion to connect the trails to the Devonian trail that is managed by Parkland County. One comment suggested a connection to Accidental beach.

For some, providing an opportunity for paddlers, rafts, to launch and land was of interest. One person said they would like to paddleboard at lunch time, which would require easy access. Many comments included canoe and kayak launches and rental amenities.

Development

Opinions and interest in development differed widely amongst participants. Discussion regarding development included both park / open space infrastructure development (i.e. walkways, play structures, art) and commercial development (i.e. coffee and restaurants, retail). Water access and outlooks were generally supported while support for commercial development varied.

There is general support for commercial development in the Rosedale Powerplant, and at Victoria Park Golf Course. Other comments include more entertainment but not necessarily bars. Shops, flea markets, buskers and singing were listed as ideas for development. There is modest support for micro or non-permanent vendors in Ezio Faraone Park and throughout the project area. Many are interested in being able to enjoy a coffee or hot chocolate. "Provide services without commercializing it."

 *Would hate to see this nice serene area turn into a bunch of food trucks all the time.* 

Many raised concern regarding what type of development would be appropriate for Edmonton's river valley. There were some comments against all development in the river valley. Sometimes they didn't want development for wildlife or environmental reasons, but most comments against development explained that Edmonton's natural river valley is unique.

Comments included:

- + "It is not a contrived greenspace that any municipality can do along the river."
- + "Edmonton has a wild urban escape that is rare and should be preserved"

Most people were comfortable with development to enhance the park spaces such as generating places to gather where open views of the water could be enjoyed. Installing washrooms, garbage cans, lighting, and benches was supported.

When it came to development and construction the project team was advised this should be cost effective and limit the use of concrete. Where possible permeable pavement should be used, as well as solar panels and other green technology. Where there must be concrete, such as the retaining wall underneath the legislature, include opportunities for artwork.

 *To make the outfalls look more natural in the area would help the perception and beauty.* 

The only specific development suggestions included:

- + Improved sidewalks on the trails
- + Places for a coffee or glass of wine
- + Benches
- + Washrooms
- + Access to the water for fishing or paddle boarding
- + Outlooks to the water; however, not to the scale of the one at the Athabasca icefields
- + Funicular
- + Area for music
- + Lighting

Protecting History

Concern for respecting the burial grounds at Rosedale came with the suggestion of protecting the history project area. It was also acknowledged that there is the potential to uncover more burials with development in the project area and the question arose how these would be protected. Some people thought that no development should occur due to the historical and archaeological significance of the area.

Budget

At in person sessions many people were curious to know whether the project funding had been impacted by the recent provincial budget. Some participants stated that this project should not proceed because it was perceived to be a frivolous expenditure. The project team received similar comments through the project email and social media accounts.

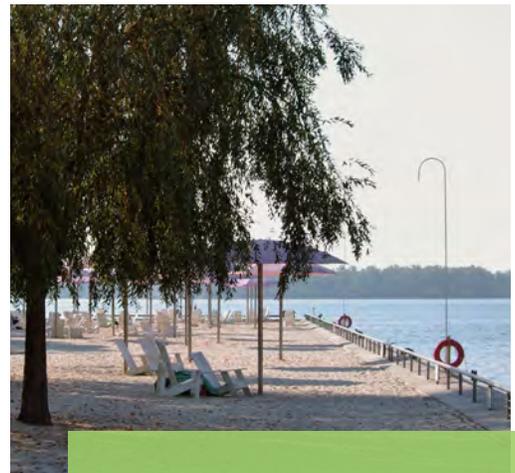
Places Like...

As people spoke about their vision for Touch the Water Promenade they often referenced other places they have visited with urban waterfronts. These places represent a diversity of geography, climate, cultures, and uses. Many of these places have substantial developments. While we did hear that some Edmontonians were interested in retail and commercial development, the majority of Edmontonians were comfortable with improved park infrastructure. We don't know exactly which elements people liked about these places, but we do understand that they are waterfronts where people can gather and make memories. Places people named include:

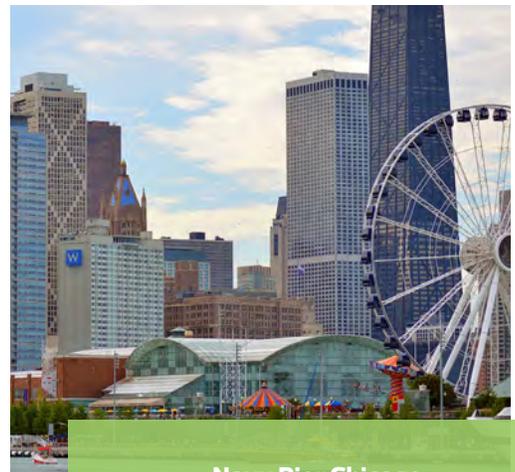
- + Granville Island, Vancouver
- + Clifford E Lee Sanctuary in Parkland County – example of floating boardwalks
- + Stanley Park, Vancouver
- + Saskatoon
- + Calgary's riverwalk feels like a destination similar to the powerplant
- + Chicago
- + Mercado in Portugal
- + Prince's Island Park in Calgary
- + Buchanan Street in Glasgow (buskers, signers, make it alive!)
- + Places for kids to play in the water like Lac St. Anne
- + Santa Monica walkway
- + Champlain Boulevard Quebec City – Promenade de Champlain
- + Sugar Beach in Toronto
- + The Forks in Winnipeg, but it should be more green
- + Coal Harbour promenade
- + Tamworth Australia (artists and sculptures in the park, link to art gallery)
- + Burangaroo Park in Sydney Australia. Reclaimed park in Sydney planted with indigenous species. Social enterprise and tourism opportunities for Indigenous communities
- + Barcelona waterfront, Spain, but scaled down
- + Ghirardelli Square, San Francisco
- + Lisbon, there is a building by the main train station
- + Helsinki has a sauna café right at the sea



Calgary's Riverwalk



Sugar Beach in Toronto



Navy Pier Chicago

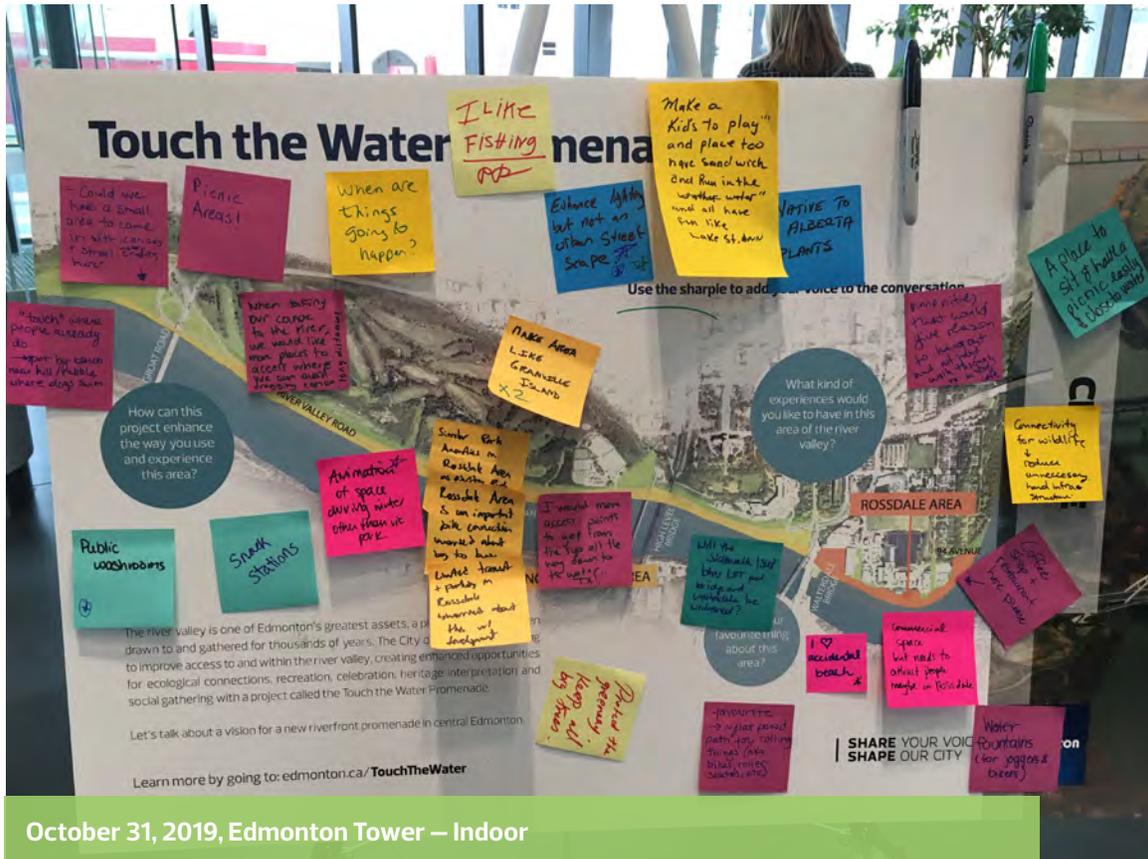
GRAFFITI WALLS

Across all graffiti walls there were comments in support of washrooms/garbage cans/water fountains, improved pedestrian lighting, more trees and shrubs, and more places to rest. Frequent comments expressed the desire for places to be accessible, where they could walk, sit and drink coffee. While there were many comments that the boards had in common, each location also captured different ideas for the project team to consider which are included below. Because the context behind the comments is missing from the graffiti boards, the following simply lists many of the comments.

Edmonton Tower

Comments unique to the graffiti wall in Edmonton Tower were:

- + Standing wave like Calgary
- + Access right to the water like the Seawall in Vancouver
- + Heritage story of river valley
- + Short term storage racks for kayak/canoe/stand up paddling
- + Floating businesses (Halifax harbour walk, leased concrete pads or seasonal businesses in shipping containers)
- + Educational opportunities to talk about the importance of water and wildlife corridors in the river valley

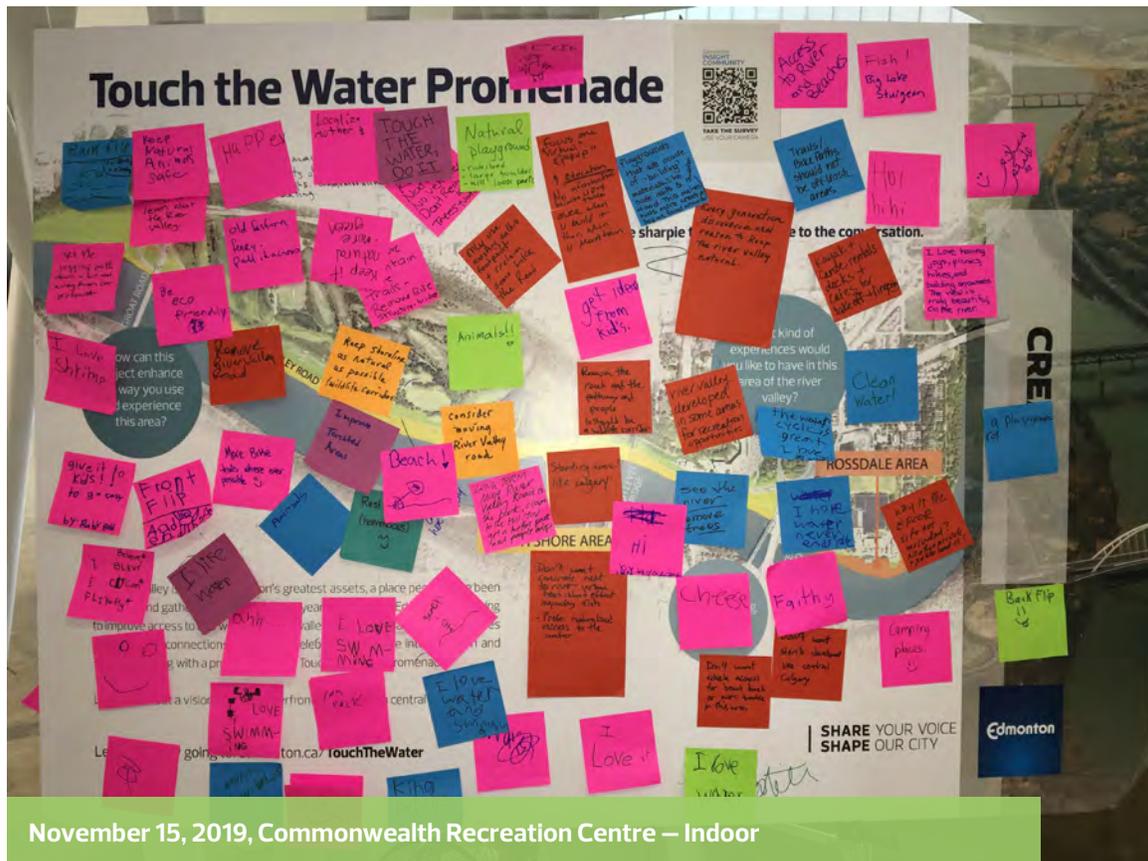


Commonwealth Recreation Centre

- + Remove river valley road, or move it back closer to the hill
- + Love the water, love swimming, love beaches*
- + Keep the river valley natural or 'naturalized'
- + Preserve the wildlife corridor
- + Hammocks to relax in
- + Camping places
- + A playground
- + An old fashioned ferry that you pull
- + Kayak and canoe rentals with docks and cafes for launching and lingering

Touch the water, DO IT!

* Comment expressed by multiple participants



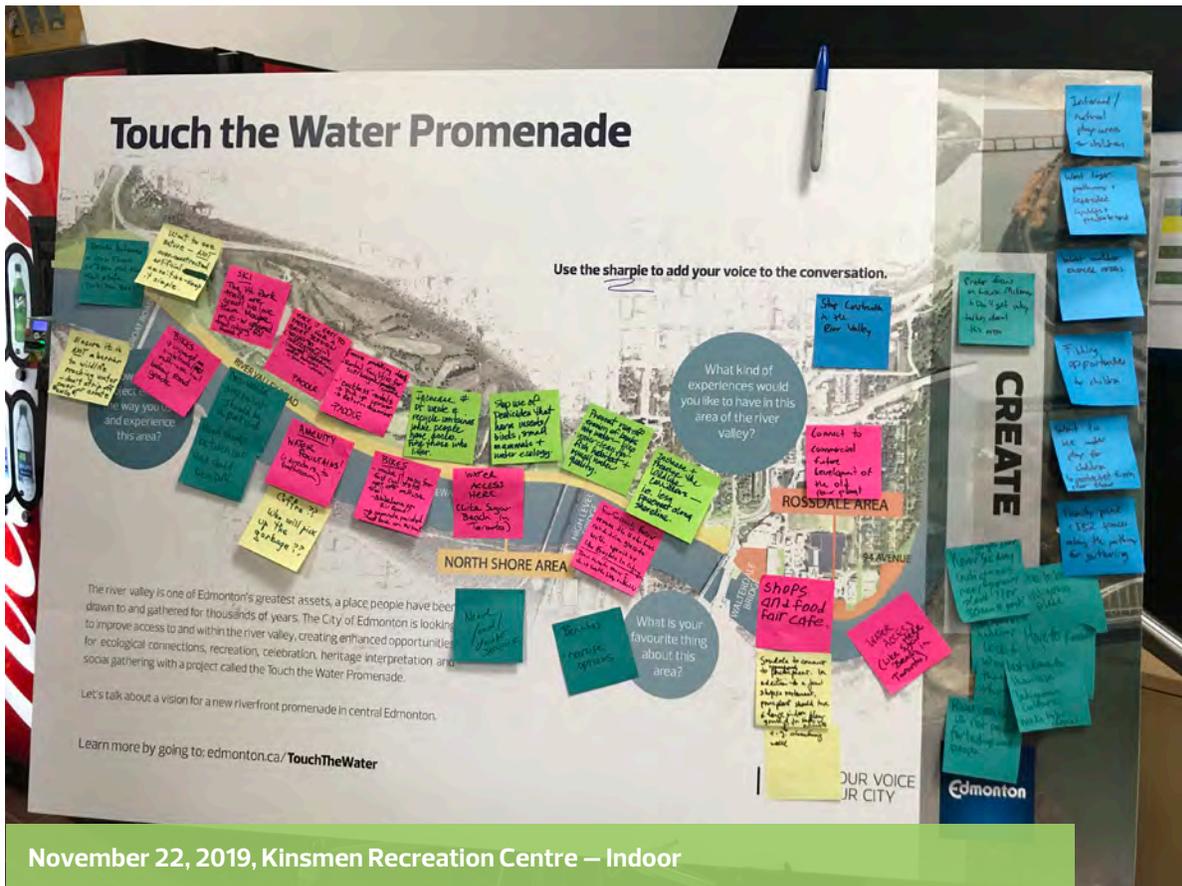
November 15, 2019, Commonwealth Recreation Centre – Indoor

Kinsmen Recreation Centre

- + Keep it green
- + Improve lighting and have clear sight lines
- + Concern about erosion and sediment impacting water quality
- + Coffee shops and eateries overlooking the river*
- + Midway style pier
- + Separate the cyclists and runners, and improving the barrier between the road and the path*
- + Hand boat launches, and areas for stretching and informal gathering*

🗨️ Long term, move river valley road to the back, closer to the hill. You get a better park and people edge. 🗨️

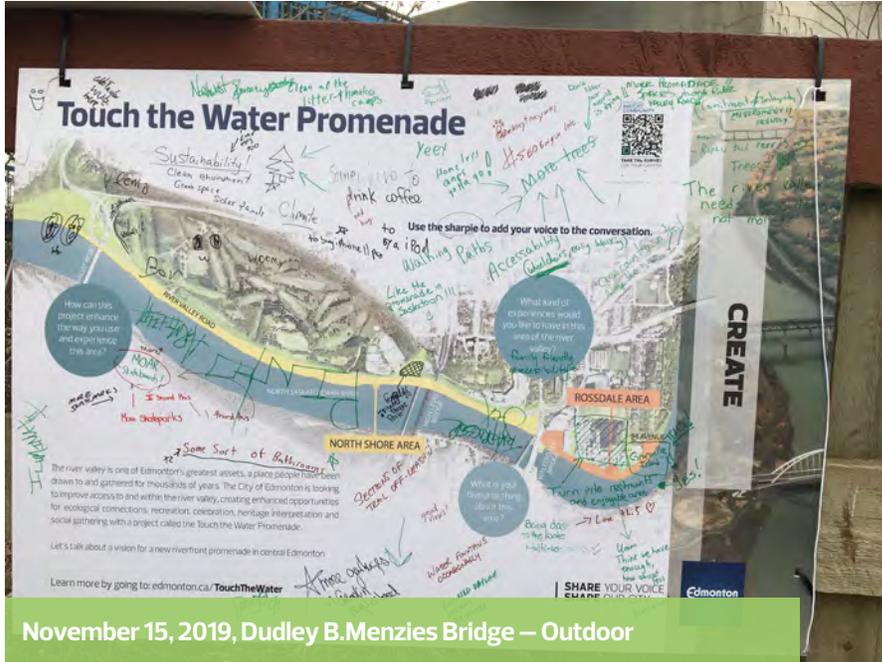
* Comment expressed by multiple participants



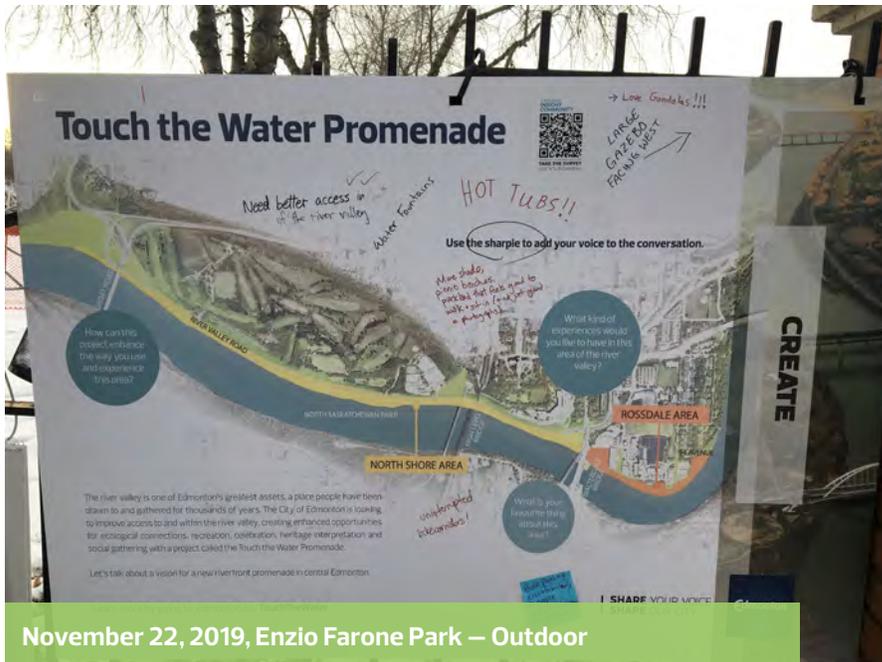
November 22, 2019, Kinsmen Recreation Centre – Indoor

Enzio Farone Park and Dudley B. Menzies Bridge

- + Skate park
- + Hot tub
- + Fenced off doggie park in the gravel parking lot beside the Royal Glenora Club
- + Sections of the trail for off leash



November 15, 2019, Dudley B. Menzies Bridge – Outdoor



November 22, 2019, Enzio Farone Park – Outdoor

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The project team met with the following stakeholders to share project information and answer questions.

- + Alberta Infrastructure
- + EPCOR
- + River Valley Alliance
- + Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee
- + Rosssdale Community League

There is strong support for improved lighting along the promenade, such as the lighting for esthetic and safety reasons. Improving access to the project site was a common item of discussion, as were the project process and timelines. Interest in sculptures, wayfinding signage, commemorative trees and benches were raised by the Rosssdale Community League.

ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

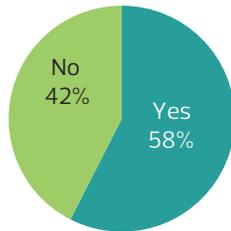
The online survey generated feedback from people across the city including many who do not go to the project area, which provided a different perspective. The online survey was completed by 3,224 people, and validated much of what we heard through in person engagement and on the graffiti boards. The survey revealed that nearly half of respondents had not visited the central river valley in the last year. Those who indicated they had not visited the area said they had no reason to visit, access is inconvenient, or they go to the natural areas within their home neighbourhood.

The survey demonstrated that people who use the area do so for exercise, recreation, and relaxation. When asked about what they would like to do in this area in the future, the response was status quo, but include options for eateries, more public washrooms, and improve access to the water. Through the survey we learned that half of users access the site by bicycle or on foot, and the other half drove. When asked what limits people from using the area people mentioned safety, poor access, and a lack of amenities and services.

The following summarizes the results of the survey. For open ended questions, direct representative quotes were provided.

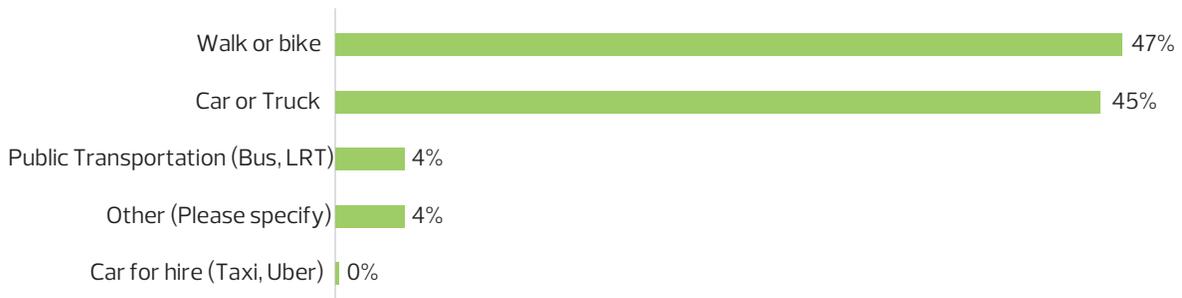
Detailed Online Survey Results

1. Have you visited this area in the last 12 months?



3,224 respondents

2. What mode of transportation do you currently use to get to this area?



1,854 respondents

3. What do you like most about this area?

3,000 respondents

Some sample comments include:

The views of nature and feeling like I can "escape" from the city for a bit

It is a beautiful public space. It is a lovely place for a stroll or a bike ride.

Proximity to downtown, connectivity to other trail systems. Only a 2 lane road, and the constant pedestrian activity is great to see.

Active transportation trails along the river valley edge.

How close it is to the river. Great view.

Our river valley is beautiful and natural.

I don't actually like this area as it's high traffic, which brings noise and pollution, the very things I'm trying to escape by going into the river valley.

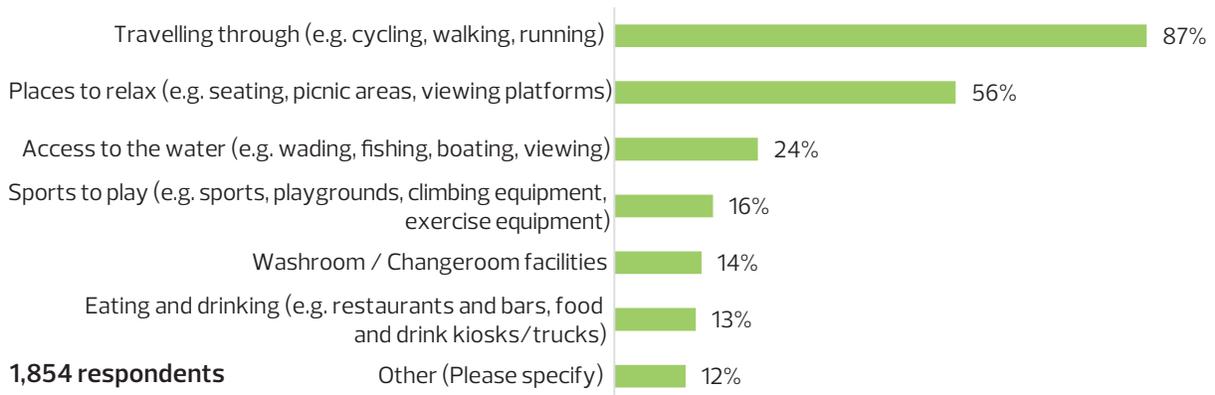
My favourite thing about this area is the scenery from the bridges - watching the sunset or the water freezing in winter or the trees changing colour in the fall. My second favourite aspect of this area is the trails and opportunities for exercise and outdoor activity.

It is a beautiful area but I have no need to go there. Plus I walk with a cane and therefore can't handle the upward/downward climb.

That it's unspoiled and undeveloped.

The actual river itself, and I look forward to a mature development plan which will turn it into a true asset.

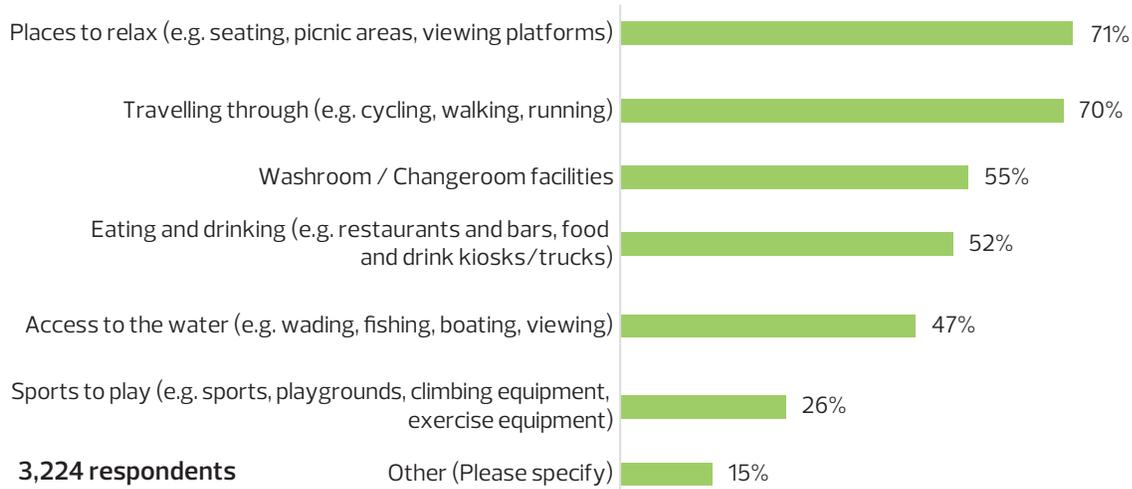
4. What do you currently do / use in this area of the river valley?



Examples from the 'Other' category include:

- + Recreation such as dog walking, metal detecting, wildlife viewing, photography
- + Festivals and events such as sporting events, art installations, annual British vehicle show in Victoria Park
- + Employment takes them to or through the project area

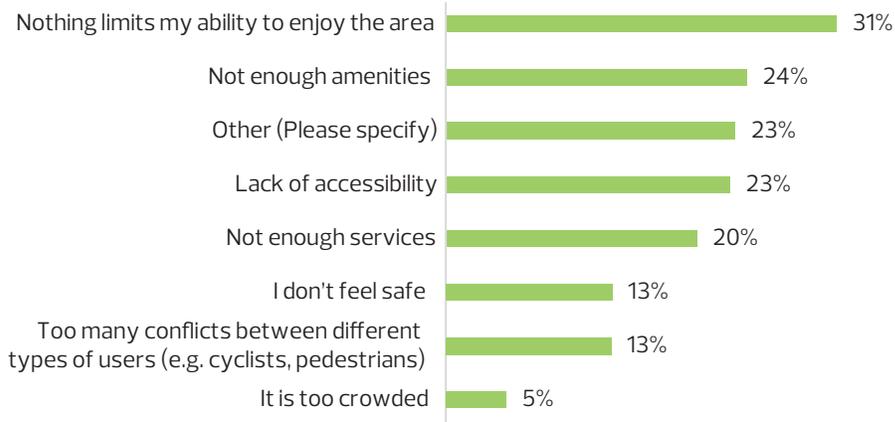
5. What would you like to do/ use in this area of the river valley in the future?



Examples from the 'Other' category include:

- + Recreation such as temporary motorsports road course, off leash dog park
- + Improved access including water taxi and more transit options
- + Water fountains

6. Is there anything that limits your ability to enjoy the area?



3,224 respondents

Many of the comments in the Other category reiterated access, services, safety, and crowding. Some examples include:

- + It is out of the way, and I have no reason to go there.
- + It is really not all that appealing.
- + Lack of viable transit option
- + Lack of washrooms and water fountains
- + Limited parking.
- + More washroom facilities would be helpful. I don't want to see it become too commercial but on the other hand it might be nice to have small places where you could enjoy the view and enjoy something to eat and drink.
- + Nothing to do down there. If there was programming, I would go down to see a play, watch a concert, and then hang out in the area for dinner or lunch, or a walk.
- + The trails for walking and biking are really nice, but it would be nice to have more spots to stop and have some water and enjoy the area. Some areas where people can take photos, sketch or just enjoy the scenery would be nice. No bars please!
- + We have an immense river valley and thanks to the extensive pathway system we have access to many parts of the river valley. This particular area doesn't have any more or less of a draw than many of the other river valley areas.

7. What types of activities and/or experiences would encourage you to visit this area?

3,000 respondents

Access to river- wide paths, seating and restrooms, keep the natural components. Limited commercial space. Keep it pristine.

I think opening the Rossdale area to more development would encourage traffic. Cafes, breweries, markets, a promenade, etc.... Give people a reason to visit. I can't think of much better than sharing a beer on a patio looking out onto the river.

Keep the natural space and don't overdevelop it.

If there was parking for boats or paddle boards. Also restaurant/pub type amenities.

I would like to see "enforced" pedestrian only trails through the pristine river valley - free from the constant speeding bikers.

I already go to this area regularly - don't change it - it's busy enough already.

Washrooms, access to water and picnic areas.

Space and less people.

I do NOT want the area developed with loads of restaurants or bars. There are more than enough within a reasonable distance, and the river valley should be kept as undeveloped as possible.

Putting on events in this area or promotions that encourage people to check out this area. Better wayfinding and acknowledgement of the area would help.

Clear, pleasant waterfront parks with adequate parking

Rest areas, picnic areas, canoe/kayak launch areas. Safety and restrooms and change rooms, to encourage family use.

I would like to see some amenities such as a cafe, or a brewery, restaurant, etc. Something to make it a bit more of a destination.

8. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us about this area of the river valley?

3,000 respondents

This area is already extremely developed, so I don't put stock in people complaining about putting businesses down there. I know the Rossdale area is significant to Indigenous people, so I hope any development in that area would be done in partnership with those communities.

Thinking of winter months connecting trails throughout the river valley for x-country skiing.

At this point there are too many roads down there, too much pavement, too little wildlife corridor, too little thinking about enabling the pedestrian and the biker to connect with nature.

This is a beautiful area with a lot of potential, I would love a way to access it more easily by bike as well as opportunity to encourage boating, and other programming.

The river valley needs a skatepark. Closest one is Capilano, but there is no parking. There is no other skate park within biking or skating distance

If you do nothing else, make it safer. Add lighting, emergency phones, etc. And consider adding more garbage receptacles too.

It should be a place to live and to visit, not just a jumble of roads for cars to travel through.

I'd like it to remain as natural as possible. It is the closest area to downtown and Oliver for enjoying the river. That natural space is important.

DO SOMETHING WITH THE POWERPLANT!!! Stop wasting this amazing opportunity. The building has been shuttered for years and just sits there. That is decades of wasted opportunity where we could have had a destination that drew people both near and far to this amazing area.

I walk the dog there occasionally and have been aware of the number of homeless camping areas along that specific stretch in the river valley that has put me off doing too much as I go by myself and the dog.

It's a tricky situation where a balance needs to be struck between maintaining the natural environment, but also developing the area to attract people.



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Vancouver, is shown with a semi-transparent green overlay. The image captures a mix of urban buildings, green spaces, and a river valley. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

As A Result, What Has Changed In The Project

The input received over the course of engagement will be used by the project team to create a vision and design principles, that will guide the development of the project as it progresses. Now that we are aware of residents' perspectives on the river valley, values, current uses, and preferences for desired uses for the project area, the project team is able to work towards concept options that reflect the future possibilities for the Touch the Water Promenade.

The development of concept options will also consider feedback received from regional Indigenous engagement, Council direction, relevant City plans and policies, and results from ongoing technical and environmental studies.

What's Next

The next phase of engagement will be in Spring 2020.

Before the next phase of engagement, we will create a draft vision, design principles, and two concept options for the project.

Each option will explore unique ways for people to connect to, gather in and move through the project area. They will attempt to address shared needs and values, as well as proposing unique design strategies to respond to the range of differing values and viewpoints that we have received from the public and stakeholders. The draft concepts will provide options for use and experiences in the project area, which include the 'look and feel' of the space. Various ways for people to access the water in the project area will be considered. Possible opportunities to restore the local ecology will be presented. Different scales of gathering spaces for events, recreation, or enjoying the central river valley will be considered. The concept options are intended to integrate with other city projects, to help Edmontonians connect with the area and maintain or strengthen their pride of the river valley.

At the next phase of engagement, we will share the draft project vision, design principles, and concept options. We need your help to review and REFINE the concept options, so that a preferred concept can be developed from the options. We will also ask you to let us know if the draft vision and design principles are reflective of the feedback you gave previously. Questions will include: what are the visitor and user needs of the area? Does the look and feel resonate with you? Does the design look comfortable, safe, and respectful to the environment?

Citizens can continue to engage by subscribing to receive updates through the [Project Website](#) and/or through the City of Edmonton [Communications and Engagement Calendar](#).

Thank you for participating in sharing your voice and shaping our city.

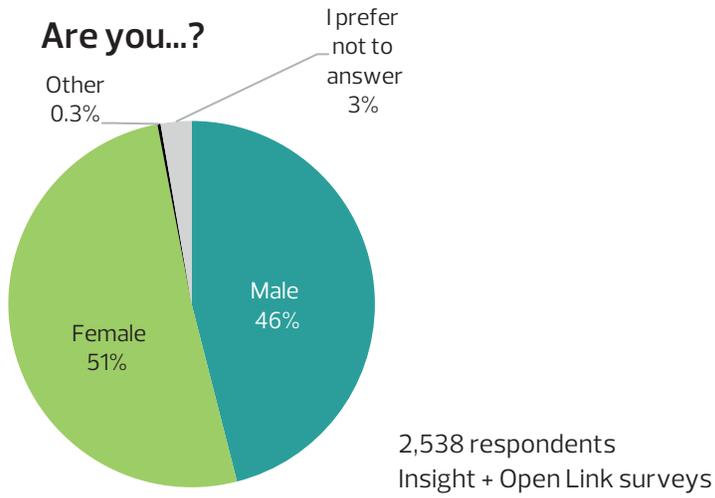
For more information on City of Edmonton public engagement, please visit www.edmonton.ca/publicengagement



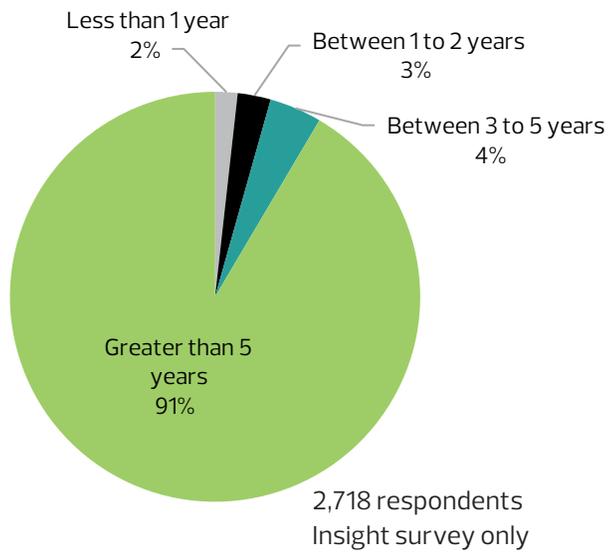


| Appendix A

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

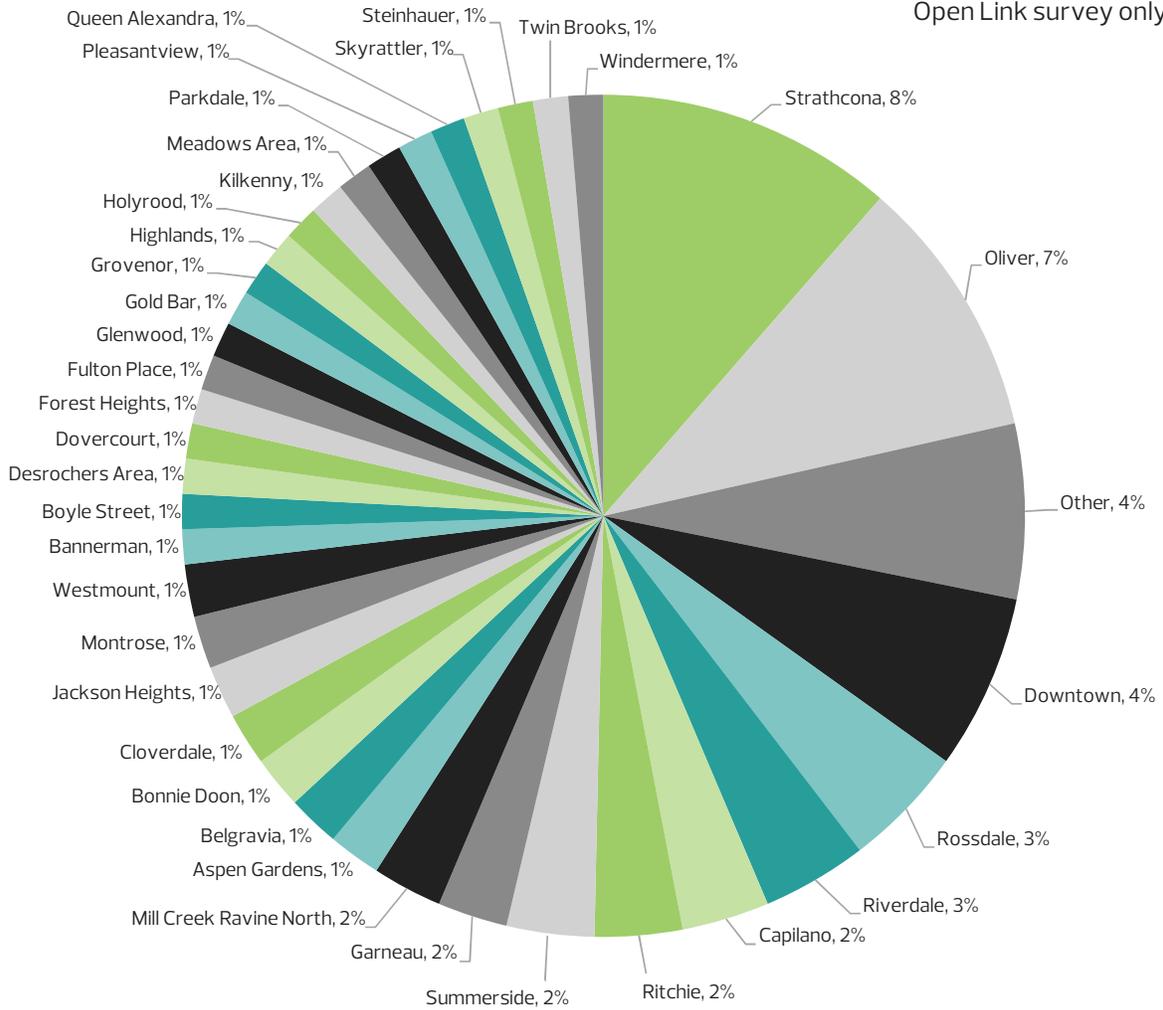


How long have you lived in Edmonton?

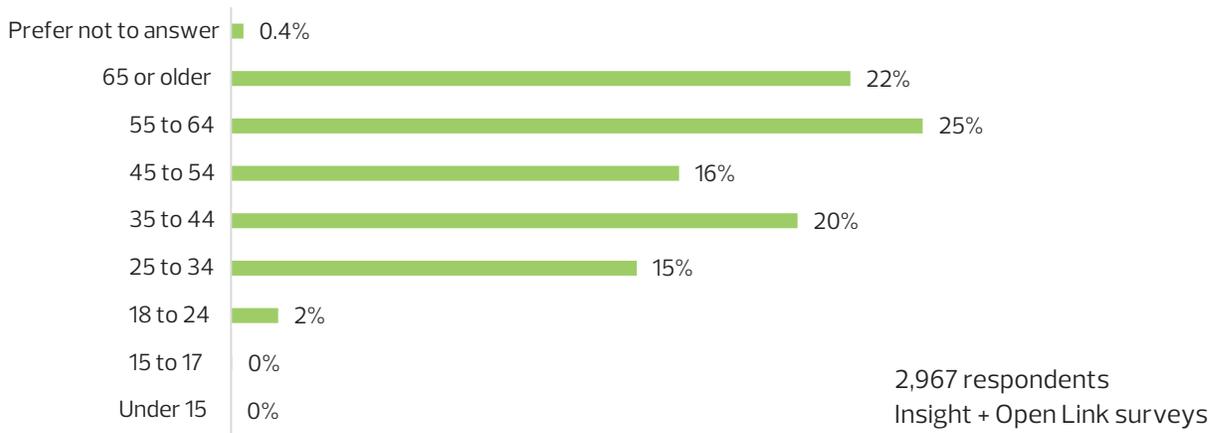


In what Edmonton neighbourhood do you reside

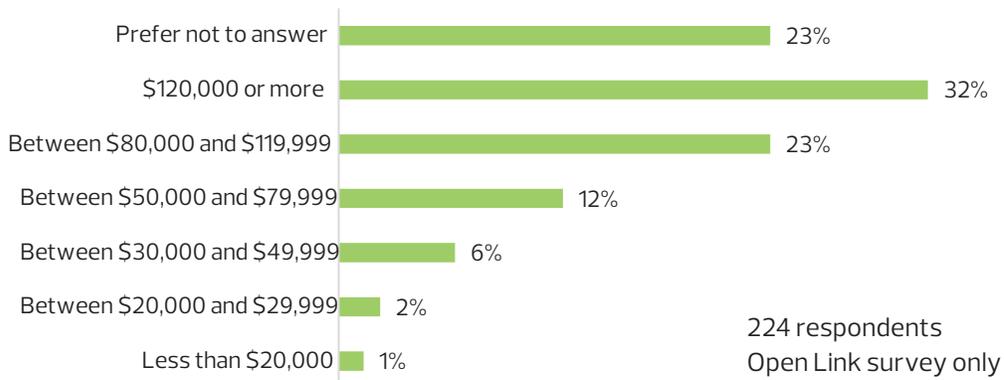
224 respondents
Open Link survey only



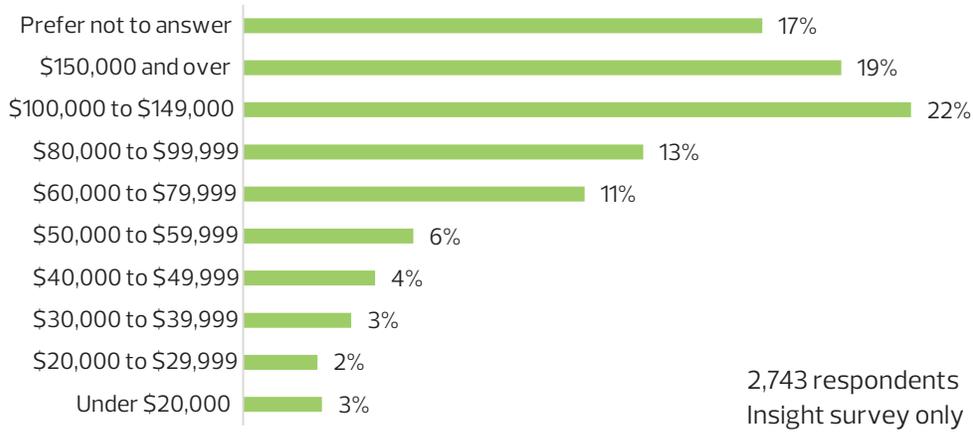
Which of the following age groups are you in?



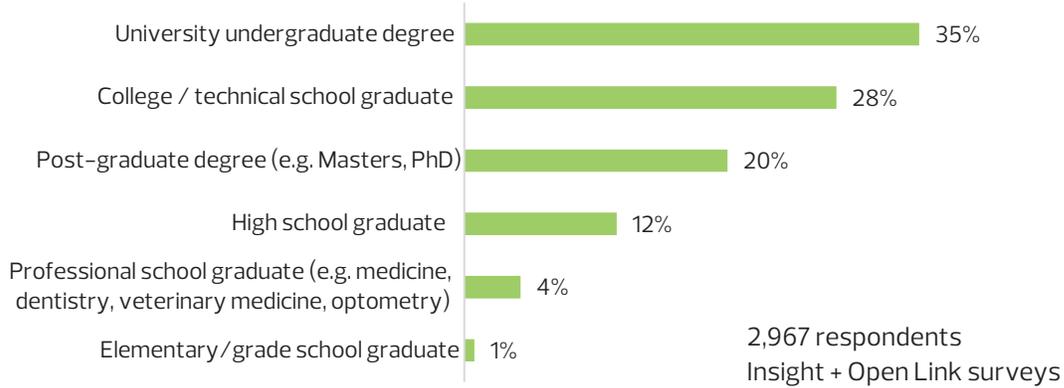
Which of the following categories best describes your total household income in 2018 before taxes?



Which of the following categories best describes your total household income in 2018 before taxes?



What is the highest level of education you have completed?





FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Please visit edmonton.ca/touchthewaterpromenade