

## **Mill Creek Ravine Trestle Bridge And Culvert Replacement**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **Why is the trestle bridge being replaced?**

The bridge was originally constructed in 1902. The Mill Creek Trestle Bridge structure was part of an early rail connection between the towns of Strathcona and Edmonton and remains a valuable part of the Edmonton River Valley trail system. The existing bridge has reached the end of its service life and requires replacement to ensure a safe crossing for all trail users.

#### **Is the trestle bridge safe for use?**

Yes, the trestle bridge is currently safe for pedestrian and cyclist use. The bridge is being monitored to ensure the continued safety of Edmontonians until the replacement begins.

#### **Will any of the historic elements be kept?**

As a Municipally Designated Historic Resource, the replacement trestle bridge will represent the existing structure as closely as possible while adhering to current design and safety standards. The existing bridge plaque will be preserved and installed on the replacement trestle bridge.

#### **Why did the City include a culvert replacement as part of this project?**

The culvert under 76 Avenue is aging and is contributing to erosion and slope stability issues in the surrounding area. After considering the condition of the culvert, budget, timelines, environmental benefits, erosion and flooding risks, the City has decided to replace the existing culvert with a new single-span, concrete girder bridge. The replacement project will also include realignment, daylighting and restoration of Mill Creek.

#### **What options were considered to address the issues with the culvert and how were they evaluated?**

In combination with planning replacement of the Mill Creek trestle bridge, the City, supported by a team of specialty consultants, reviewed four options to replace the aging culvert under 76 Avenue:

1. A new culvert
2. An arch culvert with creek realignment
3. A bridge with creek realignment
4. A combined bridge for both vehicles on 76 Avenue and pedestrians/cyclists (i.e. redirecting users of the trestle bridge to a single bridge at 76 Avenue)

Each option was assessed against multiple criteria, including cost, long-term benefit, risk, environmental impact and construction timelines. **Option 3, a road bridge with a realigned creek, was the best option.** This option improves the overall creek by daylighting a buried section, reduces river valley bank erosion and keeps 76 Avenue open for vehicle traffic after construction is completed. By prioritizing this location, this project provides a vehicle connection (for drivers, transit, deliveries and emergency services), while considering environmental protection and historical preservation, making it the most responsible and sustainable choice.

### **Will the City consider closing 76 Avenue at the Mill Creek ravine to vehicular traffic permanently?**

The City has reviewed this option but does not recommend removing vehicular traffic from this area. 76 Avenue is a key transportation connection and one of a few vehicular crossings over Mill Creek in this area. Closing 76 Avenue would shift traffic to other routes, increasing neighbourhood shortcutting and traffic delays would impact commuters, transit, deliveries and emergency services on nearby routes.

### **Will the new 76 Avenue bridge bring more vehicular traffic to the neighbourhood?**

The design of the new 76 Avenue bridge will maintain 1 lane in each direction (1 eastbound lane and 1 westbound lane), it will not increase the roadway capacity or encourage higher volumes of vehicles to use 76 Avenue instead of other parallel routes.

## **Public Engagement**

### **Was there public engagement before deciding to build the road bridge?**

Engagement with interested parties was conducted during the preliminary design phase of the project. In late 2022, letters were sent to various community groups and interested parties, including community leagues, environmental organizations and active transportation groups to discuss the project. Meetings were arranged with the groups who expressed interest.

In 2024, as design for the project progressed, it was determined that a replacement of the existing culvert under 76 Avenue was needed. Following this decision, the project team extended meeting invites to the parties mentioned above in late 2024. Meetings with the interested parties were held in person and virtually to share new project information. The project team also used this opportunity to gather local knowledge and feedback to inform development of environmental and traffic mitigation strategies.

Interested parties provided their feedback to the City (at the [ADVISE](#) level of the City's [public engagement spectrum](#)), and were generally supportive of the project and the decision to replace the culvert and realign Mill Creek.

### **Was public engagement feedback received through the 76 Avenue Renewal project considered in this decision?**

The 76 Avenue bridge design was coordinated with the future renewal plans for 76 Avenue, for which planning is underway as part of the City's Neighbourhood Renewal Program. While feedback gathered as part of the [76 Avenue Renewal Project](#) has not directly influenced the bridge project, the bridge design accommodates a shared pathway, which can tie into active transportation upgrades that may be provided through the renewal project.

### **Is there a plan to engage residents about the decision to replace the 76 Avenue / Mill Creek Ravine culvert with a bridge?**

The City project team met with representatives from community groups and interested parties in 2022 and 2024. Due to the technical nature of this project as identified above, public engagement with residents is not part of the project process.

### **Why is the road bridge included under the trestle bridge replacement project, which was consulted separately?**

The project began as the replacement of the Mill Creek Trestle Bridge, but through the study of the site, it was determined that the culvert underneath 76 Avenue also needed to be replaced. Due to the proximity of the trestle bridge and the culvert replacement project, the interrelated nature of the work, and overall efficiency and coordination, the construction of both the trestle bridge and the new 76 Avenue bridge will be completed at the same time. Once the City decided to include the culvert replacement as part of the project, information was shared with the previously identified community groups and interested parties and posted on the City's project webpage.

## Environment

### Is Mill Creek realignment or daylighting part of the plan? How will this impact the ecosystem?

Mill Creek will be realigned to follow a more natural path through the area, which includes opening up the creek, known as daylighting, which will restore a section of the creek that has been buried for over 90 years. Allowing for the restoration of the creek's natural flow will also improve water quality, and increase the habitat and movement through the ravine for fish and wildlife. The culvert replacement with a bridge will also reduce the risk of flooding and erosion.

## Budget

### What is the estimated cost of the Mill Creek Trestle Bridge and 76 Avenue Bridge Project?

The budget set for the project, including both bridges and all associated repairs is \$22.8 million. The bridges are designed with a lifecycle of 75 to 100 years and are a long-term investment for the City of Edmonton.

### How does this project affect the City's infrastructure budget?

The Mill Creek Trestle Bridge and 76 Avenue culvert replacement is funded through the City's Bridge Renewal Program and was approved as part of the 2023-2026 Capital Budget.

The City of Edmonton manages an extensive inventory of approximately 350 bridges (pedestrian and vehicle) and other associated structures. These bridges require ongoing inspection, maintenance, renewal and replacement to ensure they maintain their expected level of service. The City's Bridge Renewal Program guides this work to ensure bridges are safe and maintained to avoid unplanned disruptions. The work at Mill Creek, including the trestle bridge and culvert replacement are part of this planned program and are accounted for in the renewal budgeting process.

### Could savings from lower-cost options be reinvested into Mill Creek communities or used to reduce taxes?

Funding for these projects is dedicated to the ongoing planning, design and construction requirements for Edmonton's bridge renewal program. These funds are specifically dedicated to the ongoing capital renewal requirements for these critical structures and can not be redirected toward other uses. Any available funds under this program are directed to other bridge or auxiliary structures identified as renewal priorities.

## Construction

### How long will construction take and will 76 Avenue be fully closed during the project?

Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2025. The project will require the temporary closure of 76 Avenue through Mill Creek. The specific details of the closure, including timing and detour options will be confirmed as the project advances. More information will be shared online and through a planned pre-construction information session in late 2025.

### How will traffic be managed during construction, and will shortcutting increase in nearby neighbourhoods?

Traffic planning is underway to mitigate shortcutting in the areas. Detouring options will be shared with the public closer to construction.

### Are there plans to upgrade nearby intersections to manage traffic changes?

Upgrading nearby intersections is not included in the project scope. Planning and design for the [76 Avenue Renewal Project](#) (between 75 Street and 99 Street) has begun. This will include the rehabilitation of roads, curbs and gutters, repairing sidewalks and, where possible, completing active transportation links. The construction of this work is not set to begin until after the completion of the Mill Creek Trestle Bridge and Culvert Replacement project.

### How will the City ensure residents receive accurate, timely updates about this project?

The project team is committed to ensuring continued communication and information sharing with area residents and stakeholders. The City uses multiple communication methods, including but not limited to, project construction bulletins, emails to community leagues, City neighbourhood resource coordinators, City ward councillors and community groups. Project-specific website updates, pre-construction open houses, road-side signages and social media.