

RIVER VALLEY PLANNING MODERNIZATION

Ribbon of Green & River Valley ARP

Ribbon of Green Strategic Plan: Overview of Changes

May 2025

The following changes have been made to the Ribbon of Green Plan content that was shared with the public in November 2024. Changes reflect input received from stakeholders, as well as updates to City planning tools and river valley planning context since the plan was last shared. More minor revisions that do not change planning or policy intent (e.g. edits for clarity) are not included here.

Plan Introduction

- Added reference to new Public Spaces Bylaw, approved by Council in February 2025
- Minor formatting changes and edits for clarity were made in this section.

Vision and Guiding Principles

- Only minor formatting changes and edits for clarity were made in this section.

System-wide Policies

- 2.1.5 Mitigating Ecological Impacts
 - Moved Policy 2.1.5 b) “Establish reached-based targets for ecosystem protection that take into account existing and planned development, as well as Land Management Classification” to the “Protecting our River Valley and Ravine System” section

Land Management Classifications

- Revised Policy 3.4.4.2 a)
 - COMPATIBLE USES: a) When evaluating uses not explicitly mentioned in the compatible use table, determine whether the use is appropriate within the Preservation: Trail-based Recreation Classification
 - **The use does not place** ecological, archaeological, cultural or historical resources ~~are not placed~~ at increased risk.
 - The use **does** ~~will not~~ close off **connected public access through an area.** ~~portions of the area or limit the availability of trails to the public (e.g. races).~~
 - **The use can be wholly contained within the width of the trail.**
 - ~~The use will not leave anything behind and/or traces beyond footprints (e.g. chalk marks, flags, and litter).~~

- ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION - added bullet: *h) Apply the principles of leave no trace for any uses that require flagging or pin markings, in order to minimize impacts to wildlife.*
- Revised Policy 3.4.6.2
 - ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION - added bullet: *d) Apply the principles of leave no trace for any uses that require flagging or pin markings, in order to minimize impacts to wildlife.*

LMC MAPPING

- **Big Island + Woodbend Reach** - Big Island Amenity Node: Added an Active/Working Landscape node to reflect existing agricultural use and associated farmstead on private lands south of Big Island.
- **Cameron-Oleskiw Reach** - Changed Edmonton Country Club golf course designation to Active/Working Landscapes to align with classification of other golf courses (was previously designated Preservation in error)
- **Edmonton East Reach** - Quarry Amenity Node: Updated LMCs to reflect proposed program for NE River Valley Park, including areas for restoration and programming.

Program and Ecological Guidance

- Added definitions for “transformative projects” and “lost spaces” in the introduction section.

Updates were made to the planning direction in the following reaches:

- **Big Island + Woodbend Reach**
 - Given the planning process currently being undertaken by the Province for Big Island Provincial Park, the proposed road, parking area and washroom that were previously included at the south end of the park have been removed; the Ribbon of Green will be updated to reflect planning guidance for the provincial park upon completion of that planning process.
 - Added reference to the Edmonton and Area Land Trust’s forthcoming conservation easement for the Kanata lands, which were purchased by the City in 2025.
- **Cameron-Oleskiw Reach** - added reference to Jan Reimer (Oleskiw) River Valley Park Master Plan for more detailed planning guidance
- **North Saskatchewan West Reach**
 - Added reference to Buena Vista / Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park Master Plan for more detailed planning guidance
 - Revised Recreation, bullet 1: *Due to steep river valley slopes in this reach, the trail network crosses the river in some locations. ~~paralleling the north and south bank of the North Saskatchewan River is not continuous (e.g. there is no trail west of Ramsay Heights). In a few locations trail users must re-route to the other side of the river. Ensure pedestrian bridges across the river are well signed and easily accessible to facilitate navigation of trails through the reach. so that trail users, unfamiliar with specific crossings, can easily navigate their route.~~*

- Revised Recreation, bullet 3: *Formalize a non-paved narrow width (natural surface) trail network. Identify low-impact connections that support recreation and identify areas where existing trails might need to be re-routed, or closed and naturalized.*
~~improved/enhanced or reduced/eliminated~~
- Revised Recreation, bullet 4: *Heavy use of an area by dogs can have unintended negative impacts on the surrounding environment (e.g., trampling of vegetation or disturbance of wildlife soil loss, vegetation disturbance). Adaptive management techniques should be used to strategically identify Identify, implement, and monitor carefully considered restoration activities in off-leash areas (e.g. Terwillegar Park, Buena Vista Park). Sweeping restoration measures that involve limiting access to large off-leash areas is are not advised.*
- Buena Vista Park Amenity Node
 - Ecological Opportunities: *Control and manage legislated weeds and non-native invasive plant species, including extensive stands of caragana, through removal and restoration.*
- **North Saskatchewan Central Reach**
 - Added reference to Touch the Water and North Shore Promenades Concept Design Report, River Crossing Business Plan, River Crossing Heritage Interpretive Plan, Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan, Gallagher Park Master Plan and Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan for more detailed planning guidance
 - Kinsmen Park Amenity Node - Revised Program Opportunities, bullet 6: *A space just south of the LRT access road and west of the football field has been used for Indigenous ceremonies over the past couple of in recent years. Work with Indigenous communities to further explore and support this use.*
 - River Crossing Amenity Node
 - Revised Ecological Opportunities, bullet 2: ~~Support plantings of traditional use plant species based on Traditional Knowledge concepts in Consultation with Indigenous groups due to high cultural importance of the area.~~ *Given the cultural significance of this area to Indigenous Peoples, collaborate with them to explore opportunities to include medicine plants.*
 - Changed all instances of “River Crossing Interpretive Park” to “River Crossing Park” to reflect the current name of the park.
 - Constable Ezio Faraone Park Amenity Node
 - Revised Ecological Opportunities, bullet 2: ~~Numerous user-generated~~ *Several informal* trails are present along the steep slopes below Constable Ezio Faraone Park, ~~The bike routes~~ *and frequent use of these trails is resulting in some degradation and erosion.* ~~have degraded the slope and exacerbated erosion.~~ *Future planning should establish an appropriate trail network that meets the demand for different uses in this area, while protecting and restoring ecologically-sensitive areas.* ~~Following development of a suitable bike route, restoration of unimproved trails should be explored.~~

- Revised Circulation, bullet 1: A formal, safe, accessible [trail connection](#) ~~bike route~~ down the slope is needed to [link](#) ~~connect~~ Ezio Faraone Park with the valley bottom.
- **Edmonton East Reach**
 - Added reference to Northeast River Valley Park Strategic Plan for more detailed planning guidance
 - Updated program and ecological guidance maps to reflect direction in the Northeast River Valley Park Strategic Plan, including existing parking, boat dock / hand launch and pedestrian bridges and proposed restoration areas
 - Removed “mountain bike skills park” as proposed direction for the amenity node; while it is acknowledged that there is high demand for such opportunities, more detailed consideration for such a site is needed than can be provided at this strategic level
- **Whitemud Ravine North Reach** - Revised Recreation, bullet 6: *“Formalize [a bike connection from the ravine](#) to Grandview [Heights](#), parallel to Fox Drive NW. To support ecological protection, [wildlife observation, and a quieter nature experience](#) ~~priority~~ within Whitemud Nature Reserve, continue to restrict bike use and unsanctioned construction of trails within the ravine.”*

Implementation

- Revised PRIORITIZATION OF SITE-SPECIFIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT EXERCISES, bullet 4: *Monitoring indicators ~~(identified through Section 5.2 A), including~~ - e.g.,*
 - + *The proliferation of unauthorized user-generated trails*
 - + *Safety, including user conflicts*
 - + *Poor or very poor infrastructure condition rating*
 - + *Impact to the functioning or protection of sensitive ecological, historical, or cultural sites*