

The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in a white, sans-serif font on a dark blue rectangular background.A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a river flowing through a lush green park area. In the background, a city skyline with various high-rise buildings is visible under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The foreground is dominated by dense green trees and bushes.

DAWSON PARK AND KINNAIRD RAVINE MASTER PLAN

What We Heard Report
Phase 3: Concept Options
August 2017

Project Overview

The Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine 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 part of the region's green space network, Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine are essential outdoor places for Edmontonians to relax, learn, explore and reconnect to the North Saskatchewan River Valley.

Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine are established River Valley parks within the North Saskatchewan River Valley, adjacent to Edmonton's downtown core. The area offers visitors the chance to run, hike, walk their dogs and cycle through the ravine landscape — an escape from the city for urban dwellers. The park provides opportunities to meet with friends, family and neighbours and access to the river for boating, fishing and relaxation.

No comprehensive planning process for the project area has been conducted since the 1970s, when the Capital City Recreation Park Concept (CCRPC) Plan was implemented. As part of the CCRPC Plan, Dawson Park was identified as a rest area that offered a 45-stall parking lot, hiking and biking trails, rest areas with rest rooms, benches, telephones and conserved natural areas.

In addition to planned infrastructure, Dawson Park currently provides visitors with an off-leash area between Dawson Bridge and Capilano Bridge, picnic tables, and granular trails for people who are visually impaired. The project area occupies approximately 76 hectares and contains over 10 kilometres of trails, with a continuous 2.4 km stretch of trails starting at the parking lot in the south to Wayne Gretzky Drive NW to the east. As part of the 10-Year Capital Investment Agenda, The River Valley Park Renewal program has identified Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan as a key project that will direct

investment for the park. The City of Edmonton has started this Master Plan process for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine to build on and update the planning work that was completed almost 40 years ago.

Through community consultation that reaches a broad audience using a variety of engagement tools and techniques, the City will develop a vision for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine and establish the guiding principles that will form the basis of the Master Plan. Public input is a critical component in shaping the plan and the vision for the park.

This report summarizes What We Heard from the second phase of public engagement for the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan, and outlines the following:

- » The Master Plan process,
- » The phases of public engagement
- » Our understanding of the environmental sensitivities within the park,
- » Common values and themes from all inputs, and
- » Feedback that was received during the second phase of engagement: Vision, Principles & Identity.

Dawson Park & Kinnaird Ravine Neighbourhood Context



The Master Plan Process

Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine offer an escape into nature that people love and enjoy. The park is a natural gem in Edmonton in part because of forward-looking policy, planning and community involvement. This type of planning can be traced all the way back to the recommendations of Frederick G. Todd in 1907. With the incredible growth and changing demographics that will occur around the park in the coming years, there is a need to look ahead to create a vision that protects the park while reflecting the needs of citizens and what they would like to see in the future.

The River Valley Park Renewal Program identifies a long-term strategic approach to renew parks located in the River Valley. The program is initiated by key drivers such as city policies, changing demographics, demand, recreational needs and aging infrastructure. Park renewal within the River Valley is based on an analysis of the physical condition and functionality of park elements as well as the ability to meet existing (and future) capacity. Parks with safety concerns, decreased usability and aging infrastructure are considered 'higher needs' parks. Without renewal, existing park infrastructure that is close to the end of its useful life will continue to deteriorate, decreasing park functionality, usability, safety and cost-effectiveness.

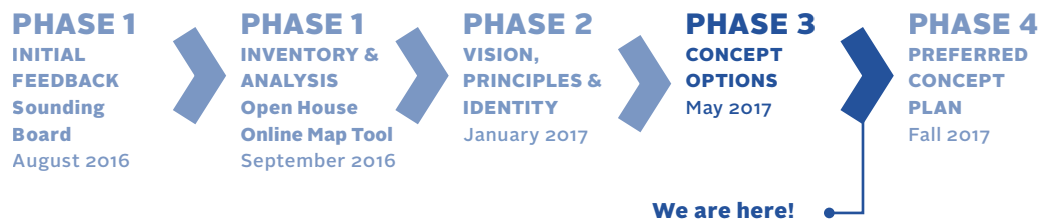
The Master Plan for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine will establish a vision and management plan for the next 25 years, and build upon existing plans, policies and initiatives while identifying public needs and priorities. It will provide direction for environmental management, as well as recommendations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

The Master Plan is currently in the CONCEPT Phase of the Park and Facility Development Process. 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 plan 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 time line



Engagement Plan

An engagement strategy using multiple consultation techniques will facilitate the ability for the public to provide input into the development of the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan. Four phases of public engagement will help 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 Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine 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 participate in four phases of engagement to help develop the Master Plan for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. 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/dawsonparkmasterplan.

Phase 1: Project Introduction, Inventory & Analysis

August – September 2016

In Phase 1, the City received feedback on the existing conditions of the park. We wanted to know what people like about the park, why it is important to the public, and what they want to see in the future. Information that was presented included: the project scope and boundaries, key existing features, systems and functions of the park, and the relationship of the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan with parallel projects such as BREATHE: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy.

The public and stakeholder input that was captured identifies key dreams, desires, issues and themes that will inform the development of a vision, identity and program for the park. We will use this input to develop a vision statement and one or more concept options based on initial feedback and comments in Phase 3.

Phase 2: Vision, Principles & Identity

January 2017

In Phase 2, the City asked the public to help improve their understanding of the opportunities and constraints in the park to help inform the vision. In addition, the themes and concerns that emerged from Phase 1 were available to the public in a What We Heard Report and helped us choose which park elements would be included in the Phase 2 engagement activities.

The public and stakeholders provided input on the material presented, prioritizing words and phrases for the vision statement and choosing park elements that could become part of the concept options.

We are here

Phase 3: Concept Options

Spring 2017

In Phase 3, the City sought public feedback on two concept options for the park. The themes, needs and direction that emerged through background research and previous consultation created the foundation for these concept options. Two distinct sets of visions statements with corresponding concept visions and details on features and park elements were presented for feedback. The public and stakeholders were asked to provide feedback on the options.

Feedback will be used to develop one cohesive, comprehensive vision statement along with a preferred concept which will be presented in the Fall in Phase 4.

Phase 4: Preferred Concept Plan

Fall 2017

In Phase 4, the City will present a refined concept plan 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 plan to help fine-tune the program and plan. This will support the development of a preferred concept that responds to the needs of the community and park users.

Feedback from all phases will support a proposal to City Council for the approval of the Master Plan. The public will also be provided with information about next steps and how they can stay involved.

Public Involvement in the Master Plan Process

The City of Edmonton prioritizes public engagement as part of the Master Plan process. It is integral to decision-making.

Discover

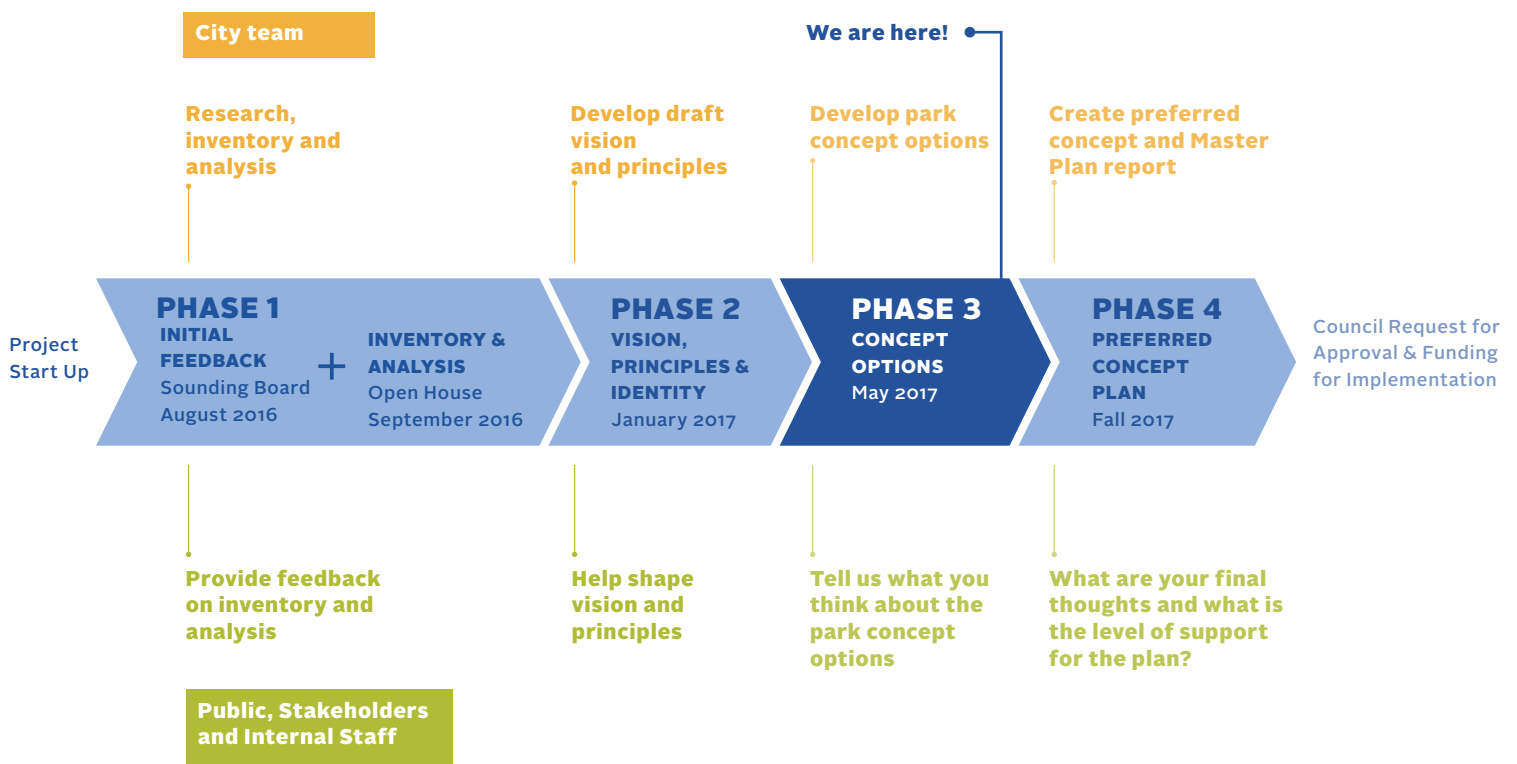
As part of the 10-Year Capital Investment Agenda, The River Valley Park Renewal Program has identified Dawson Park & Kinnaird Ravine for Master Plan development to direct investment for the park.

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.



397

citizens engaged in this phase

City-wide engagement

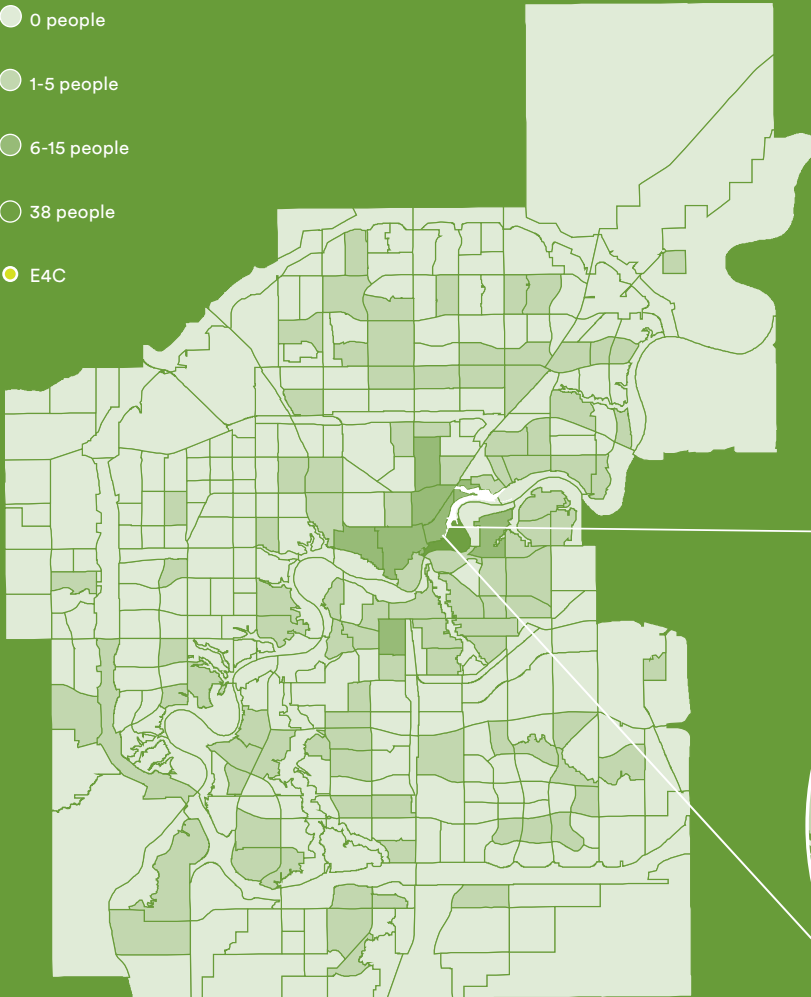
0 people

1-5 people

6-15 people

38 people

E4C



public open house

75 attendees

stakeholder workshop

11 attendees

online survey and mapping tool

303 participants

City staff open house

8 attendees



What We Did

Phase 3 – Concept Options

In May and June, two draft concept options for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine were presented to Edmontonians through a public open house, an online survey, workshops and focused citizen engagement opportunities. Nearly 400 people participated in the phase 3 engagement in person and online.

In this phase, two vision statements with associated concept options for the park were presented for public feedback. To facilitate the collection of balanced, comprehensive feedback, the public was invited to participate in person at a drop-in open house, and provided an online option that could be completed at their convenience. Internal and external stakeholders were also invited to attend workshop sessions to encourage integrated feedback and problem-solving across user groups, consider integration with city-wide initiatives, and provide an opportunity for focused discussions. The engagement process was designed to ensure that perspectives with potentially diverging insights were heard and engaged.

What were the engagement opportunities?

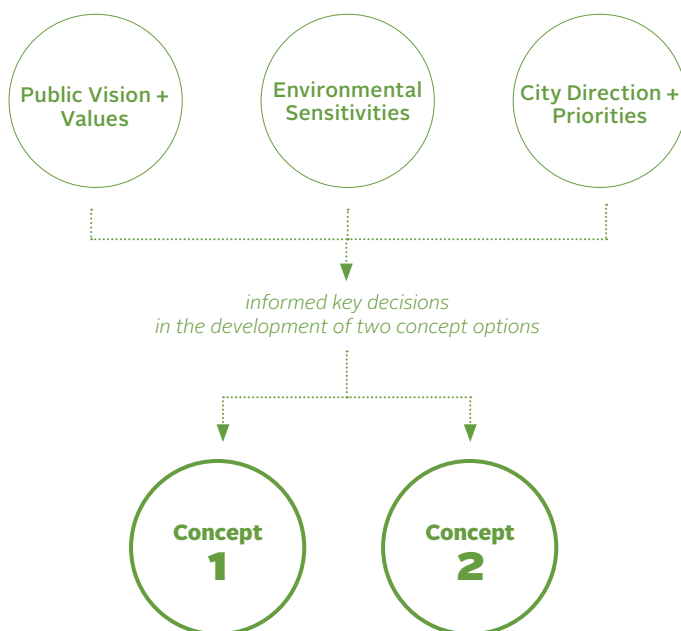
Four opportunities for participation were available to stakeholders and citizens during this phase:

Public Open House

May 30, 2017 | E4C, Alex Taylor School Gymnasium, 5-8pm
75 Attendees

An open house was held where participants were presented with information about the project process and the two concept options through a handout and panels in the room. Four engagement stations were set up to encourage discussion and feedback, with facilitators at each station. After signing in, participants received a handout which provided an overview of the two concepts as viewed through the lens of each theme. The handout also provided information about next steps and directed visitors to the website. A series of highly-visual information panels offered further background details about the project. Engagement stations provided participants with the opportunity to review the visions through language, conceptual images, and a comprehensive set of plans and sections that explored both the big ideas and theme-based initiatives of each concept option.

Over 80% of the attendees came from adjacent neighbourhoods; the remainder of attendees came from across the city. Feedback from the survey reported an appreciation for the level of detail and highly-knowledgeable, friendly staff.



Online Survey + Mapping Tool

June 2 to June 15, 2017 | 303 survey respondents

To provide an opportunity for citizens to provide feedback at their convenience, a version of the information and activities was available online for two weeks. The survey was advertised through the City's social media, outreach materials (such as mailed flyers), and at in-person events. In addition to being available on the project website edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan, the survey was also distributed through Edmonton's Insight Community.

As part of this survey, an online map tool was developed to capture spatial feedback from participants. The interface allowed the public to provide detailed comments about areas of the park they loved or would like to see improved.

External Stakeholder Workshop

May 31, 2017 | E4C, Alex Taylor School Gymnasium, 5:30 – 7:30pm
11 Participants

External stakeholders were invited to attend a two-hour session about the park concept options. Stakeholders were provided with an in-depth walk-through of the panels and invited to ask questions and comment throughout. Stakeholders were encouraged to share ideas as a group, and also provide individual feedback using stations set up around the room or through written comment. The majority of the time was spent discussing what the group thought about the concept options.

Represented organizations:

- » Sierra Club Canada Foundation (Edmonton Group)
- » Edmonton Area Land Trust, North Saskatchewan River Valley Conservation Society
- » RiverWatch
- » Cromdale Community League
- » Edmonton Dragon Boat Racing Club
- » Dogs Off Leash Ambassador & Riverdale Community League
- » Friends of Kinnaird Ravine
- » Protect Edmonton's Parks

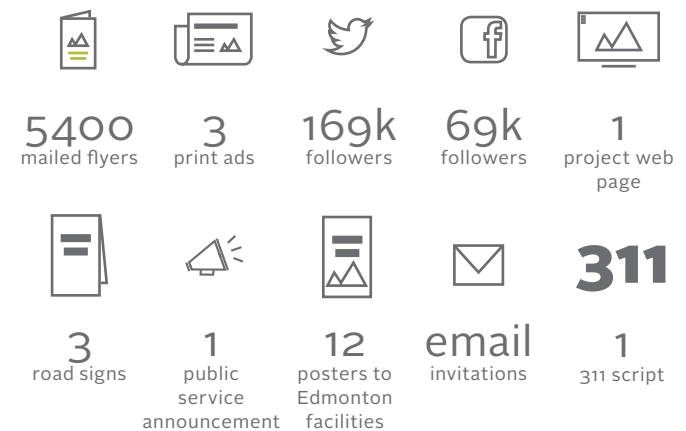
Internal Stakeholder Open House

A two-hour drop-in session for City staff to learn about the concept options was available over lunch. City staff perused the panels and provided feedback.

Represented departments and project teams include:

- » Ribbon of Green project team
- » Citizen Services
- » City Operations
- » Sustainable Development

How were engagements advertised?



What background information was provided?

To facilitate a wholistic conversation about the two concept options being presented and to obtain the most informed feedback that would be grounded in a strong understanding of the context, citizens were provided with information about past work:

- » Project background, work completed to-date, and engagement feedback from the past two phases
- » Summary of environmental sensitivities analysis
- » Two vision statement options, along with a park concept option responding to each statement
- » Two concept options, presented as a response to the five themes that emerged as priorities from past engagements

The Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan Interim Report was produced in conjunction with the Phase 3 engagement to summarize the concept development process and to provide a comprehensive description of both concept options. In this report, the City summarizes how an understanding of environmental sensitivities in the park influenced the development of the concept options and directed the placement of elements and intensity of activities suggested. The report also provides a rationale as to the integration of City policy, environmental sensitivities and public input into the development of the two park visions and concept plans. The Interim Report and other project information is available at edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan.

What questions were asked?

Four main questions were presented to encourage and direct feedback:



What do you think about the vision statements?

To develop a refined vision statement, participants were presented with two vision statements, along with a summary of the strategic decisions in the concept options that align with the ideas in the statements, and experience narratives with easy-to-understand conceptual renderings.

Feedback from this question will refine the vision into one cohesive direction that guides planning for the park over the next 25 years.



What do you think about the concept options?

To obtain feedback on the two options, strategic decisions for each concept were highlighted, and details of each concept were presented through the lens of the five themes (connectivity and circulation, park use and amenities, nature and ecology, safety and maintenance, and winter use).

Spatial feedback and comments will be used to inform the development of the preferred concept plan.



What park elements do you prefer?

To understand what people thought about the features in the concept options, participants were asked to compare the differences between the two options presented and select their preferred option. Visualizations of each pair of elements were provided to help articulate the concepts; examples include park entrances, river access, trail locations, and daylighting strategies.

Feedback will inform specific features that will be proposed as part of the final concept of the Master Plan.



Compare the two concept options.

The five themes that emerged from engagement in Phase 1 highlight Edmontonians' priorities for Dawson Park. Participants were asked to vote for which concept responded better to each theme by placing dots on their preferred concept and commenting on their selection.

Tallying the dots received for each concept captured general trends and preferences for Concept 1 and 2. These preferences and comments will be used to refine the preferred concept.

How did we analyze the feedback?

A rigorous process was used to analyze the engagement feedback. Comments from all sources were transcribed into a spreadsheet. Spatial comments were entered into one map, and all geo-tagged comments were analyzed together. Once all of the feedback was consolidated, they were tagged for ideas, recommendations, and themes; this resulted in parents themes which are the high-level summaries provided in this report.

What We Heard

Concept 1 is generally preferred for its ecological and environmentally sensitive approach, but the majority would like to see ideas from Concept 2 integrated into the preferred concept.

Generally, feedback received for both concept options was very positive. The majority preferred the ecological and environmental protective aspects of Concept 1, but Concept 2 also received strong support for its placemaking proposals and vision of supporting our growing population. Concept 1's river access points, viewpoints, Latta Bridge entrance, smaller park entrance feature, native vegetation and restoration were the most popular features. Those who chose neither option said they did so because they thought cost would be prohibitive.

Moving forward, the overall recommendation from the public is to create a preferred concept plan using Concept 1 as a foundation, while integrating selected elements from Concept 2 that were more popular or preferred. For features that demonstrate a clearly divided opinion, a third alternative could be developed to address needs and concerns that were expressed through consultation. All feedback received will be considered alongside city policies, environmental sensitivities and technical expertise to make informed decisions.

For Phase 3, here is a summary of common themes heard across all engagement activities:

Vision and experience

Most leaned toward Vision 1's focus on ecology and environmental protection, but the wording of the final vision statement could be better refined.

High level of concern regarding safety around washrooms and amenity building.

Keep it natural

Love the more "authentic" restored meadow experience and increased biodiversity effects in Concept 1.

Where new trails are necessary, consider only natural surface materials.

Keep the area natural, not too much clearing or programming.

Access to the park

Main park entry design shown in Concept 1 is lower impact but Concept 2 was more popular and practical when considering park use for a growing population.

Both Jasper Avenue entries at Latta Bridge were well received, but the trail in concept 2 seems safer in the winter and easier for cyclists and those with strollers.

Most liked Concept 2's suspension bridge as a feature for the park. However, there were perceived drawbacks to its cost and negative environmental impact, specifically bank erosion, which will be investigated further in the next phase.

There is a perceived concern regarding increased parking and traffic in the neighbourhood, which will need to be considered further.

Maintenance

Low cost, low maintenance initiatives are a priority.

Work with other City departments to determine best practices for site management.

Focus on fire protection and vegetation management.

Clear brush and metal debris.

Park use and programming

Off-leash use demonstrated split opinions. Many want the off-leash area to remain as is or extend it to Capilano Bridge. Almost as many people would like these areas removed altogether to increase pedestrian safety and ecological value.

Both concepts where Rat Creek touches the North Saskatchewan River were liked; both the naturalized restoration in Concept 1 and the placemaking and educational potential presented in Concept 2 were seen as positive.

Concept 1's more natural aesthetic for boat launches, river access points and viewpoints was preferred for its light footprint. However, participants valued Concept 2's opportunities for enhanced accessibility for the mobility impaired.

Integrate with other city-wide programs and initiatives and look into opportunities to support programs such as nature play and indigenous heritage.

Investigate strategies to address homeless encampments.

Considerations about pathway design

Limit new trails. If building new trails, use natural materials.

Reduce cycling speed to facilitate a safer pedestrian environment. A pathway design that naturally decreases speed was proposed.

Reduce conflict between off-leash users and others (cyclists, pedestrians); better signage proposed as a solution.

Increase lighting along pathways to address homeless encampments.

Culture and communication

Public art and indigenous identity are not evident in either concept. Would like to see more of these in the final concept.

Interpretive information to celebrate indigenous heritage could be incorporated into signage, language and wayfinding.

75
open house
attendees

19
external + internal
stakeholder participants

303
online survey
participants

78
online map tool
participants

558
vision
comments

287
spatially-mapped
comments

4,574
park element
preferences

866
original vision
statements

397
engaged citizens

6,593
in person + online
interactions in phase 3

Question 1

What do you think about the vision statements?

558 comments
496 online
62 in-person

The intent of this exercise was to build upon the vision statements that were created in Phase 2. The feedback from Phase 2 was used to create two unique vision statements to reflect everyone's collective wishes, values and beliefs. These vision statements provided guidance to the two concept plans. The public was asked to provide feedback on the two vision statements.

Feedback from this question demonstrates a higher level of agreement with the vision statement for concept 1.

As a general note, more than 50 commenters found the wording of both visions uncomfortable or difficult to understand; many thought the visions were bureaucratic and generic without specific actionable items. The word "recreate" in vision statement 1 was a particular sticking point for those who confused it with "re-create".

Feedback from this question will refine the vision into one cohesive direction that guides planning for the park over the next 25 years.

Vision statement 1:

As a park and passage within Edmonton's Ribbon of Green, Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine facilitates access to nature for the city's growing population to rejuvenate and recreate.

This essential connection provides a sanctuary for visitors to enjoy the physical and mental benefits of spending time in nature while increasing ecological connectivity and conserving wildlife habitat, vegetation and open space heritage. Year-round access to the North Saskatchewan River and Ravine system promotes community stewardship, sustainable maintenance and environmental protection for all visitors to appreciate now and into the future.

Vision statement 2

An escape from the city within the city, Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine is a natural destination where Edmonton's diverse and growing population can gather, learn and play.

This green corridor welcomes all people to recreate and explore in a safe and inclusive environment. Building on Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine's layered cultural and natural history, this essential link in the open-space network balances the protection of sensitive river valley ecologies with the recreational needs of generations to come.

What the public thinks about statement 1:

248 comments



“ I prefer the focus on ecological preservation and restoration in Concept Option 1, and appreciate the efforts to reduce ecological disturbance along the River Edge. I also really appreciate the efforts to make more areas accessible for people with physical and visual impairments. ”

Vision Statement 1 was very well received, with 81% either strongly or somewhat in agreement with the statement.

Values that resonated with participants the most included strong ecological and environmental priorities, as well as increased and equal/equitable year-round access. People liked Vision Statement 1's emphasis on nature, and expressed a desire for limited development. They also liked its balance with carefully considered recreational uses.

Most liked priority action:

- » The concept around the mouth of Rat Creek.

Other liked features:

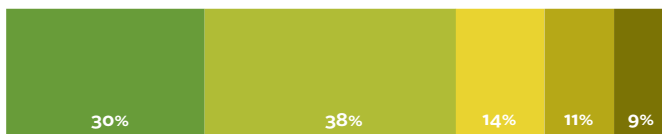
- » New natural playground
- » Trail connection to Stadium Station
- » New stairs

To be rethought:

- » Dogs off-leash area

What the public thinks about statement 2:

245 comments



“ Concept 2 seems suitable to a more diverse population. Allows accessibility to those who require it. ”

Vision Statement 2 received good support, with 68% either strongly or somewhat in agreement with the statement, however, the statement in its entirety was perceived to be too intrusive on the natural landscape.

A number of comments cited certain amenities, namely the natural playgrounds, as welcome additions. However, a large number of comments did not support the shorter off-leash loop. Many participants also expressed concerns about the larger parking lot and increased traffic in the river valley.

Most liked priority action:

- » Playgrounds

Other liked features:

- » New formal river overlook and access point
- » New entry with stairs and overlooks
- » New expanded amenity building
- » New dedicated park entry

To be rethought:

- » Dogs off-leash area
- » Parking and the potential for increased traffic

Split reactions:

- » The proposed suspension bridge



Question 2

What do you think about the concept options?

287 mapped comments

Generally, feedback from both concepts highlights enthusiasm for increased access, concern about off-leash areas, and a high-level of satisfaction with existing and proposed trails.

Below are some quotes from each concept expressing general sentiments that were captured through the responses.

On the following pages, the summary of all comments from each concept option has been presented spatially. Circle size corresponds directly to the number of comments received.

This feedback will support the decision-making process for the refined concept.

What the public thinks about Concept 1:

“ Love interpretive signage! Knowledge of history and/or at risk species builds awareness and pride.

Use the off leash dog trail year round and appreciate the snow clearing :)

Dog walkers are the single largest users of the park year round!!

Don't take that away!!

We should focus on a massive clean up!

Cyclists need to use their bell. Dog walkers need to recall their dog when bell rung.

Let's work together! ”



What the public thinks about Concept 2:

“ Too much proposed paving! Prefer Concept 1’s focus on existing trails. Keep as natural as possible! Like that we can access to walk the dog off-leash all year. Too invasive to natural areas and habitat. This is far more accessible for people with mobility problems! ”

Concept 1

200 comments



Like — 42 %

- A** — Like **new entry**.
- B** — Like the smaller footprint of the **amenity building**.
- C** — Like **existing natural trails**.
- D** — Like proposed **new natural trail**.
- E** — Like **restored meadow**.
- F** — Like **new natural playground**.
- G** — Like **restored meadow + winter garden**.
- H** — Like **naturalized mouth of Rat Creek**, think it needs odour control structures.

Needs Improvement — 58%

- I** — **Bathrooms** in the amenity building need to be upgraded with a focus on safety so they can operate for longer hours.
- J** — Keep the existing and proposed trails in the area feeling as natural as possible. **Do not clear vegetation** for sightlines.
- K** — Keep **trail maintenance and infrastructure costs** to a minimum.
- L** — Focus on **maintaining existing trails** in this area rather than constructing new ones. Undertake a thorough cleanup of dead wood and debris on trails.
- M** — **Do not reduce or restrict the off-leash area**.
- N** — **Expand the existing off-leash area**; several comments suggest it should be extended to Capilano Bridge.

Concept 2

87 comments



Like — 23%

- A** — Like new entry with stairs.
- B** — Like connection to Stadium LRT station.
- C** — Like natural play treehouse.
- D** — Like new stairs.
- E** — Like river access point.
- F** — Like new natural trail.
- G** — Like restored mouth of Rat Creek, also suggest odour control structures for the Rat Creek outfall.

Needs Improvement — 77%

- H** — Disagree with the new dedicated park entry.
- I** — Need water fountains for dogs.
- J** — Install speed bumps and/or signage to keep cyclists' speed under control on the multi-use trail.
- K** — Keep the existing and proposed trails in the area feeling as natural as possible. Do not clear vegetation for sightlines.
- L** — Encourage cyclists to use their bell and go slowly in off-leash areas.
- M** — Off-leash should not be located on the slopes; dangerous for users and increases erosion of hillsides.
- N** — Access from Stadium LRT station requires too much hardscape.
- O** — The proposed off-leash loop is too short; do not reduce or restrict the off-leash area.
- P** — Expand the existing off-leash area.

Question 3

What park elements do you prefer?

4004 online preferences
2175 online comments
570 open house preferences
26 open house comments

Of the most popular elements, 12 out of 14 were chosen from Concept 1. People cited the lower costs, lower environmental impacts, and natural aesthetics of Concept 1 as positive aspects of each choice. Options from Concept 2 were

chosen for their tendency to offer greater accessibility and potential to attract visitors.

Concept 1's river access points, viewpoints, Latta Bridge entrance, new park entrances, off leash, and native vegetation and restoration were the most popular options.

The new natural trail had the greatest percentage of "neither" comments, with many wary of having too many trails in the park.

Although a slim majority chose Concept 1 for the North Side Connection, there was strong interest in the suspension bridge that was ultimately beaten by cost and environmental concerns.

The following section provides an overview of:

- › Top six selected features
- › Preferences and a summary of trends and themes by feature



Top Park Elements



256
restore native
grasses + shrubs



244
improvements
to existing overlooks



229
trail access
under Latta Bridge



212
naturalized river
access points



205
retain existing off-leash dog
area on multi-use trail



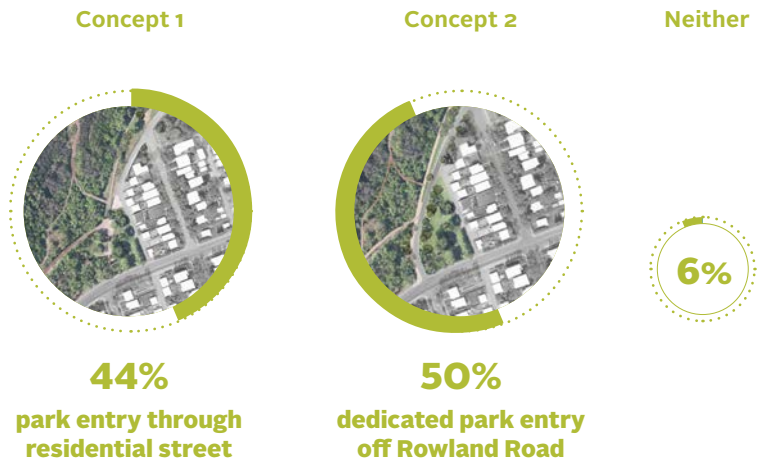
205
select entrances enhanced
with signage and trails

● Park Use + Amenities ● Nature + Ecology ● Connectivity + Circulation

Park Entry

330 Comments

Concept 1 was chosen by a number of participants for its low-impact, economical approach and respect for green space. Several participants wanted to keep access limited, either to keep the park quiet and peaceful or because they did not see the demand. Concept 2 was ultimately more popular for its benefits to local residents, who currently face issues of security, traffic, and a shortage of street parking.



Boat Launch Area at Pavilion

323 Comments

Participants liked the more natural approach and aesthetic of Concept 1, preferring its low-cost use of gravel over concrete. Several participants also wanted to minimize boating on the river and hoped Concept 1 would discourage motorized use. Those who chose Concept 2 praised its accessible versatility and saw it as an opportunity to attract a diversity of users. The majority of “Neither” participants wanted to keep the river peaceful and natural by limiting access.



Winter Play

321 Comments

A majority of participants chose Concept 2’s playground and programming for its potential to host local events, as well as its ability to attract users to the park year-round. Concept 1 participants found the interventions to be overly prescriptive in an area they would prefer to keep natural, and didn’t think the features would be enough to attract users to the park in winter. Those who chose “Neither” hoped to limit development in the park and did not see the need for winter-oriented features.



Off-Leash

327 Comments

A lower cost and reduced environmental impact were cited as benefits of Concept 1. Several comments argued that signage and cooperation between cyclists and dog owners would be sufficient to reduce conflicts. Although a majority of participants chose Concept 1, more comments were left by those who chose Concept 2; out of concerns for safety and environmental preservation, they hoped that the off-leash loop would limit the presence of dogs in other areas of the park. Those who voted “Neither” fell strongly into two camps: allow off-leash dogs in more areas of the park, or remove dogs from the park altogether.



Parking

329 Comments

Concept 1 proved to be more popular with participants who want to limit hardscape and expensive development in the park, and do not see the need to expand. Many hoped that limited parking would encourage alternative forms of transport. Those who chose Concept 2 thought that expanded parking would accommodate more users and take the strain off of surrounding neighbourhoods. Many “Neither” participants wanted to see data showing an increase in park users before agreeing to expand the parking lot.

Amenity Building

326 Comments

Participants preferred Concept 1 for its affordability and minimal look, expressing the desire to improve the existing facility but keep its footprint small. Concept 2 was liked for its versatility and potential to draw visitors into the park. Both sides liked the idea of improving the washrooms or expanding their hours. Those who chose “Neither” had security concerns for any kind of shelter in the park and would prefer that the existing structure be removed altogether.

River Access Points

328 Comments

A strong majority of participants said that they preferred the naturalized aesthetic of Concept 1. They also saw value in its reduced maintenance requirements and low construction costs. Participants with concerns about accessibility were more likely to choose Concept 2, which was praised for its consideration of those with limited mobility and was considered by many to appear “safer”. Those who chose “Neither” did not want to see any new access points to the river to keep it as natural as possible.

Viewpoints

332 Comments

Concept 1 was the clear preference; participants liked the reduced impact and lower costs. Concept 2 was called “overbuilt” and “too industrial”. Those who chose the additional overlook structures mentioned their potential to draw visitors to the parks and to make them more accessible. Many of the participants who chose “Neither” didn’t want any overlooks in the parks due to their environmental impact, as well as safety concerns as a potential attractor of illicit activity.

Concept 1



56%

retain existing parking lot

Concept 2



38%

expand parking lot

Neither



56%

flexible indoor space + washrooms



37%

flexible indoor space + washrooms + program space



65%

naturalized river access points



29%

select constructed river access points



73%

minor improvements to existing overlooks



20%

additional overlook structures



New Natural Trail

315 Comments

Comments for both Concept 1 and Concept 2 valued increased access and connectivity for diverse users. However, many participants appeared to be confused by Concept 1's new natural trail; several were unsure why it would run parallel to the existing trail. This suggests either that people don't see the need for separate trails to reduce conflicts between different users, or that the intention was not clearly communicated. Participants who chose "Neither" were also concerned about overdevelopment and wanted to keep the parks trail system as it is.

Concept 1



48%

new natural trail in River Valley Slopes

Concept 2



33%

new natural trail in Kinnaird Ravine

Neither



19%

Latta Bridge Entrance

326 Comments

While some participants thought that the wooden staircase under Latta Bridge would improve accessibility, the majority thought it would be too expensive and unsafe when icy in the winter. They liked the trail access and considered a ramp to be easier to manoeuvre for cyclists and those with strollers. Those who chose "Neither" thought the entrance upgrade would be too costly.



70%

trail access under Latta Bridge



23%

wooden staircase under Latta Bridge



7%

North Side Connection

326 Comments

Concept 1 was commonly chosen for its lower costs and reduced impact on the environment. However, many participants who chose Concept 1 also left comments that they would be very interested in the suspension bridge from Concept 2. Those who chose Concept 2 saw the bridge as an exciting attraction for the city. Many who chose "Neither" also liked the bridge but thought it would be too costly or would not be able to accommodate cyclists. 7% of the comments were strongly opposed to the bridge.



46%

small staircase off Ada Blvd NW outlook point



43%

suspension bridge across Kinnaird Ravine



11%

Park Entrances

320 Comments

A majority of participants preferred Concept 1's simple design and lower costs. Many did not see the need for the large signs in Concept 2, and were concerned about the potential for vandalism. Those who chose Concept 2 liked the prominent visuals and easier access points for current and future visitors. The "Neither" commenters thought funds could be better allocated elsewhere.



64%

select entrances enhanced with signage and trails



29%

larger and more defined entrances



7%

Daylighting Rat Creek

332 Comments

Participants who chose Concept 1 preferred the naturalized experience, aesthetic, and stream restoration. Concept 2 participants saw an opportunity to make the park a destination by increasing access to the river and offering educational opportunities. Those who chose “Neither” preferred to leave the area alone, or to find a happy medium between the naturalized approach and the fish habitat and river access.

Concept 1

Concept 2

Neither



48%

naturalized approach to habitat + experience



42%

open terraced stream edge and fish habitat



10%

Native Vegetation + Restoration

326 Comments

Concept 1 was the clear preference; participants liked the more “authentic” experience and reduced maintenance requirements, as well as the smaller environmental impact and increased habitat and biodiversity. They liked the use of native vegetation, particularly grasses; many were opposed to the mown lawn in Concept 2. Those who chose Concept 2 thought it would be better for cyclists and there would be less conflict between users.



79%

restore native grasses + shrubs



15%

maintain manicured grass areas



6%

MEETING SPACE IN AMENITY BUILDING

Would you book a meeting room in Dawson Park?

310 Comments`

Many participants saw the potential for weddings, workshops, and club gatherings in the amenity building. Those who said no did not belong to any organizations, or thought there are already ample meeting spaces in the city.



34%

yes



66%

no

Would you pay for it?

18 Comments`

Data reflects open house feedback only.



56%

yes



44%

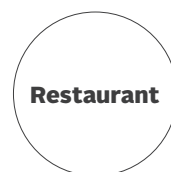
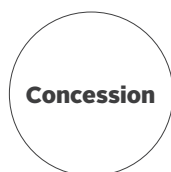
no

JOHN C. HALL BUILDING USE

What would you like to see this building used for?

19 Comments`

The Master Plan is exploring the possibilities for the future long-term use of the John C. Hall Building. Sample comments below reflect open house feedback only.



Question 4

Compare the two concept options.

What did the public choose and why?

Typically, comments expressed a desire to keep the park natural where possible, enable a low level of park maintenance and directed attention to a cleanup of existing infrastructure. Natural trails that limit construction were preferred. Participants expressed concerns for the environment and prioritized ecological values.

Overall, Concept 1 emerged as the option that best met the stated objectives of each of the themes.

1335 online preferences
751 online comments
98 open house comments
18 external stakeholder comments

Park Use + Amenities

49%

CONCEPT 1

- » More environmentally sensitive, natural
- » Prefer off-leash dog solution
- » Limits new amenities, keeps development to a minimum; popular with participants wary of attracting too many visitors

39%

CONCEPT 2

- » Improved opportunities for accessibility
- » Better connections to the city
- » Limits off-leash for those who don't want dogs in Dawson Park
- » Offers more amenities

12%

NEITHER/ON THE FENCE

- » Disliked cost

Safety + Maintenance

56%

CONCEPT 1

- » Requires less maintenance
- » Appreciate lower cost
- » Like low-impact, natural approach
- » Like proposed dark sky initiatives

32%

CONCEPT 2

- » Felt safer to some participants
- » Offers more lighting along trails

12%

NEITHER/ON THE FENCE

- » Couldn't see a difference between the concepts
- » No change desired
- » Disliked cost

Winter

50%

CONCEPT 1

- » Prefer the smaller footprint and restrained approach
- » Don't think winter use requires infrastructure
- » Liked the warm up space
- » Had safety concerns with active use in Concept 2; thought visitors might be likely to slip on ice throughout the park

34%

CONCEPT 2

- » Appreciate amenities: will encourage people to get outside

16%

NEITHER/ON THE FENCE

- » Couldn't see a difference between the concepts
- » Disliked cost

Nature + Ecology

56%

CONCEPT 1

- » Like the natural / ecological emphasis
- » Existing natural areas prioritized for restoration and preservation
- » Prefer proposed native plant species to Concept 2's mown grass

But:

Don't change off leash
Address vulnerable persons
and homeless encampments

31%

CONCEPT 2

- » Like how it balances human use/recreation and nature

13%

NEITHER/ON THE FENCE

- » No change desired

Connectivity + Circulation

51%

CONCEPT 1

- » More natural, less intrusive
- » Prioritizes ecology and the environment
- » Creates new trails

But:

Don't change off leash
Limit the number of paved surfaces
Maintain existing natural trails

36%

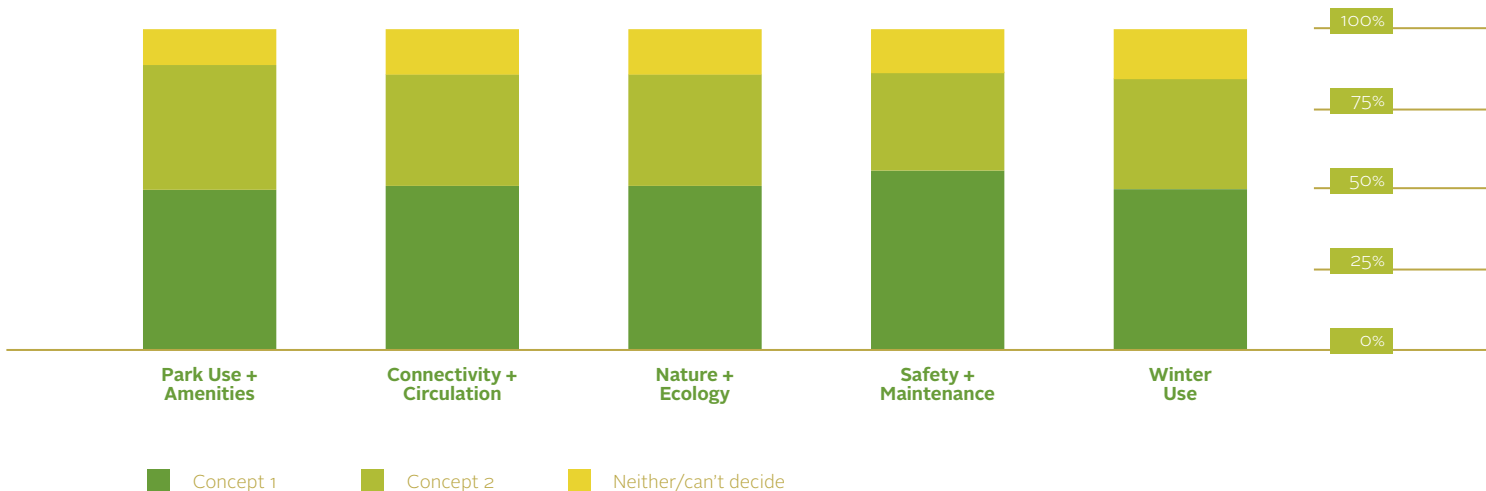
CONCEPT 2

- » Appreciate how accessibility is embedded into the concept through the paved trail
- » Emphasizes connectivity to other parks and the city as a whole
- » Prefer dogs on-leash and a limited off-leash area

13%

NEITHER/ON THE FENCE

- » Couldn't see a difference between the concepts
- » Disliked cost
- » No change desired

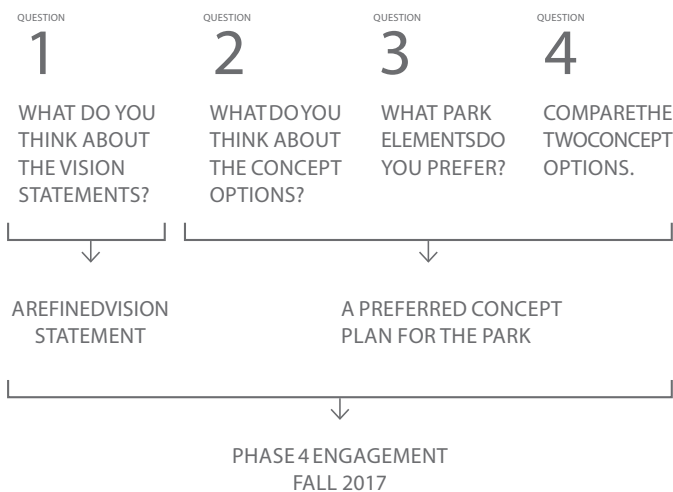


Next Steps

Thank you to all participants who provided their feedback during Phase 3 of engagement for the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan!

Input from the open house, the online survey, and stakeholder workshops will inform the development of the preferred concept plan. The draft preferred concept will minimize ecological disturbance while addressing public and City priorities.

Input from the four questions will inform the preferred option and vision statement as follows:



1. What do you think about the vision statements?

Concept options presented in this phase of engagement were closely guided by these vision statements; the feedback collected from this question will help refine the two visions into one. This will provide a cohesive direction not only for the preferred concept plan, but for planning the park over the next 25 years.

2. What do you think about the concept options?

Mapped feedback from this activity will be used to inform the development of the preferred concept plan in Phase 4. Spatial analysis of comments will directly support the decision-making process for the refined concept plan.

3. What park elements do you prefer?

Qualitative and quantitative feedback from this activity will guide which elements will be included in the preferred concept plan, as well as their look and feel.

4. Compare the two concept options

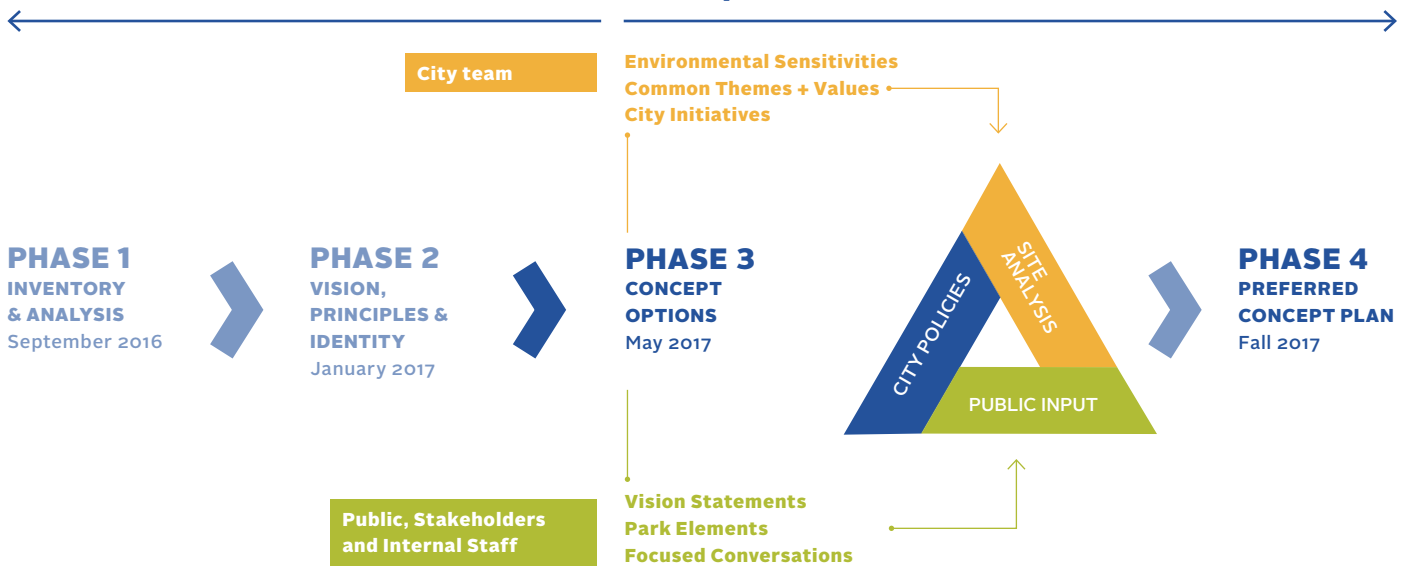
Comments from this activity will be used to understand and refine the positive elements of Concept 1 and Concept 2, informing the final preferred concept plan.

In Fall 2017, the preferred concept plan will be presented during Phase 4 engagements for final feedback.

For project updates: edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan

Discover

Develop



Phase 3 Inputs and Results

The activities in Phase 3 of engagement provided us with different forms of feedback, each of which will be used to develop the preferred concept plan. We will take this feedback into account in conjunction with environmental sensitivities and City priorities as we develop a comprehensive plan that will be presented in Phase 4.

