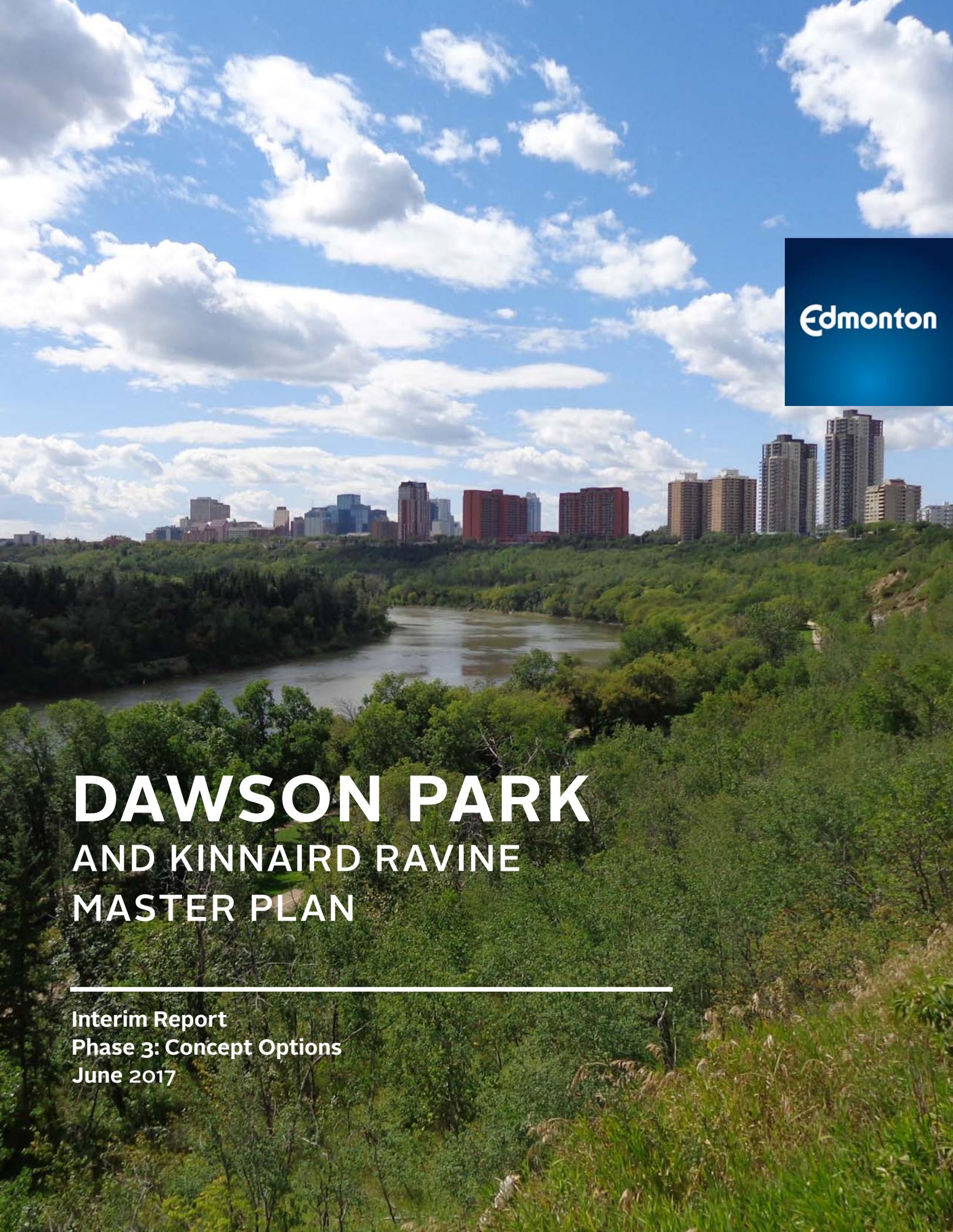


The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in a white, sans-serif font on a dark blue rectangular background.A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a river flowing through a lush green forest. In the background, a city skyline with various high-rise buildings is visible under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

# DAWSON PARK AND KINNAIRD RAVINE MASTER PLAN

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Interim Report  
Phase 3: Concept Options  
June 2017

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# Introduction

**This report outlines the steps that have been taken in the production of the Master Plan for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine, and the steps that are yet to come. The Master Plan process is based on a thorough understanding of the site conditions, environmental sensitivities, public values and City priorities.**

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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 (CCRP) Concept Plan was implemented. As part of the CCRP Concept Plan, Dawson Park was identified as a rest area and was designed to include 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.



## Project Timeline

### 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.

### Timeline

The Master Plan is currently in the CONCEPT Phase of the Park and Facility Development Process. In this phase, public engagement 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. City policy and priorities, environmental analysis 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.

### Work Completed to Date

An initial inventory and analysis of Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine was completed in the summer of 2016. The inventory was compiled from several sources, including observations from site visits, desktop analysis and archive and environmental research. The results of the inventory research were presented to the public for comments and additional input in Phase 1 of engagement.

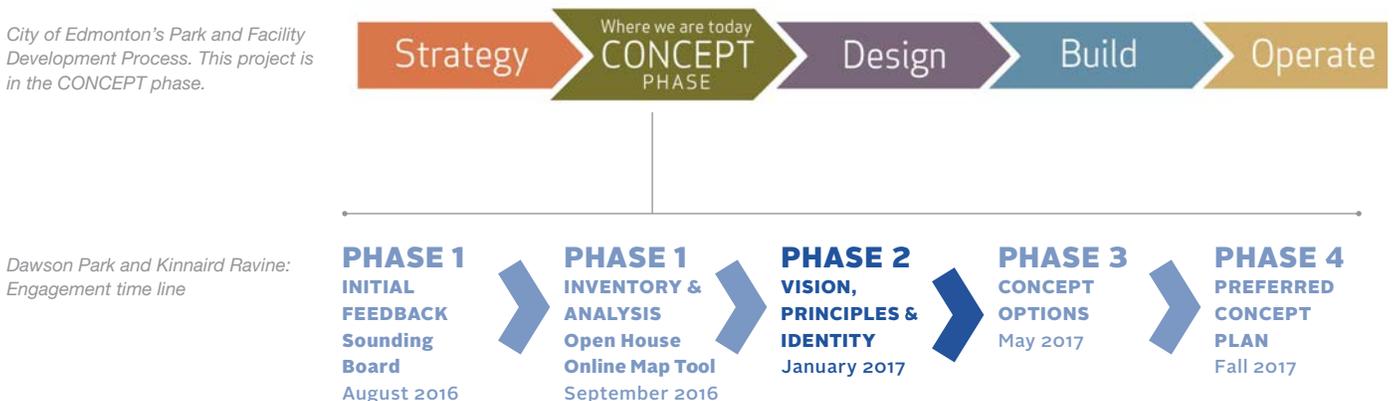


Figure 1.1 Project Timeline

The initial inventory and analysis was built upon with a desktop analysis of environmental sensitivities in the park. The results are summarized in this report and in more detail in an Environmental Sensitivities Report produced in February 2017. The sensitivity analysis is used throughout the Master Plan process as a foundational decision-making tool. The environmental sensitivity work was supplemented with an environmental overview, completed by Basin Environmental Ltd., to review current and historical environmental information relative to the site.

Extensive consultation with various City of Edmonton departments has been and remains an integral part of the Master Plan. Internal stakeholders provide insight into operational needs in the park as well as opportunities to leverage other City priorities and initiatives in the Master Plan.

The Master Plan process includes four phases of public engagement, two of which have been completed to date. In the first phase of engagement, we asked the public to comment on the results of our inventory and analysis. The results of the first phase provided us with a greater understanding of the park functions and the public's dreams and wishes for the future of Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. The goal of the second phase of engagement was to give the public an opportunity to help build the vision statement for the park and to recommend park amenities and activities they wanted to see in the park. The results of the second phase contributed directly to the development of the concept plans. A more detailed description of the public engagement is presented later in this report as

well as in two What We Heard reports available on the project website: [edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan](http://edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan).

Two concepts were created as part of the Master Plan in the early spring of 2017. In developing these concepts, the City incorporated all the above input (site analysis, City policy and public input) into a balanced and holistic approach to planning and design. Two unique concept options will be presented to the public in May of 2017 for comments and discussion. The feedback will inform the development of a final concept plan to be included in the Master Plan in Fall 2017.

## Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the progress of the Master Plan to date and the steps required to move toward the completion of the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan. This report summarizes the concept development process, including all influencing factors, and presents two unique concept options for the park. The concept options include varying approaches to the following elements:

- » The vision for the park and the desired user experience
- » Proposed program and park management recommendations
- » Winter use and management
- » Infrastructure requirements for the proposed program
- » Parking requirements to support the proposal
- » Potential environmental consequences and proposed mitigation measures

# Context

## Edmonton is a City on a River. As a connector park in the River Valley, Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine play multiple roles in the City of Edmonton.

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The park is an ecological link in the Ribbon of Green as well as a community connection to downtown neighbourhoods, providing residents with an opportunity to escape the city into nature. The Master Plan for this multi-functional linear park is rooted in Edmonton's long-term vision for the City's green network and urban growth planning. City policies and initiatives impact the Master Plan in two ways:

1. Ensuring the public preferences inform the Master Plan and align with City direction where feasible, and
2. Making strategic recommendations for the Master Plan based on the City's long-term goals.

### The Park Within the City

Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine provide a connection to the City's natural heritage. Edmonton is located in the Eastern Alberta Plains and the Parkland Natural Region (Natural Regions Committee [NRC] 2006). As Edmonton becomes increasingly urban in character and the population continues to grow, the River Valley is a connection to the city's ecological past. Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine are located east of downtown on the north side of the North Saskatchewan River. Kinnaird Ravine projects west into the City, historically extending well beyond its current terminus, Stadium Station.

### City Policy

The Master Plan for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine will be integrated into the City's planning framework for the City's green network and River Valley park system. Recommendations in the Master Plan must, therefore, align with the City's planning approach to open space, public safety and ecological preservation. For a complete list of City policies that have influenced the plan, please refer to the What We Heard Report for Phase 2.

Throughout the process, decisions for the Master Plan are measured against recommendations from City Policy. For example, decisions around the amenity building and official public use of the park are heavily influenced by the City's safety requirements for public spaces, River Valley policy and the needs identified by the public and stakeholders. These considerations are made to ensure that the park remains a safe and secure place for all people to enjoy the natural character of the River Valley and that proposed park improvements can be sustainably funded.

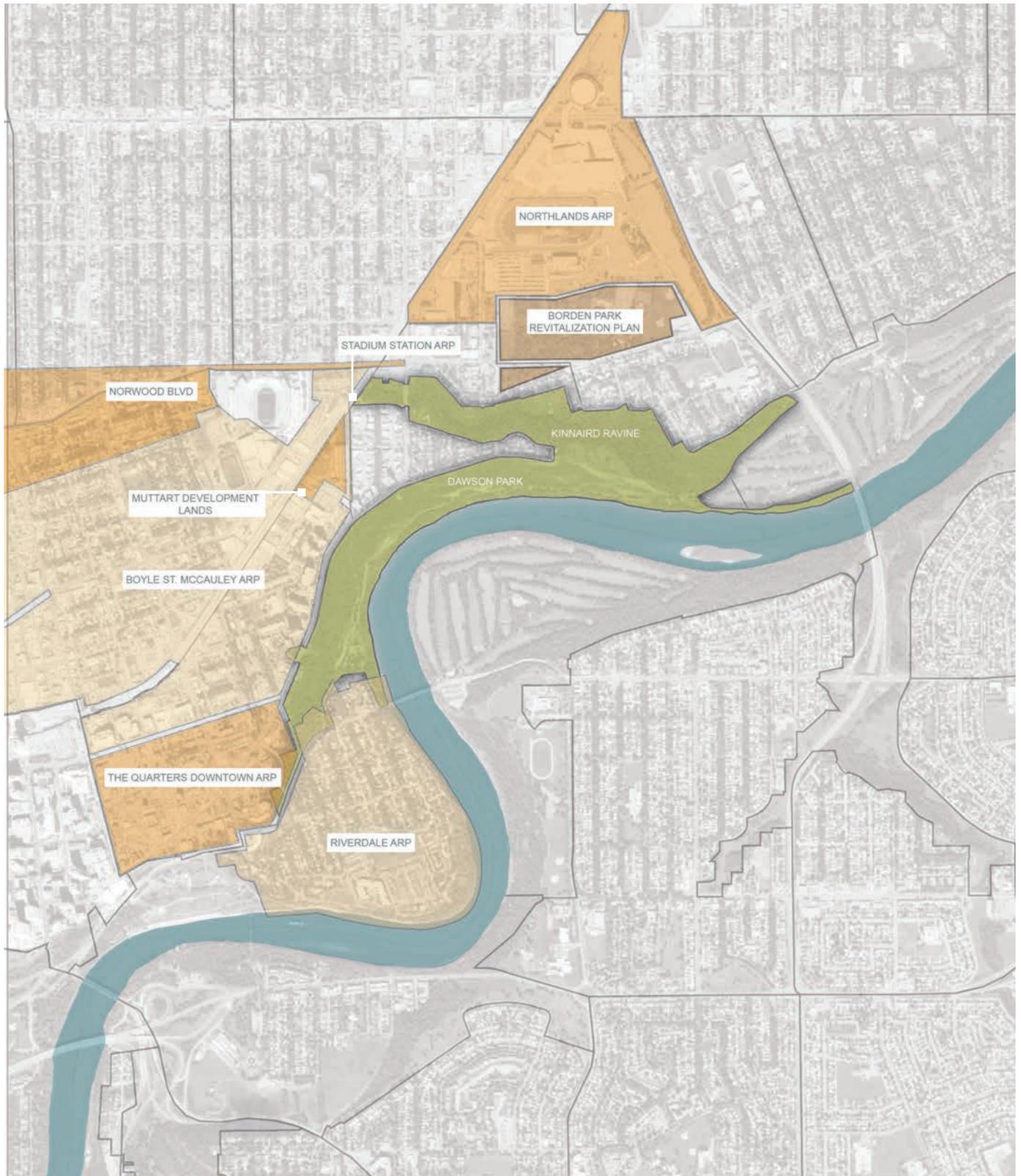


Figure 2.1 Dawson Park & Kinnaird Ravine Community Context

The park serves ecological, social and health functions and serves all Edmontonians. The park provides gathering, river access and active and passive recreation opportunities for all citizens of Edmonton. The Braille Trail, which resulted from the Capital City Recreation Park Concept Plan (CCRPCP) in the 1970s, is a reminder of the legacy and responsibility to provide an accessible park experience for all of Edmonton's residents.

### **The Park Within the River Valley**

The North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine system, Canada's largest urban park, is considered a national environmentally sensitive area as it provides critical habitat, corridors and linkages for a diverse range of wildlife species. The River Valley's aspen, poplar and spruce forests contribute to Edmonton's urban tree canopy and the North Saskatchewan River provides critical habitat to aquatic species such as Lake Sturgeon. Edmontonians value the River Valley as a place to protect these ecological resources and to experience nature.

The River Valley's trail network and amenities, including picnic areas and playgrounds, among others, create opportunities for park users to experience the health benefits of being in nature. Almost half of Edmontonians indicated that they participate in river-based activities (River Access Strategy). Residents and

organized groups enjoy using the river for various types of non-motorized boating, educational programming, fishing and more. The River Valley currently has five formal hand launch locations, two vehicular launches, two public docks and three partner docks. A River Valley Alliance hand launch will be built in Dawson Park in the summer of 2017.

### **The Park Within the Community**

Community planning in the neighbourhoods surrounding Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine responds to the City's long-term goals of urban densification and green space enhancement to accommodate a growing population. Higher density development will occur next to well-established communities including Virginia Park, Cromdale and Riverdale. New residents will benefit from the strong neighbourhood bonds and active community groups that already exist in the area.

A number of people sleep rough or camp in the park's forested spaces. While the City continues to take a holistic and cooperative approach to addressing homelessness in the city, increased density in the surrounding neighbourhoods will create opportunities and challenges regarding the use of Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine.

## **Homeless on Public Lands**

Recognizing that rough sleeping occurs in the park and that work is currently being done to address homelessness in Edmonton by the City and partner organizations, the Homeless on Public Lands Working Committee has been an integral part of the Master Plan engagement strategy. The Committee consists of City staff, representatives from Boyle Street Outreach, emergency response personnel and Rangers.

Discussions with this group have helped to shape the Master Plan's approach to rough sleeping in the park. The long-term goal for the park is to reduce the number of informal encampments in the park, which will only be possible with the continued cooperation between the City and partner organizations. The Master Plan will not support or promote rough sleeping in the park but will take a compassionate approach to homelessness and support the continued work of the Homeless on Public Lands Committee. The concept options presented in this report include elements to support increased safety in the park for all visitors.

## Early Heritage

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

The area that now makes up the City of Edmonton was originally occupied by various Indigenous Nations including the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot and Nakota Sioux. Archaeological

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

## Land Use

Only recently has Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine been protected as a natural area. Coal mining as well as sewage and waste disposal have had a substantial impact on the landscape.

## Park Planning

An early vision for a River Valley park system begins to come to fruition in the later part of the 20th century with policy that protects the natural character of the River Valley landscape.

## Events & Figures

Resource extraction plays a large role in the history of the park. Important figures commemorated in the park moved to Edmonton for early trading, mining and to benefit from the oil industry.

## Timeline

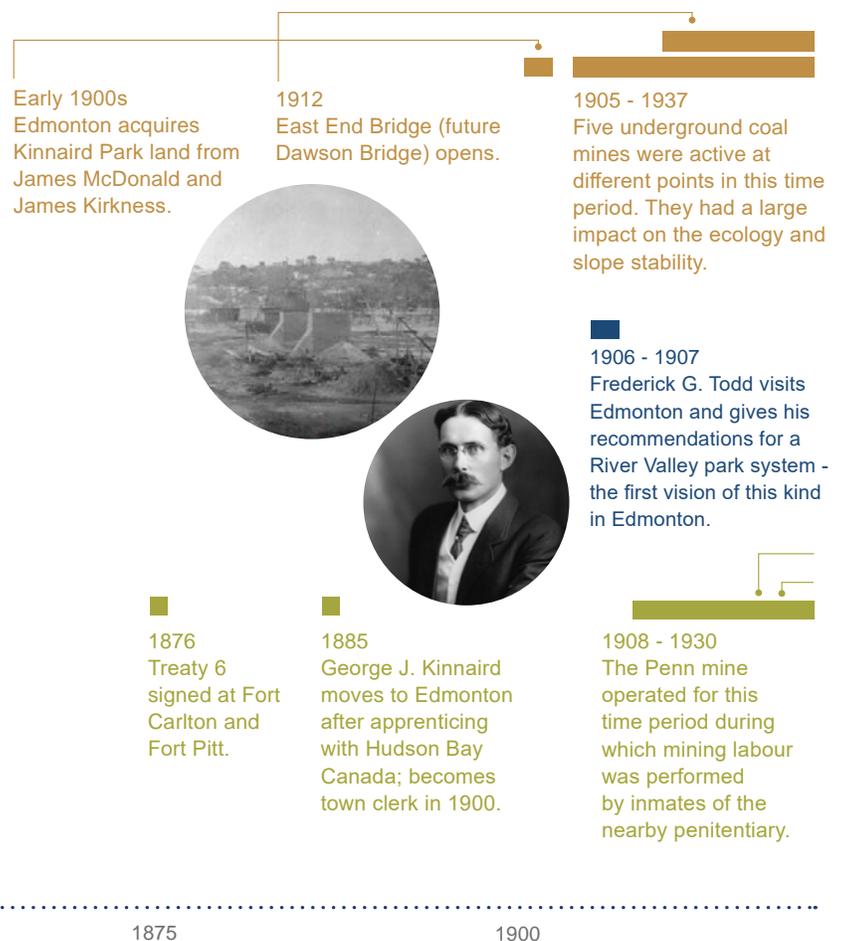


Figure 2.2 Dawson Park & Kinnaird Ravine Historical Timeline



## **Historic Land Use and Events**

After the signing of Treaty 6, the North Saskatchewan River became a resource to be utilized for economic gains. In the early 1900s, Edmonton acquired land from James McDonald and James Kirkness, which is now known as Kinnaird Park. From 1905 to 1937, five underground coal mines were active in Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. Mining labour at Penn Mine (Mine 632) was performed by inmates of the nearby penitentiary. The Riverdale Sewage Disposal Plant (renamed Sewage Disposal Plant No. 1) operated between 1910 and 1956 and the East End Bridge (Dawson Bridge) opened in 1912 to aid in the transport of people and goods across the river. Resource extraction and waste water treatment were the major land uses in the park site for over half a century, and these uses left a large trace on the landscape. Although the park is now a natural area, unstable slopes and buried refuse endure as a legacy of the park's industrial past.

Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine have a long history of inhabitation. Private residences appear to have been located in the area of Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine and there is some evidence of a homestead and agricultural activity. The North West Mounted Police are believed to have camped in Kinnaird Ravine on their final stop before reaching Fort Edmonton in the 19th century. Jane Salisbury, while belonging to the Order of the Eastern Star, helped to house elderly residents in the park area for almost 30 years (from approximately 1953 to 1982).

As the neighbourhoods surrounding the park developed, they faced challenges regarding their location in the River Valley. The Flood of 1915 had a tremendous impact on Cloverdale, Rosedale, Riverdale and surrounding communities with the loss and damage of personal property. Approximately 2,000 people were displaced, 50 buildings were destroyed and over 700 homes were submerged in the flood. Coal mining had an adverse effect on some residents and in 1932 and 1933, remediation payments were made to homeowners whose properties were affected by their location above abandoned mines. Heritage homes that remain around Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine provide a link to the local community's history.

Dawson Park takes its name from one of Alberta's early geologists and WWI veteran John Forsyth Dawson (1892-1962). Dawson worked in the Turner Valley oil fields and for the Dominion Oil Fields Supply Company in Edmonton. He is not to be confused with his father, H.S. Dawson, for whom the Dawson Bridge was named. George J. Kinnaird moved to Edmonton in 1885 after apprenticing with Hudson Bay Canada. He became the town clerk in 1900.

## **Planning History**

A petition was circulated in 1912 calling for the creation of a city park in the project area. This may have been influenced by Frederick G. Todd's vision and recommendations for a River Valley park system following his visit to Edmonton in 1906-1907. Todd wrote that "a crowded population, if they are to live in health and happiness, must have space for the enjoyment of that peaceful beauty of nature – which because it is the opposite of all that is sordid and artificial in our city lives – is so wonderfully refreshing to the tired souls of city dweller..." (Todd, 1907). This vision was the first of its kind in Edmonton and was not realized for many years because, at the time, most people were primarily focused on the use of the River Valley for resource extraction, waste disposal and transportation.

Only after the flood of 1915 was Todd's vision adopted by the Government of Alberta "in-principle", later to be incorporated into a zoning bylaw which protected the city's green spaces in 1933. The City of Edmonton adopted the Bland-Spence report in 1949, which recommended the opposition of further development in the River Valley and the initialization of a long-term program to acquire River Valley land. The Top-of-the-Bank policy in 1970 provided regulations for development adjacent to the ravine system and evolved into the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan in 1985. Dawson Park was officially named in 1990, beginning its relatively recent history as a recreational park and natural area.



Figure 2.3 Park Evolution Aerial Photographs

# Environmental Considerations

**One of the main principles of the Master Plan is to preserve and enhance the already valuable ecological resources within Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. Understanding the existing conditions within the park is essential to preserving sensitive ecologies and mitigating the effects of human use on natural features in the park.**

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The City of Edmonton is in the process of defining areas for preservation, conservation and use in the far northeast and southwest reaches of the river valley and ravine system as part of the Ribbon of Green (2018) project. To do this, they are using the results of the Environmental Sensitivities Mapping project along with other ecological, recreational and cultural analyses to ensure that environmentally significant areas are managed appropriately and respected. Although Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine are not located in the Ribbon of Green project area, a similar approach to park use and environmental sensitivities will be taken in the Master Plan.

Many areas in the park, including Kinnaird Ravine, steep River Valley Slopes and the River Edge, are classified as highly sensitive. The steep slopes, dense vegetation and relatively

high habitat potential throughout the park contribute to a higher ecological sensitivity. This means that ecological impacts from development are expected to be greater than in other, less sensitive park areas like the Mobility Corridor. Park use in Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine will be driven by City priorities and public input, resulting in a range of desired activity levels and ecological impacts that must be calibrated according to the sensitivity levels within the park. Proposed park use should be considered with a thorough understanding of existing environmental sensitivities and potential ecological impacts to determine the activity's feasibility. It should be noted that park use and restoration are not mutually exclusive. Innovative and sensitive design has the potential to create opportunities for engaging recreational activities while at the same time providing ecological benefits.

## Environmental Sensitivities

The Environmental Sensitivities Report produced in February 2017 presented the most sensitive areas within the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine boundaries based on the above criteria. This report was completed in advance of concept development so that recommendations could be made with a conscious understanding of their impacts on the sensitive areas of the park. The report is available on the project website at [edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan](http://edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan).

Development in sensitive areas of the park has generally been avoided throughout concept development, while less sensitive areas have been explored for either increased activity or ecological restoration. The findings of the Environmental Sensitivities Report will guide the development of a refined concept plan to ensure sensitivities are respected in the Master Plan.

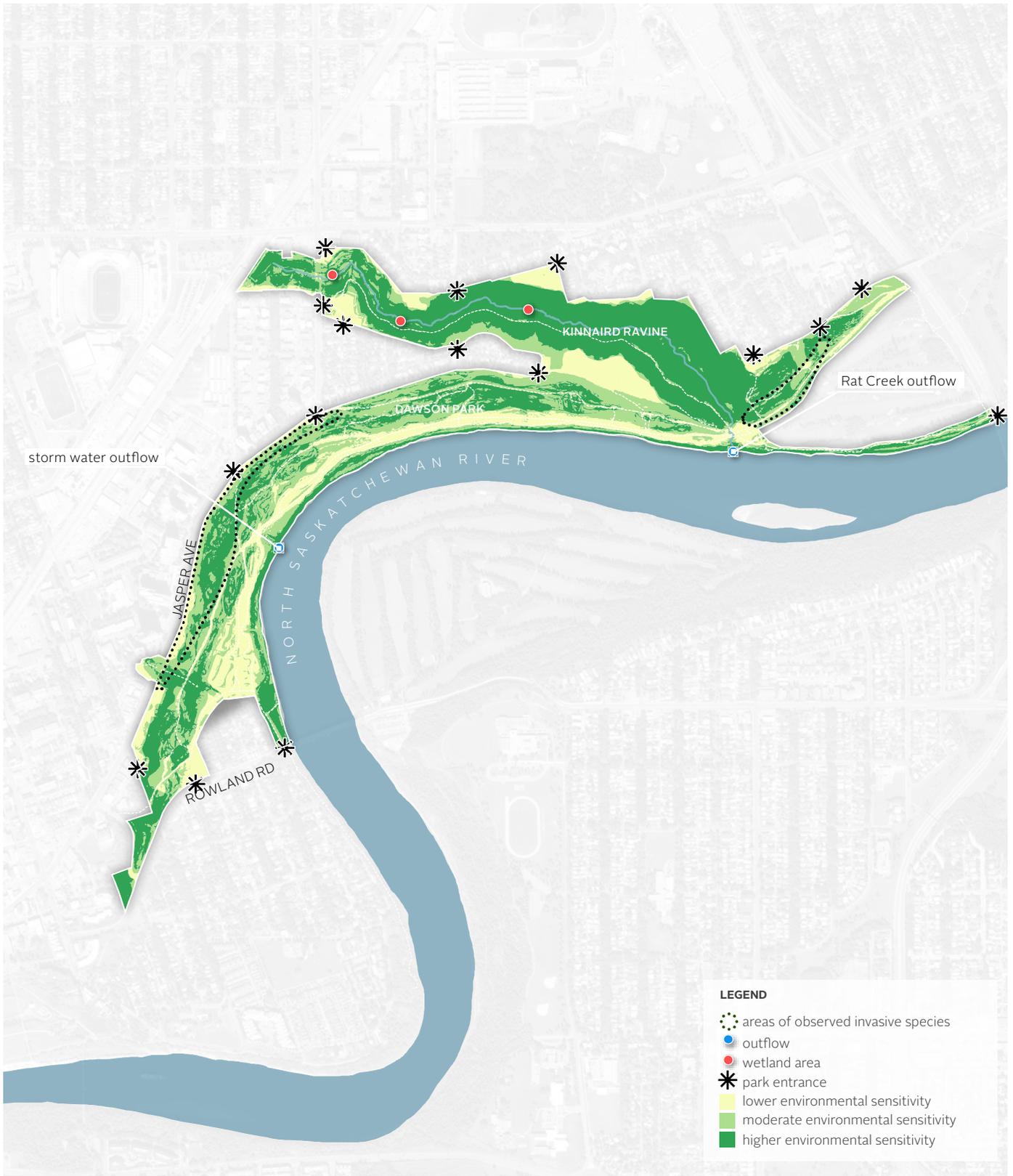


Figure 3.1 Environmental Sensitivities Map for Dawson Park & Kinnaird Ravine

# Public Engagement

**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.**

Results of the first two phases of engagement are summarized in this report. For more detailed descriptions of What We Did and What We Heard in each phase, please consult the What We Heard Reports on the project website: [edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan](http://edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan).

## **Phase 1: Inventory & Analysis**

In August and September 2016, the City of Edmonton asked citizens to share their thoughts about Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. A variety of engagement tools were used to provide citizens with convenient opportunities for providing feedback and insight. Responses were analyzed with the goal of uncovering emerging themes, outlying ideas and points of contention. These were grouped into categories, resulting in five main themes. These themes will remain as planning and communication tools for the remainder of the Master Plan and public engagement process.

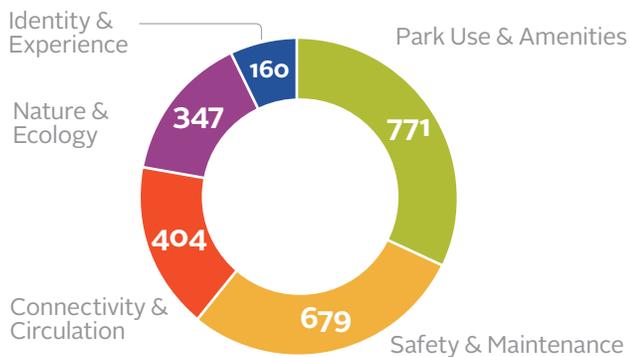


Figure 4.1 Phase 1 Comments by Theme

The underlying values that became apparent in Phase 1 were summarized in the What We Heard Report and were considered in the following phases, including concept development. Common values are found where participant values, such as maintaining the natural character of the River Valley and increasing safety for all in the park, align with the findings from environmental sensitivities and City policy. These common values will inform the vision and guiding principles for the Master Plan.

Values expressed by the public include:

- » Enjoy many activities in one park, including dog-walking, cycling, running and boating
- » Reduce user conflict in the park to improve safety and enjoyment for all
- » Increase the feeling of safety in the park
- » Address camping (rough sleeping) in the park
- » Create more opportunities to access the river
- » Provide universally accessible amenities for all park users
- » Improve connections to adjacent parks and neighbourhoods
- » Retain the natural character of the park and the ability to escape the city
- » Keep the sense of pride and community stewardship
- » Increase opportunities to spend time with family and friends in the park

## Phase 2: Vision, Principles & Identity

In January and February 2017, we engaged Edmontonians through an open house, an online survey, and a series of focused workshops on the vision and desired program for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine.

The activities in Phase 2 worked together to inform the vision for the park, to gain a deeper understanding of our shared values and to hear the public's desires for specific programs, elements and activities impacting the look and feel of the park. Themes and underlying values emerged from the analysis of over 2,800 vision statements. While some variation in the desired activity level in the park was evident, most statements reflected the importance of maintaining the natural state of the park. All collected vision statements fell into one or more of the following thematic groups, listed in order of comment frequency:

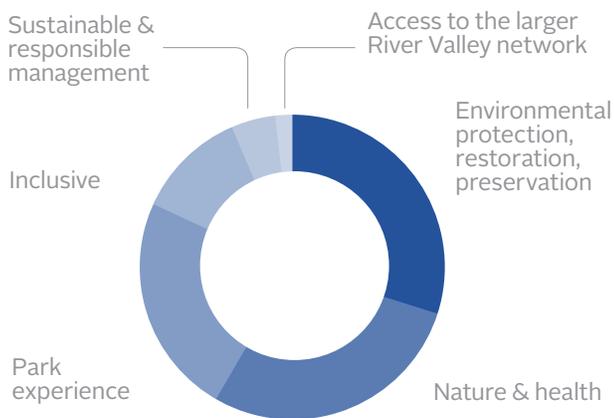


Figure 4.2 Vision Statement Themes Collected

The results of the Create your own park! and Park Elements activities were in line with the values and sentiments expressed in the vision statements. Most preferred elements were low impact and related to recreating in or preserving nature. The top 10 placed Create your own park! elements and activities were:

- » Conservation Area
- » Garbage Can
- » Water Access
- » Walk + Bike
- » Walking
- » Off-Leash Dog Walking
- » Picnic Area
- » Mountain Biking
- » Boating Hand Launch
- » Biking

The top 10 Park Elements chosen were:

- » Mixed Use Trail
- » Conserve Natural Areas and Wildlife
- » Preserve Sensitive Areas
- » Cycling Trail
- » Restore Disturbed Areas
- » Drinking Fountains
- » Standard Garbage Receptacle
- » Running Trail
- » Sewer Connected Washroom
- » Cross Country Skiing

Focused conversations with participants and thorough analysis of online comments gave us insight into the motivations behind people's responses to the activities, which are also reflected in the vision statements and concept options.

## Public Input

Public input has been obtained through in-person and online exercises meant to elicit general feedback on the park vision and specific feedback on park program and placement. The results of these exercises have directly contributed to the park visions and concept options presented later in this report.

Public input is valuable to the Master Plan process. Public support of the Master Plan will help to secure funding for the park's long-term development. It also informs the development of a concept plan for a park that Edmontonians will use and value well into the future.

# Concept Development

**Two concepts were created as part of the Master Plan in the early spring of 2017. In developing these concepts, the City incorporated all the above input (site analysis, City policy and public input) into a balanced and holistic approach to planning and design.**

The two options consist of two distinct vision statements and concept plans that detail the programs, activities and maintenance requirements for the park. We are looking for input from the public to understand which elements they would like to see in a single, refined concept for the Master Plan.

## Needs assessment

The City performs a needs assessment for all park Master Plans, which includes a review of the existing conditions and uses of the park, current user groups, visitation information, demographics of surrounding communities and public engagement results. The needs assessment was driven by findings from the River Valley Park Renewal Program, which analyzed the park's ability to meet existing and future capacity, identifying Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine for park renewal. The City also considers the amenities and programs available in surrounding parks to ensure all communities in the City are well-served by park space.

### Current Features & Use:

The first phase of the Master Plan for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine included an inventory and analysis of the existing conditions in the park including:

- » the use and condition of existing amenities, trails and access points,
- » existing natural features and vegetation,
- » utilities and servicing to the park,
- » demographic and neighbourhood context,
- » use of the park by different user groups and organizations, and
- » events (cross country running, orienteering, Dragon Boat racing, charity walks, art events).



## Inventory of Surrounding Parks

	Borden Park	Forest Heights Park	Riverdale Park	Henrietta Muir Edwards Park	Louise McKinney Riverfront Park	Capilano Park	Gold Bar Park	Queen Elizabeth Park	Kinsmen Park	Strathcona Science Park	Rundle Park
Multi-Use Trails	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Hiking		■		■	■	■		■	■		■
Bike Rental					■						
Open Space	■	■	■		■				■		■
Playground	■		■						■		■
Sports Facilities	■	■				■			■		■
Swimming Pool	■								■		■
Winter Activities			■			■	■		■	■	■
Picnic Tables	■		■			■	■	■	■		■
Bookable Picnic Sites	■					■	■	■			■
Gardens	■		■		■						
Public Art	■				■						
Performance Space	■				■						
Amenity Building / Pavilion	■				■	■	■				■
Washrooms	■				■	■	■	■	■		■
Cafe					■				■		
Vending Machines	■								■		■
River Access / Boating				■		■	■				■
Parking	■		■		■	■		■	■	■	
Off-Leash						■	■				
Distance to Dawson	200 m	800 m	1.9 km	2.3 km	2.5 km	3.6 km	3.9 km	4.7 km	5.6 km	8.2 km	8.3 km

In addition to the City's needs assessment for the park, we are using online and in-person methods to reach out to the following communities to gain a more holistic understanding of public needs for the Master Plan:

- » Braille Trail users through an online survey
- » Indigenous Nations through outreach efforts associated with multiple City projects including BREATHE: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy, the River Access Strategy and the Ribbon of Green Master Plan
- » Members of the community who presently rough sleep in the park or who have previously camped in the park to inform the service needs of this population
- » Multi-cultural communities through workshops aided by the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op
- » Consultation and discussions with the river users as part of the development of the River Access Strategy

As data from these outreach methods becomes available, the City will incorporate the findings into the Master Plan. The environmental sensitivity analysis for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine contributed to the City's understanding of the park by outlining areas of known and potential historical significance as well as areas of potentially high habitat value. Feedback from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of engagement has been integral to our understanding of programmatic and operational needs for the park.

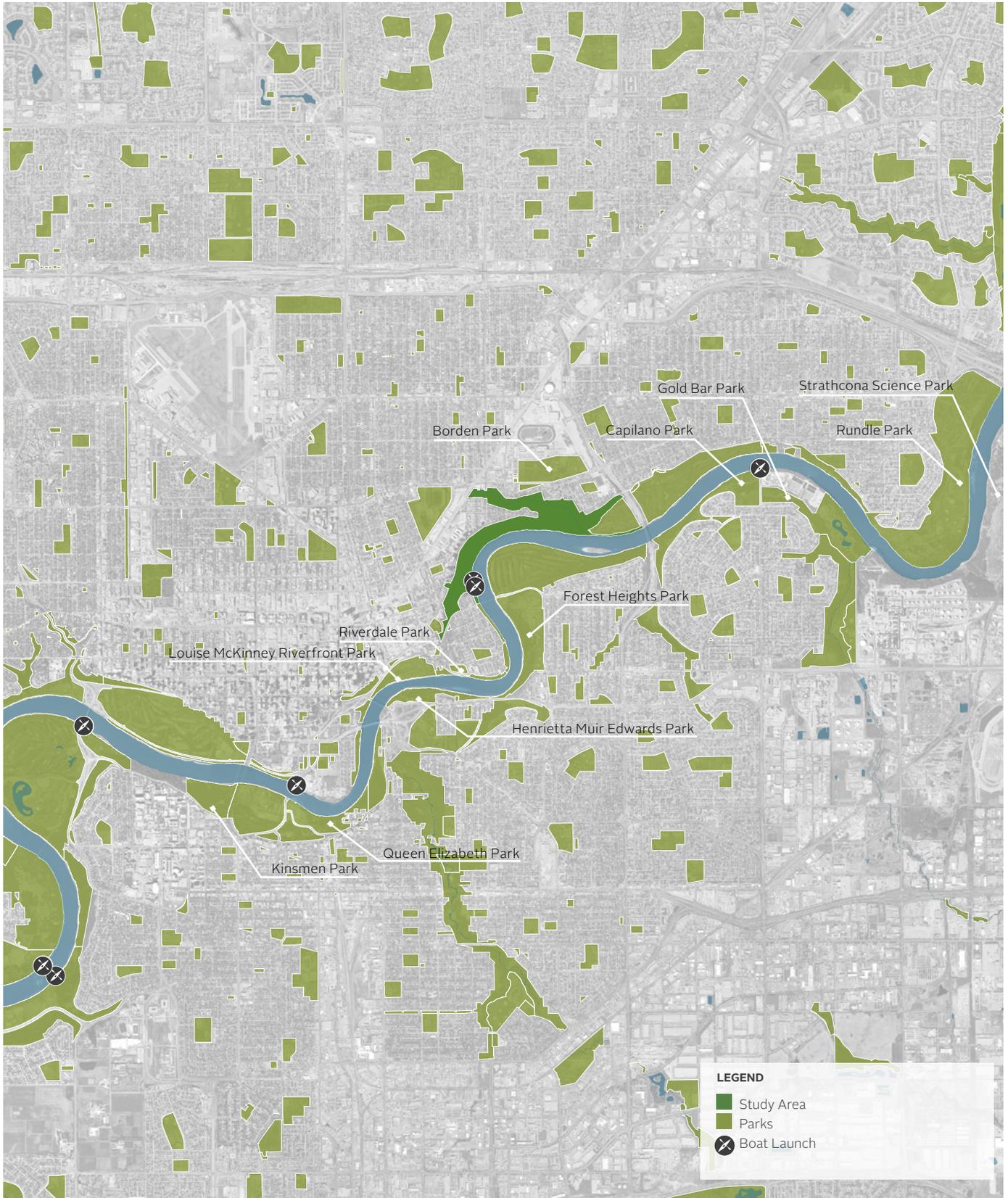


Figure 5.1 Inventory of Surrounding Parks

## Design and Planning Process

### Creating the vision statements

Feedback from Phase 2 of public engagement built on what we heard from Phase 1 and helped contribute to common values from the park. We asked participants to prioritize words and phrases that resonated with their values that would contribute to two vision statements for the concept options. The public's input resulted in a vision for the park that is:

- » Natural and protects the ecological balance and
- » Is a place for people to be outside in nature to experience the health benefits of being in nature.

Secondary to this, people would like the park to facilitate an experience: one that invites exploration and recreational activity year-round, while telling a story about the culture and history of the place. A park that is inviting and accessible to all people (and pets) is desired, creating a place for heritage appreciation, including Indigenous heritage and gathering. The park should also inspire community stewardship, be planned and built responsibly and provide access and connection to the River Valley.

Differences in public opinion and varying priorities in City policy and environmental conditions helped us to develop two unique vision statements and concept plans for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine.

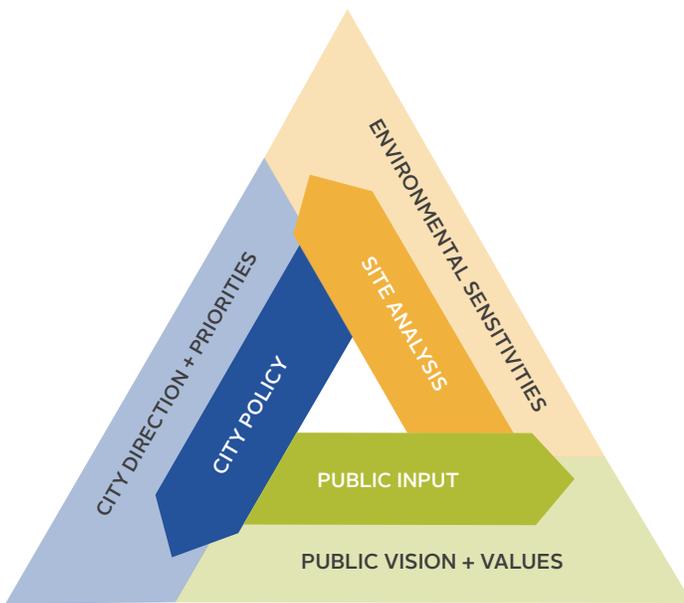


Figure 5.2 City's Decision-making Inputs

### Creating the concept options

The City has developed benchmarks or check points to provide direction in recommendations for the Master Plan. These check points have been developed from public input, site analysis and City policy:

#### How do the concept options align with the common values and vision for the park? What are the conflicting preferences?

Public vision and values were developed through the analysis of public input from the first two phases of engagement. We want to make sure that all recommendations are in line with the public's vision for the park and our common values.

#### Are there conflicts with the environmental sensitivities in the park? Can they be mitigated?

Environmental sensitivities were determined through the analysis of existing conditions in the park. We aim to respect the environmental sensitivities in the park and minimize development impacts in more sensitive areas.

#### How are the concept options supported and directed by City policies and priorities?

City direction and priorities are determined by City policy and current planning initiatives. Recommendations for the Master Plan should align with the City's policies and vision for the open space network.

Concept development is an iterative process, weighing the pros and cons of public preferences and balancing them with priorities from site analysis and City policy. As recommendations are refined, they are continually measured against the three check points. With three inputs influencing the direction of the Master Plan, conflicting influences are inevitable. Through the development of the concept options, strategies were developed to reduce these conflicts where possible. The following pages summarize some key decisions that were made in response to conflicts that arose during concept development.

CONFLICTS WITH PUBLIC INPUT	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<b>INCREASED AMENITIES</b> Some members of the public expressed that they do not want to see high levels of development, but some would like increased activity in the park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Focus on low levels of development and ecological restoration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Increase opportunities for activities to occur in the park by providing appropriate infrastructure</li> <li>» Manage environmental impacts of development</li> </ul>
<b>INCREASED PARKING</b> Some people do not want increased parking, but we also heard that the current parking lot does not meet existing needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improve the function of the parking lot without expanding the capacity or footprint</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Expand the parking lot to address existing and future needs</li> </ul>
<b>RIVER ACCESS</b> Increased access to the river is desired with a preference towards natural access points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» New river access points reduce informal access along the River Edge, keeping a natural aesthetic</li> <li>» Boat launch is universally accessible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» New river access points are constructed</li> <li>» The pathway to the boat launch is universally accessible and designed as a gathering space</li> </ul>
<b>KEEP IT THE SAME</b> Many do not want to see major changes in the park, while others would like increased activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Enhancements are proposed to protect natural areas, improve safety in the park and accommodate increased future use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» More infrastructure changes are proposed as current infrastructure contributes to the feeling of being unsafe and is reaching the end of its useful life</li> </ul>
CONFLICTS WITH CITY POLICY	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<b>PARK OPERATIONS</b> While high levels of development are not desired for the park, many want to see an increase in public safety and park clean-ups. Park Operations and Outreach staff expressed a need for more supporting infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Enclosed garbage bins are proposed in the parking lot to aid park clean-ups</li> <li>» The City will continue to collaborate and support Homeless on Public Lands initiatives, taking a sensitive approach to homelessness</li> <li>» The amenity building will include supporting amenities for staff, including a touch down spot for meetings and collaboration</li> </ul>	
<b>AMENITY BUILDING</b> Some would like improvements to the existing pavilion while others would like a new amenity building with increased program. The City recommends a new structure to address safety concerns. The existing pavilion can not accommodate small improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A small new amenity building with visible washrooms and small flexible indoor space is proposed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A larger amenity building with visible washrooms, small flexible indoor space and potential for expansion to support river access partners is proposed</li> </ul>

Figure 5.2 Key Decisions

CONFLICTS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<p><b>OFF-LEASH DOG WALKING</b> Off-leash dog walking is desired by many but this activity can sometimes pose conflicts with other park users and natural areas in the park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The multi-use trail in the Mobility Corridor remains an off-leash trail with added regulatory signage and natural or constructed buffers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A new dedicated off-leash loop is proposed on the River Valley Slopes as well as an off-leash area in Jasper Viewpoint Park to help separate park uses and minimize ecological impact</li> </ul>
<p><b>NEW TRAILS</b> Some would like to see a new natural trail in the park, however new trails could negatively impact the park's sensitive slopes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A new natural trail is proposed near the Cromdale trail to minimize impacts to undisturbed slopes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A new natural trail is proposed in Kinnaird Ravine to connect neighbourhoods to the north to the North Saskatchewan River</li> <li>» The trail route minimizes impact on the Ravine</li> </ul>
<p><b>ACCESS FROM JASPER AVENUE</b> Many people want to have better access into the park, but access along Jasper Avenue will have impacts on the sensitive River Valley Slopes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Two new connections are proposed along Jasper Avenue using sustainably constructed trails and stairs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Three new connections are proposed along Jasper Avenue using sustainably constructed trails and stairs</li> </ul>
<p><b>RIVER ACCESS</b> Increased access to the river is desired but human access along the River Edge could disturb the already sensitive landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» River access points are formalized but kept natural</li> <li>» Invasive species removal and native planting are included as part of the restoration efforts along the River Edge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» River access points are formalized with small lookouts</li> <li>» Invasive species removal and native planting are included as part of the restoration efforts along the River Edge</li> </ul>
CONFLICTS WITH CITY POLICY	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<p><b>WINTER ACTIVITIES</b> Some would like to see more winter activity in the park, including cross country skiing. The City supports winter activities in the park, but Dawson Park has not been identified as a location for track set ski trails.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Cross country skiing is supported in the park, but the City will not provide track set cross country ski trails</li> <li>» Track set trails are provided across the river at the Riverside Golf Course</li> <li>» Pathways in the park may be used for activities such as snowshoeing, hiking and fat biking</li> <li>» Playgrounds are enhanced with winter activities</li> </ul>	
<p><b>EMERGENCY CALL BOXES</b> Elements to increase the feeling of safety in the park are desired. The City is phasing out Emergency Call Boxes due to poor functionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Trail markers with a numbering system for emergency response is recommended</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Trail markers with a numbering system for emergency response is recommended</li> <li>» Concept 2 also explores increased Rangers presence in the park</li> </ul>

# Concept Options

The concept options presented in this report respond to all that we have learned about Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine through the Master Plan process – from the public, site analysis and the City’s priorities for the park.

Both concepts propose sustainable design and management practices and encourage responsible use of the park to protect vital habitat and ecological links. The following narratives describe the experience of a park visitor as they travel through all areas of the park. This experience is illustrated in a series of images. The location of the images is keyed on the main plan for the concept option.

The landscape units used to describe the experience were developed through the inventory and analysis of the park for the Master Plan. They represent areas with similar ecological attributes that can be expected to respond to management techniques in the same way.

## Concept 1 Experience

### River Valley Slopes

As a stark contrast to the urban landscape surrounding the park, nature is within arm’s reach in the River Valley Slopes. Native trees are protected to enhance wildlife habitat and maintain the stability of the slopes. The feeling of enclosure created by the forest vegetation is balanced with improved sight lines and clear wayfinding signage to maintain a sense of security for all park users as they traverse down the slope. Park visitors connect to nature and to one another as they share the trails for biking, walking and snowshoeing through the park.



#### LEGEND

- areas of highest sensitivity
- river valley slopes
- mobility corridor
- river edge
- kinnaird ravine
- plateau parks
- \* park entrances

Figure 6.1 Landscape Units in Dawson Park & Kinnaird Ravine



Figure 6.2 Concept 1 Plan & Image Locations

### Concept 1 Vision

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, conserving wildlife habitat and respecting the heritage of our open spaces.

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.

The focus in Concept 1 for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine is promoting habitat protection and restoration.

Concept 1 improves ecological connections, has fewer infrastructure requirements and addresses safety and maintenance concerns in the park.

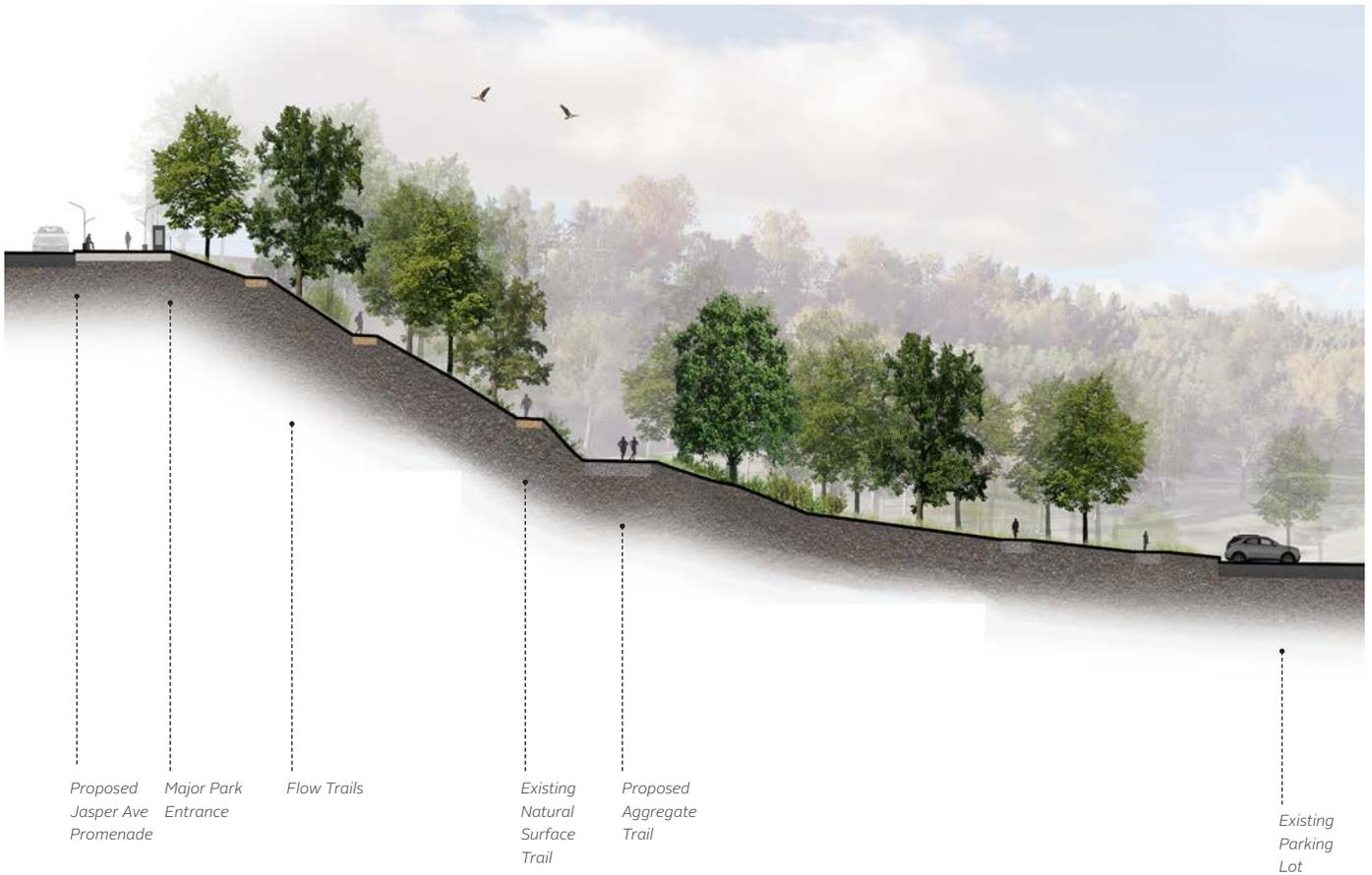


Figure 6.3 Concept 1: Dawson Park Section 1



Image 1  
 Ada Blvd. Lookout Point and Stairs to Mobility Corridor



Image 2  
 Formalized Park Entrance off of Jasper Avenue to Existing Cromdale Trail

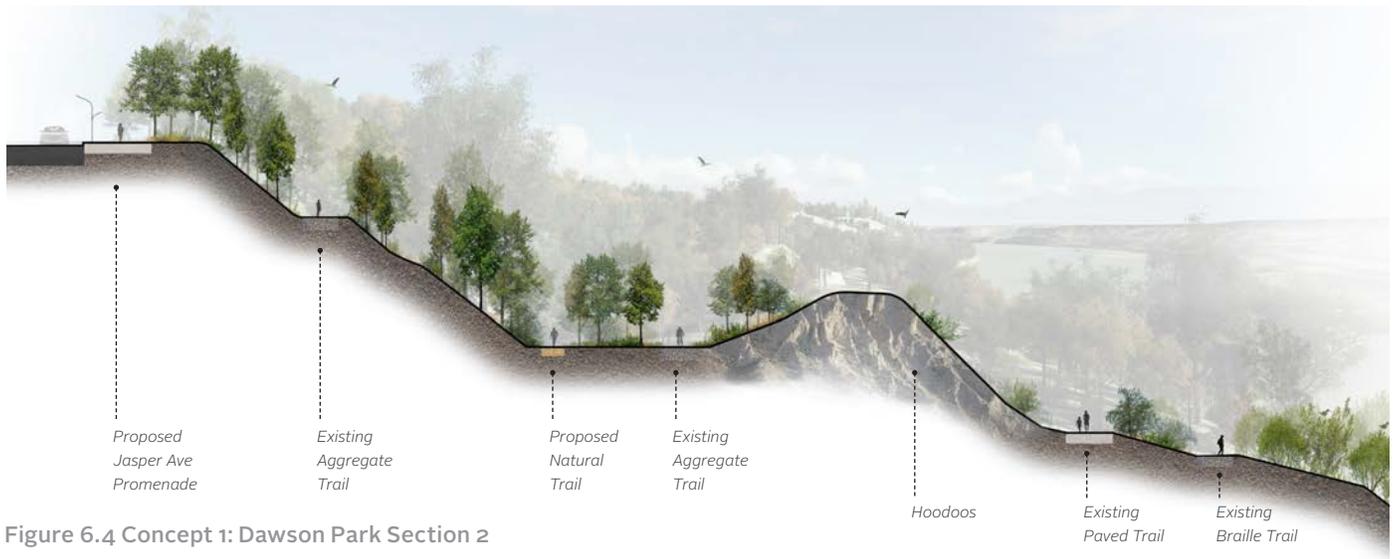


Figure 6.4 Concept 1: Dawson Park Section 2

### Plateau Parks

Plateau Parks, which are the flat parkland areas connecting into the ravine at the top of bank, play a large role in connecting people and ecological communities at the top of the bank to the North Saskatchewan River. In the Plateau Parks, people of all ages can run, play and learn amidst the early spring blooms or wander through contemplative winter gardens during the colder months. Restored vegetation communities create a natural haven for park visitors and provide essential habitat for birds, insects and small mammals. The Plateau Parks open to expansive views of the River Valley, revealing the river in the landscape and persuading visitors to wander down to the water.



Image 3  
Winter Garden and Play Space in Jasper Viewpoint Park

### Mobility Corridor

In the Mobility Corridor, the landscape once again opens to views of the North Saskatchewan River. Connecting to the larger integrated River Valley trail system, Dawson Park is an essential link in the trail network. Conflict in trail use between various park users is minimized using signage, public education and natural or constructed barriers where necessary. An accessible trail loop near the parking lot and a universally designed boating hand launch, both of which are enhanced with restored native vegetation, allow everyone who visits the park to experience the beauty of the River Valley. The amenity building and adjacent rest area become a moment of pause in the trail system, creating opportunities for gathering with friends and neighbours in a safe and natural environment.



Image 4  
Off Leash Multi-Use Trail in the Mobility Corridor with Hoodoo Interpretation Signs

### Kinnaird Ravine

Kinnaird Ravine is a unique place in Edmonton to escape from the city and descend into the rich, cool ravine air. Along the single gravel trail there are opportunities to stop, observe Rat Creek and learn about the birds, insects and aquatic species that call its wetlands home. Community stewardship and partnerships help to ensure that Kinnaird Ravine remains an essential wildlife corridor and a natural sanctuary for quiet reflection and mental rejuvenation.

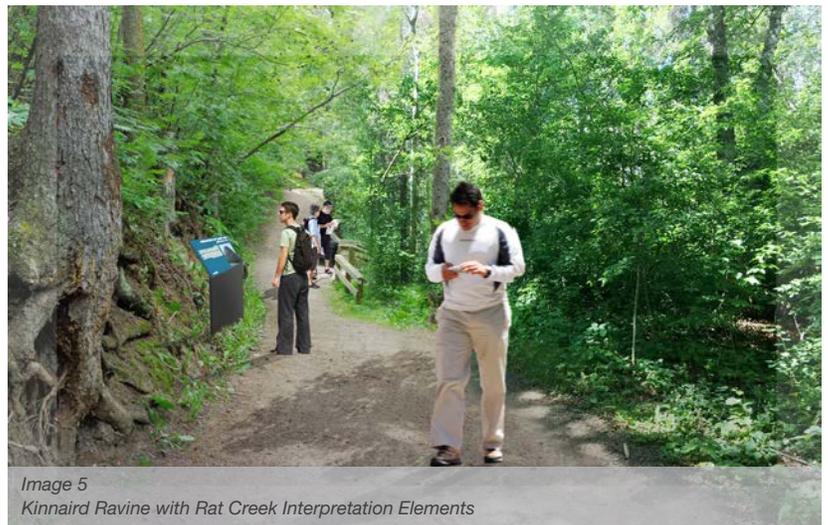


Image 5  
Kinnaird Ravine with Rat Creek Interpretation Elements

### River Edge

The park connects with the North Saskatchewan River at the River Edge. It is a place for ecological restoration and quiet fascination. Those who take the time to pause near the river are rewarded with sightings of birds, fish, insects and other wildlife who rely on the river for habitat. Enhanced riparian vegetation, including native grasses, shrubs and flowers, lend to seasonal interest in the park. The mouth of Rat Creek is restored and opened for fish habitat and nature interpretation. Whether sitting among the native flowers and grasses at the river's edge in the summer months or watching the ice flows course through the river in the earliest stages of spring, visitors are encouraged to contemplate their relationship to the river and their place in the larger ecosystem.



Image 6  
Natural Stone River Access Points along the River Edge



Image 7  
Naturalized Mouth of Rat Creek with Interpretation Elements, Pedestrian Bridge and Limited Water Access



Figure 6.5 Concept 2 Plan & Image Locations

### Concept 2 Vision

*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.*

The focus in Concept 2 is creating a meeting place and recreational experience for park visitors while maintaining the natural character of the River Valley.

Concept 2 maintains the ecological integrity of the park while proposing activities with slightly more infrastructure requirements.

## Concept 2 Experience

### River Valley Slopes

Well-defined gateways at the top of bank lead visitors onto enhanced stairs and pathways, connecting to the network of natural and improved trails that weave through the slopes. Park visitors, including mountain bikers, hikers, dog-walkers, snowshoers and cyclists, co-exist in the River Valley Slopes, enjoying opportunities to meet friends and neighbours and to experience nature up close. While maintaining a natural feel, improved sight lines, wayfinding signage and pathway improvements increase the feeling of security for all people in the park. The proposed off-leash dog loop brings park visitors and their four-legged friends into the River Valley Slopes, helping to reduce impacts on other, more sensitive, areas of the park and reducing conflict on the multi-use trail at the base of the slopes.

### Plateau Parks

The open spaces at the top of bank offer an exciting introduction to the River Valley and ravine landscape. Whether you are approaching the park from Jasper Avenue, a neighbourhood north of the park or from elsewhere in the City, the Plateau Parks offer play opportunities, picnic sites and off-leash dog areas in a mix of manicured and natural landscapes. These amenities are accessible to all neighbours of the park and encourage pedestrian connections to adjacent green spaces, such as Borden Park north of the ravine. Visitors are enticed to descend the slopes at several improved access points, cross over Kinnaird Ravine on a new pedestrian bridge or simply sit and enjoy the stunning views.



Image 1  
Dawson Park Gateway along Jasper Avenue Promenade at 82 St. NW



Image 2  
On Leash Aggregate Trail, Improved Seating, Off Leash Dog Area in Jasper Viewpoint Park



Image 3  
Natural Play at Sheriff Robertson Playground Including Tree House and Butterfly Garden

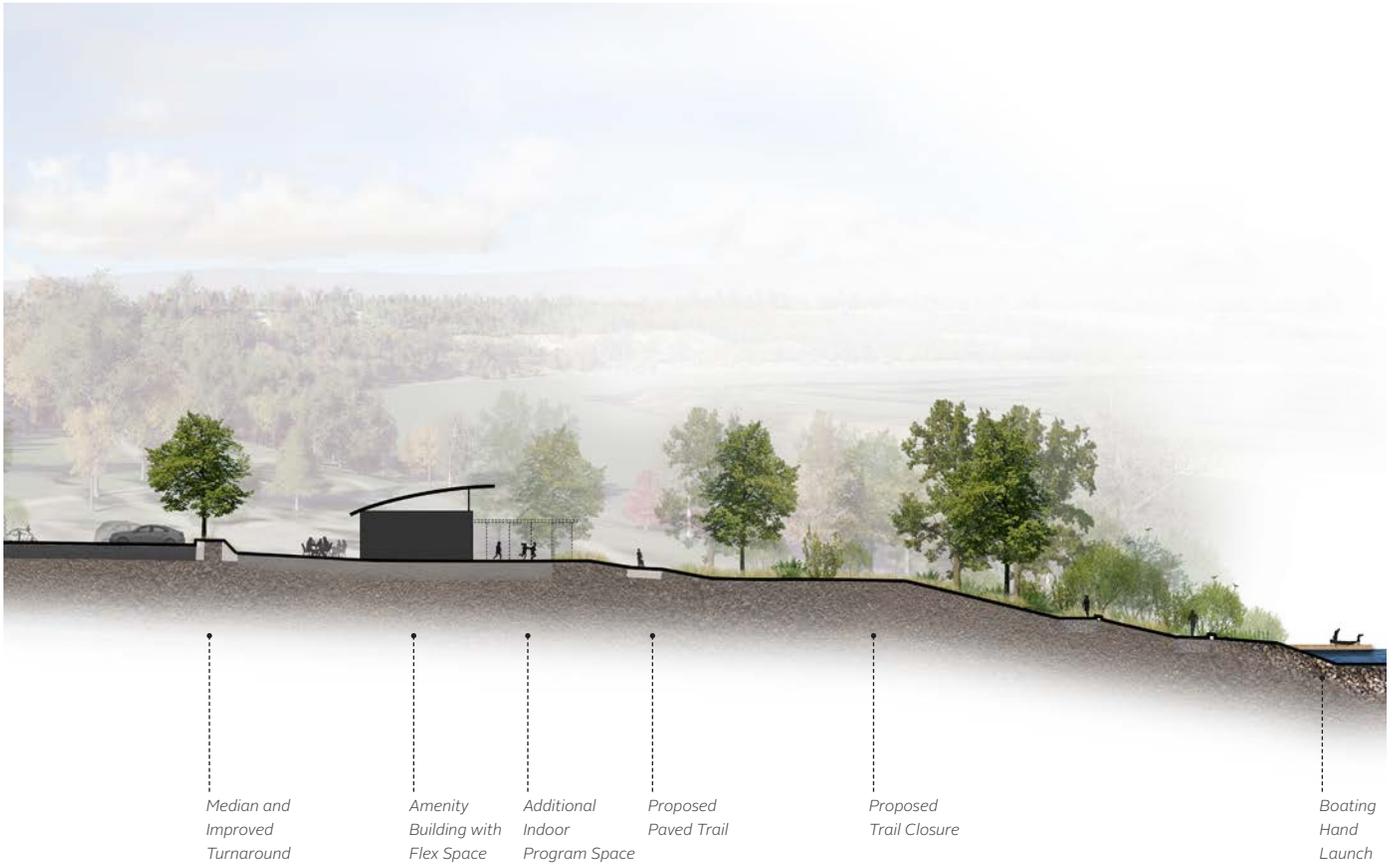


Figure 6.6 Concept 2: Dawson Park Section 1

**Mobility Corridor**

The Mobility Corridor is a place for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to gather and enjoy being in the River Valley. As an open space at the bottom of the bank, the landscape is ideal for running, cycling, snowshoeing and strolling along the pathways. A new vehicle and pedestrian entrance to the park creates a sense of arrival and a clear identity for the park. The parking lot, with improved parking for buses and boat trailers, connects to a barrier-free trail loop and accessible boating hand launch, as well the Braille Trail with enhanced interpretation elements, creating exciting experiences for all park visitors. Large groups can use the picnic area for family or community gatherings while children can run, jump and climb on the new natural playground in the activity node. The amenity building is safe, visible and well-maintained, providing a space for partner organizations, City staff and the public to come together in the park.





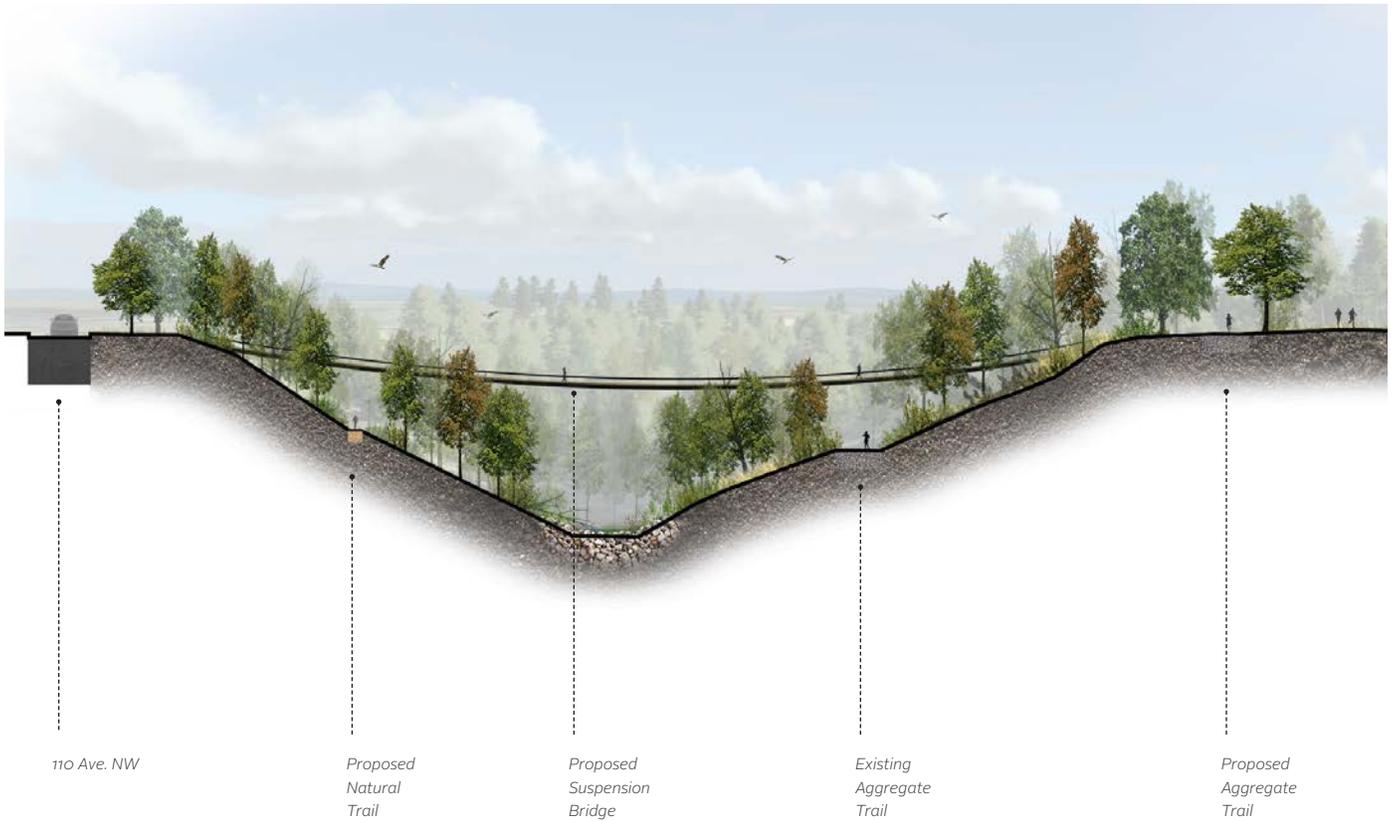


Figure 6.7 Concept 2: Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Section 2

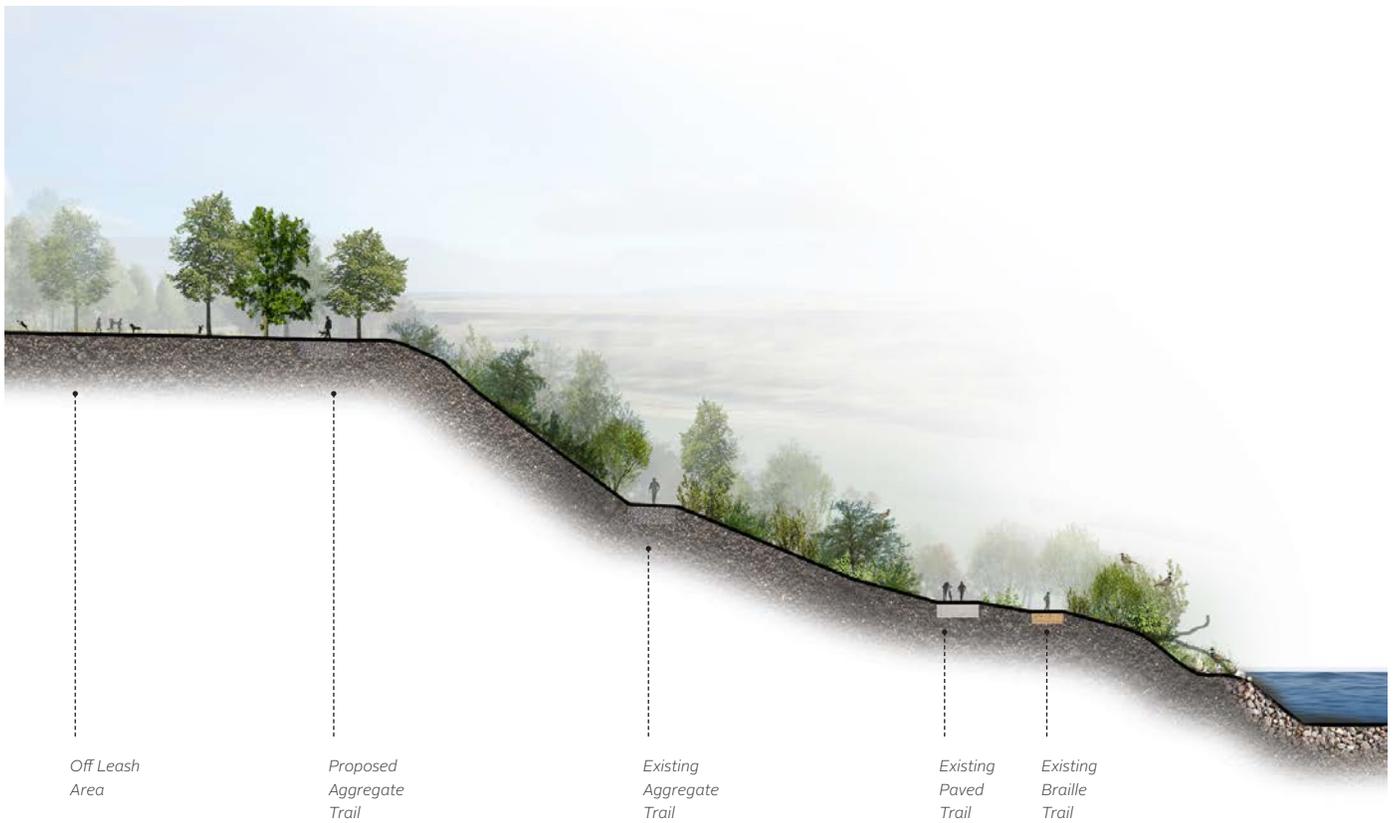
### Kinnaird Ravine

Secluded and shaded by a towering white spruce forest, Kinnaird Ravine offers a rejuvenating experience unlike any other in Edmonton for commuters, recreationalists and naturalists alike. Visitors are welcomed to walk, roll, run, bike or snowshoe along the existing gravel pathway, experiencing the unique ecologies of the ravine and community artwork.

A suspension bridge across the Ravine creates a spectacular viewing experience for visitors to the park and an additional natural pathway that traverses through the forest will connect park visitors to the confluence of Rat Creek and the North Saskatchewan River from the north bank.



Image 7  
Kinnaird Ravine Suspension Bridge Connecting 110 Ave. NW to Jasper Viewpoint Park



### River Edge

The River Edge is a place where everyone can access the North Saskatchewan River. Quiet enjoyment of the river is facilitated at designated access points and viewing decks amidst restored riparian vegetation. Near the amenity building, the landscape terraces down to the boat launch to improve access for all boaters and park users. This terracing is mimicked at the mouth of Rat Creek, inviting people to climb down to the water or to sit and enjoy river views.



Image 8  
Terraced Mouth of Rat Creek with Access to the River and Expanded Viewing Deck

## Program and Park Management

Out of the Phase 1 engagement results, we developed five themes to help summarize public preferences for the park. The following four themes, along with a Winter Overlay and Identity & Experience described above, are used to summarize the proposed changes and highlight key differences between the concept options.

- » Connectivity & Circulation
- » Park Use & Amenities
- » Nature & Ecology
- » Safety & Maintenance
- » Winter Activities

### Connectivity & Circulation

#### General Approach

The Master Plan will address connectivity and circulation in Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine with the following two priorities:

1. **Trail Rationalization:** The trail network should be rationalized to create safe and identifiable trail loops for various park users. Trails should be maintained according to City standards and designed using international best practices to minimize safety risks and ecological impacts. The City will integrate a natural surface trail system into their official trail network and will re-route or enhance natural trails that are showing signs of erosion or misuse. A new aggregate trail will connect the Stadium Station LRT station into Kinnaird Ravine. This trail will be used by park visitors, commuters and park operations staff.
2. **A Clear Wayfinding Strategy:** Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine will use a signage and wayfinding strategy to improve the feeling of safety, reduce user conflict and enhance site interpretation and public education in the park.

#### Program

Trail activities, including hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, walking, cycling, mountain biking, fat biking and dog

walking, will be encouraged in the Master Plan. These activities will be regulated, in part, by a comprehensive signage plan for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. The signage plan will regulate park use, improve wayfinding throughout the park and integrate site interpretation elements. The Braille Trail and accompanying braille plinths will be maintained, and additional interpretation elements for people with varying abilities will be incorporated into park signage.

The signage plan will take direction from the River Valley Wayfinding strategy and will incorporate recommendations from the Pedestrian Wayfinding Design Standard along the top of bank, especially along Jasper Avenue, which will be enhanced in the coming years to include a pedestrian-friendly promenade. The Master Plan will recommend the following signage types:

- » Major Park Entrance (Primary Identification [RV] or Pedestrian Monolith)
- » Minor Park Entrance (Secondary Identification [RV] or Pedestrian Minolith)
- » Information and Orientation Hub
- » Regulatory and Component (Picnic Site, Boat Launch, Off-Leash Area Code of Conduct) signs
- » Interpretive signs
- » Parking Directional signs
- » Wayfinding signs
  - » Park Directional signs at major pathway intersections
  - » Transitional Area Directional signs between major park areas
  - » Trail markers (Mid-trail sign posts) along trails at 250m intervals and at pathway intersections

Trail markers along the natural trail system will include identification symbols or codes to aid in navigation by park users, maintenance staff and emergency response crews. Signage at park entrances will contribute to the creation of visible and identifiable gateways into the park.

**Key Differences: Connectivity & Circulation**

	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<b>DOGS OFF LEASH</b>	Off-leash dog walking remains an activity for the Mobility Corridor. Improved signage and natural or constructed barriers help to reduce user conflict. All other areas in the park are on-leash.	Off-leash dog walking is moved from the Mobility Corridor to Jasper Viewpoint Park and a paved, all season trail loop in the River Valley Slopes to isolate the activity and separate user groups. All other areas in the park are on-leash.
<b>NEW NATURAL TRAIL</b>	A new natural trail in the River Valley Slopes creates new opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists. The trail uses the same bench as an existing trail, minimizing the ecological impact on other areas of the park.	A new natural trail in Kinnaird Ravine creates an access point from the north side of the park to the river. The alignment was chosen to create a ravine experience for park visitors with a small ecological footprint.
<b>PARK ENTRANCES</b>	A new park entrance point is proposed at 78 St. NW off Jasper Ave. This staircase connects to an existing path and stairs.	Two new park entrances are proposed along Jasper Avenue, as well as a new staircase with outlook platforms under the Latta Bridge.
<b>NORTHERN CONNECTIONS</b>	A new staircase off the Ada Blvd. viewpoint creates a sustainable access point from the north side of the park to the river. This entrance would be connected into the neighbourhood by a gravel trail and sidewalk system in Virginia Park.	To improve connections to the north side of the ravine, a suspension bridge is proposed to connect Virginia Park to Jasper Viewpoint Park.
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Aggregate Kinnaird trail</li> <li>» Aggregate trail</li> <li>» Natural trail</li> <li>» Staircase</li> <li>» Signs</li> <li>» Trail improvements (maintenance)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Aggregate Kinnaird trail</li> <li>» Paved trail</li> <li>» Natural trail / boardwalks</li> <li>» Staircases</li> <li>» Suspension bridge</li> <li>» Signs</li> <li>» Trail improvements (maintenance)</li> </ul>



Figure 6.8 Connectivity & Circulation Concept 1

**Connectivity & Circulation: Concept 1**

Trails are upgraded with a preference of natural and aggregate surfaces over paved surfaces.

Trail activities are encouraged in less sensitive areas of the park and new alignments are chosen to create minimal ecological impacts.

- TYPE 1
  - Existing: Paved Multi-Use Pathway
  - Proposed: Paved Multi-Use Pathway
- TYPE 2
  - Existing: Aggregate Surface Trail
  - Proposed: Aggregate Surface Trail
- TYPE 3
  - Existing: Natural Surface Trail
  - Proposed: Natural Surface Trail
- Proposed: Trail Closure
- Proposed: Aggregate Path with Truck Access



Figure 6.9 Connectivity & Circulation Concept 2

**Connectivity & Circulation: Concept 2**

Trails are upgraded to accommodate increased activity.

New trail alignments are chosen where they will create exciting user experiences in the park while minimizing impact to ecologically sensitive areas.

- TYPE 1
  - Existing: Paved Multi-Use Pathway
  - Proposed: Paved Multi-Use Pathway
- TYPE 2
  - Existing: Aggregate Surface Trail
  - Proposed: Aggregate Surface Trail
- TYPE 3
  - Existing: Natural Surface Trail
  - Proposed: Natural Surface Trail
- Proposed: Trail Closure
- Proposed: Aggregate Path with Truck Access

## **Park Use & Amenities**

### **General Approach**

The park use and amenities in both concept options are largely based on public input, City policies and site analysis. The location of proposed activities was guided by public input from Phase 1 and 2 as well as information from the Environmental Sensitivities Report. Higher intensity activities are not recommended for higher sensitivity areas. In cases where activities and sensitivities conflict, the Master Plan will recommend mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to natural areas in the park.

### **Program**

Based on public input, City priorities and their compatibility with sensitivities in the park, the following activities and amenities are recommended for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine:

- » On- and off-leash dog walking
- » Trail activities
- » Play experiences and natural play
- » Viewing areas
- » Recreational and accessible boating activities (non-motorized)
- » Fishing
- » Exercise on stairs and trails
- » Picnicking
- » Educational programming
- » Park stewardship
- » Community art programs

Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine is identified as a park for barrier-free access to the River Valley, providing educational and recreational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. Building on recommendations from the Capital City Recreation Park (CCRP) Concept Plan, the Master Plan will recommend the maintenance and enhancement of the Braille Trail and related interpretation elements for people with visual impairments. The Master Plan will also recommend the inclusion of a barrier-free boat launch at the location of the proposed RVA hand launch and accessible supporting amenities (washrooms, shelters, tables, etc.).

The Master Plan will explore future uses for the John C. Hall building located within the park boundaries at the eastern end of Jasper Avenue. Potential uses the Master Plan could explore within the current zoning allowance include uses such as community, non-profit or exhibit space. The Master Plan will also explore the designation of the structure as a heritage building if the resources to do so are available and desire exists.

## Key Differences: Park Use & Amenities

	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<b>PLAY</b>	Natural play and interpretation elements are introduced in Sheriff Robertson Park, Jasper Viewpoint Park and near the proposed amenity building.	A larger natural playground is proposed near the amenity building in Dawson Park and a smaller interpretive playground is introduced in Jasper Viewpoint Park near the off-leash dog park.
<b>VIEWPOINTS</b>	Views to the river are enhanced through vegetation clearing and, at some points, interpretive signage.	Existing viewpoints are enhanced to reduce the level of rough sleeping near the structures and to improve their winter comfort (for example, with wind breaks).
<b>RIVER ACCESS</b>	Access points to the river are formalized with small ramps, stairs and small docks to reduce informal access points along the River Edge.	Several constructed viewing decks are proposed along the River Edge to formalize access to the river.
<b>PICNIC AREAS</b>	The picnic area near the amenity building is designed to update infrastructure, maintaining accessibility for people with physical and visual impairments.	The picnic area near the amenity building is designed to accommodate larger gatherings and is proposed to become a bookable site. A flexible shelter will provide cover for events without encouraging camping. A small picnic area is proposed in Jasper Viewpoint Park along with picnic tables in other Plateau Parks.
<b>AMENITY BUILDING</b>	The amenity building will provide minimal amenities while remaining accessible and safe. It will include public washrooms, water bottle fill stations, a small meeting room and maintenance storage. The approach to the river from the amenity building maintains a naturalized look and feel.	The amenity building will include public washrooms, water bottle fill stations, a larger meeting room and maintenance storage with the possibility for expansion for use by boating groups. The approach to the river from the amenity building will be integrated into the site design, creating a terraced gathering area and accessible ramp to the boating hand launch.
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Dog bag dispensers</li> <li>» Waste receptacles</li> <li>» Bike racks</li> <li>» Drinking fountains</li> <li>» Benches</li> <li>» Picnic tables</li> <li>» Interpretive signage</li> <li>» John C. Hall building</li> <li>» Smaller playground features</li> <li>» Smaller amenity building</li> <li>» Parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Dog bag dispensers</li> <li>» Waste receptacles</li> <li>» Bike racks</li> <li>» Drinking fountains</li> <li>» Benches</li> <li>» Picnic tables</li> <li>» Interpretive signage</li> <li>» John C. Hall building</li> <li>» Larger playground features</li> <li>» Amenity building with potential expansion</li> <li>» Parking</li> </ul>



Figure 6.12 Park Use & Amenities Concept 1

**Park Use & Amenities: Concept 1**

A sensitive approach to recreation in the park is taken in Concept 1.

The focus for the park is on ecological preservation and restoration, which introduces unique passive recreation opportunities into the park.

**Legend:**

- Shelter
- Outlook
- New / Enhanced Playground
- Drinking Fountain
- Public Washroom
- Hand Launch
- Fishing
- Bike Racks
- Upgraded Parking
- Dog Bag Dispensers
- Off-Leash Dog Walking
- John C. Hall Building
- River Access
- Off-Leash Dog Trail
- Off-Leash Dog Area
- Benches
- Garbage Cans
- Park Entrance - Existing
- Park Entrance - Proposed



Figure 6.13 Park Use & Amenities Concept 2

**Park Use & Amenities: Concept 2**

Concept 2 integrates more amenities based activities into the park plan.

This concept proposes relatively low levels of development but provides the required amenities to support a more actively used park.

**Legend:**

- Shelter
- Outlook
- New / Enhanced Playground
- Drinking Fountain
- Public Washroom
- Hand Launch
- Fishing
- Bike Racks
- Upgraded Parking
- Dog Bag Dispensers
- Off-Leash Dog Walking
- John C. Hall Building
- River Access
- Off-Leash Dog Trail
- Off-Leash Dog Area
- Benches
- Garbage Cans
- Park Entrance - Existing
- Park Entrance - Proposed

## **Nature & Ecology**

### **General Approach**

In both concept options, the approach to managing the natural areas in the park is focused on the maintenance and enhancement of ecological connections while increasing safety in the park. The proposals follow the federal, provincial and municipal policy framework with regards to natural area management and customize recommendations based on the unique environmental and social context of Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine.

The findings from the Environmental Sensitivities Report play a large role in the approach to natural area preservation and park use within the Master Plan. For example, recommendations for restoration will focus on the pinch points indicated in the report, such as near the mouth of Rat Creek and the North Saskatchewan River and the southern and eastern connections to other park spaces in the River Valley. Attention will also be paid to improving ecological connections and maintaining tree cover on the River Valley Slopes and River Edge.

### **Program**

The concept options for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine balance the protection of environmentally sensitive areas with present and future recreational uses of the park. Activity in the park is largely segregated to the trails and areas that are already disturbed, encouraging people and dogs to stay out of sensitive natural areas. Fences or natural barriers in combination with public education efforts are recommended to protect the areas of highest sensitivity, such as wetlands and the hoodoos. The wetlands along Rat Creek will be delineated and protected according to the Water Act and historical resources in the park will be protected according to the Historical Resources Act.

Stewardship opportunities will be explored in the Master Plan, building on work that is currently being carried out by community groups in the area. Community groups

will be encouraged to partner with the city in natural area conservation and education opportunities. The Master Plan will recommend that detailed information be collected on invasive species, weeds and at-risk plant species (if identified) in the park, utilizing resources from community groups and potentially partnering with university research teams. Interpretive signage will be used to increase awareness of natural and historical assets in the park and supplement community-led educational efforts.

Dawson Park's location on the outer bend of the North Saskatchewan River presents an opportunity to improve critical habitat for aquatic life, such as fish who spawn and over-winter in the river. The areas to the south and east of Dawson Park are classified as Mapped Class A water bodies with important fish habitat. The Master Plan will recommend naturalizing the mouth of Rat Creek to enhance fish habitat in the park. Currently, Rat Creek is unlikely to provide good habitat for fish due to low water levels. The Master Plan will explore opportunities to redirect storm water into Rat Creek from surrounding communities with the goal of increasing water flow in Rat Creek and reducing stress on the combined sewer system, potentially improving the quality of water entering the river through the sewer system. Signage will be used to regulate park activity around restored areas.

The Master Plan will recommend sustainable management practices for natural areas and proposed infrastructure development. The new amenity building will follow contemporary best practices for energy and water consumption and the park will be minimally lit to adhere to dark sky guidelines for natural areas. Trails that are deemed to be unsustainable because of their alignment or condition will be repaired or re-routed to minimize ecological damage and improve the safety of trails.

**Key Differences: Nature & Ecology**

	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<b>ACTIVITY IN SENSITIVE AREAS</b>	Human activity is discouraged in sensitive areas. Passive recreation is the most compatible park use with ecological restoration.	Human activity is managed in sensitive areas. Public education and trail management will be key to protecting natural areas from harmful human impacts while allowing park visitors to experience nature up close.
<b>DOGS OFF LEASH</b>	Dogs off leash remain in the Mobility Corridor. Physical barriers are implemented to protect the most sensitive areas of the River Valley Slopes as well as the Rat Creek from dogs. All other areas of the park are on-leash.	Dogs off leash are moved to a paved trail loop in the River Valley Slopes and to an off-leash dog park in Jasper Viewpoint Park. Fences or physical barriers are recommended to protect highly sensitive slopes and vegetation from dogs. All other areas of the park are on-leash.
<b>ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION</b>	<p>Invasive species are removed in select test sites in the River Valley Slopes and the River Edge using species conversion.</p> <p>The River Edge is enhanced with native grasses, shrubs and trees to improve aquatic habitat and stabilize river slopes.</p> <p>Select areas on the Plateau Parks are planted with meadow and parkland grasses, shrubs and flowers to enhance habitat for birds, insects and small mammals.</p> <p>Fish habitat is enhanced with a naturalized approach, protected from direct access by humans and dogs.</p> <p>Activity in Kinnaird Ravine is restricted to trail activity. Rough sleeping is highly discouraged in this landscape unit.</p>	<p>The River Edge is enhanced with native grasses, shrubs and trees to improve aquatic habitat and stabilize river slopes.</p> <p>Fish habitat is enhanced through the daylighting of Rat Creek. Human access to the River Edge is controlled to minimize ecological impact.</p> <p>Activity in Kinnaird Ravine is managed and public education is used as a tool to decrease human impact.</p>
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintenance access for forest management</li> <li>» Rat Creek</li> <li>» Regulatory / interpretive signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintenance access for forest management</li> <li>» Paved trail for dogs</li> <li>» Rat Creek</li> <li>» Regulatory / interpretive signage</li> </ul>



Figure 6.16 Nature & Ecology Concept 1

**Nature & Ecology: Concept 1**

The focus is on ecological restoration and enhancing wildlife habitat.

Natural heritage interpretation, educational programming and passive recreation are proposed as compatible park uses.

**Legend:**

-  Interpretive Sign
-  Protect Habitat / Discourage Human Activity
-  Manage Vegetation for Fire Prevention / Habitat Enhancement
-  Manage and Restore Riparian Plants / Stabilize Slopes
-  Restore with Native Grass and Shrub Planting
-  Restore with Transitional Forest Vegetation
-  Maintain as Mown Grass with Shade Trees
-  Restore Vegetation Cover to Create Natural Buffer
-  Restore Vegetation Cover on Exposed Slopes
-  Remove Select Vegetation for Improved Sightlines
-  Protect Sensitive Geologic Landform



Figure 6.17 Nature & Ecology Concept 2

Nature & Ecology: Concept 2

Legend:

-  Interpretive Sign
-  Protect Habitat / Manage Human Activity
-  Manage Vegetation for Fire Prevention / Habitat Enhancement
-  Manage and Restore Riparian Plants / Stabilize Slopes
-  Maintain as Mown Grass with Shade Trees
-  Restore Vegetation Cover on Exposed Slopes
-  Remove Select Vegetation for Improved Sightlines
-  Protect Sensitive Geologic Landform

## **Safety & Maintenance**

### **General Approach**

A priority of the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan is to increase the level of safety in the park and improve the well-being of all park users. Improving access into the park has two main benefits: increasing eyes on the park, which improves the feeling of safety, and helping people to experience the health benefits of being in nature. Sight lines are improved through selective clearing of underbrush in the River Valley Slopes along pathways. A comprehensive signage plan will improve wayfinding in the park and help to mitigate user conflict.

The Master Plan will complement the City's efforts to address homelessness and rough sleeping in the park, including outreach efforts organized by the Homeless on Public Lands Committee and Boyle Street Outreach. A focus of the Master Plan is to support City staff and outreach workers. Flexible space in the proposed amenity building in both concept options will be used by City staff, outreach services, Rangers and emergency service personnel to help perform their tasks when necessary. Enclosed garbage bins and improved access for maintenance staff will be recommended to aid in the collection of refuse throughout the park. The implementation of a needle box program is out of scope but supported by the Master Plan,

with the potential for drop off locations in Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. The Master Plan will not support activities that encourage formal or informal camping within the park, but will support a housing first and compassionate approach reducing homelessness in Edmonton.

Fire prevention will also be a focus of the Master Plan and natural area management will integrate FireSmart guidelines. It is recommended that structures in the park be constructed with non-flammable materials when possible, infrastructure for water pumps be provided along the River Edge, and paved or granular buffers be maintained between forested and residential areas. Vegetation clearing is a recommended fire prevention technique near park structures and the clearing or pruning of underbrush will be recommended in areas with a higher risk of fire. Fire prevention techniques such as public education and enforcement are recommended as opposed to species conversion, especially in Kinnaird Ravine, because of the habitat value and slope stabilizing qualities of the existing vegetation. The Master Plan will recommend an assessment by a FireSmart Representative to help determine the appropriate balance between fire prevention and environmental conservation.

## Key Differences: Safety & Maintenance

	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<b>AMENITY BUILDING</b>	The amenity building will require daily maintenance from park operations staff. A small meeting room will provide City staff, outreach services, Rangers and emergency services personnel a place to meet and perform their tasks.	For the short term, Concept 2 proposes additional supports such as extended washroom hours, increased Rangers presence and incentives for people rough sleeping to vacate the park and clean up campsites. The Master Plan supports the City's efforts to reduce homelessness in Edmonton. City and partner organizations will operate from meeting space in the new amenity building. Garbage collection and nightly cleaning will be required.
<b>LIGHTING</b>	The amenity building and parking lot will be lit according to dark sky recommendations. Natural areas will not be lit.	The amenity building, parking lot and picnic and play area in the activity node will be lit according to dark sky recommendations. Natural areas will not be lit.
<b>VEGETATION</b>	Vegetation management in Kinnaird Ravine and the River Valley Slopes will be focused on maintaining the ecological integrity of the park. Species conversion will occur in select areas with high numbers of invasive species, while selective vegetation clearing will only occur where necessary for fire prevention and improved sight lines.	Selective vegetation clearing in Kinnaird Ravine and the River Valley Slopes will occur where necessary for fire prevention and improved sight lines.
<b>PLATEAU PARKS</b>	Planting and maintenance regimes will occur in the Plateau Parks and to restore turf grass to native parkland and meadow vegetation. Yearly maintenance will be required to remove invasive species and to create mown pathways in the parks. Partnerships with community organizations will be explored in restoration efforts.	Plateau Parks will require yearly maintenance to extend the life of proposed infrastructure, such as picnic areas and playgrounds. The dog park in Jasper Viewpoint Park will require higher maintenance of the turf.
<b>TRAILS</b>	Yearly trail maintenance and repair will occur on paved and aggregate surface trails. The City will work with partners for the maintenance of natural surface trails. Snow clearing will occur on paved trails only.	Yearly trail maintenance and repair will occur on paved and aggregate surface trails. The City will work with partners for the maintenance of natural surface trails. Snow clearing will occur on paved trails only, which includes the proposed off-leash dog trail in the River Valley Slopes.
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Amenity building, enclosed garbage bins</li> <li>» Lighting</li> <li>» Signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Amenity building, enclosed garbage bins</li> <li>» Lighting</li> <li>» Signage</li> </ul>



Figure 6.18 Safety & Maintenance Concept 1

**Safety & Maintenance: Concept 1**

The activities and natural area management in Concept 1 generally require a lower level of maintenance.

A focus on ecological restoration and habitat protection calls for lower impact park operations and safety measures.

**Legend:**

- Trail for Maintenance Vehicles
- Enclosed Roll-Off Garbage Bins for Park Maintenance
- Lit Area
- ? Regulatory Sign
- ← Wayfinding Sign
- Trail Markers for Natural Surface Trails
- Trail Markers for Aggregate or Paved Surface Trails
- Remove Select Vegetation for Improved Sightlines



Figure 6.19 Safety & Maintenance Concept 2

**Safety & Maintenance: Concept 2**

Trails are upgraded

**Legend:**

-  Trail for Maintenance Vehicles
-  Enclosed Roll-Off Garbage Bins for Park Maintenance
-  Lit Area
-  Regulatory Sign
-  Wayfinding Sign
-  Trail Markers for Natural Surface Trails
-  Trail Markers for Aggregate or Paved Surface Trails
-  Remove Select Vegetation for Improved Sightlines

## **Winter Overlay**

The winter overlay for both concept options includes winter activities, winter ecologies and required winter maintenance. Therefore, there are additional factors to consider in the winter overlay within the themes of Connectivity & Circulation, Park Use & Amenities, Nature & Ecology and Safety & Maintenance.

### **Connectivity & Circulation**

Park signage and trail markers will include information on winter trail activities. Low impact trail-based activities are encouraged in the winter, including:

- » Fat biking
- » Hiking
- » Walking
- » Dog walking
- » Educational programming
- » Snowshoeing
- » Cross country skiing

### **Park Use & Amenities**

Both concept options offer opportunities for park visitors to enjoy nature in the winter months. Many of the activities that occur in the summer are made available in the winter with additional elements to enhance the winter experience. See the chart on the following page for similarities and differences in winter programming between the concept options.

### **Nature & Ecology**

In Concept 1, winter gardens are created in the Plateau Parks through the selection and planting of native grasses, shrubs and flowers. These gardens and meadows will increase the habitat value of the Plateau Parks in the summer and winter

months. Early blooming plant species will be chosen in areas to amplify the conditions created by the park's south facing aspect, resulting in earlier snow melt and warmer, sunnier days throughout the winter.

Restored aquatic habitat in both concept options creates the potential for fish to over-winter in or near the park. Winter ecologies create exciting educational opportunities in the park. For example, fish over-wintering and winter gardens create unique learning opportunities in Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine for school and community groups. Interpretive signage throughout the park will include information for summer and winter ecologies.

### **Safety & Maintenance**

Trail maintenance in the winter will mainly occur on paved trails with snow removal. Trails will not be track set for cross-country skiing because the qualities of the park, including south-facing slopes, do not create appropriate environmental conditions for track-setting. Cross country skiing is still encouraged in the park on trails that are not track set.

As daylight hours dwindle in the winter months, lighting becomes an important element in Edmonton's parks. Lighting is recommended near the amenity building and parking lot in both concept options for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine. Lighting in Concept 2 is extended into the playground and picnic area adjacent to the amenity building to extend use of these facilities for events or general park use during winter months. Lighting is not recommended in natural areas in either concept option.

## Key Differences: Winter Programming

	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
<b>DOG WALKING</b>	The off-leash dog trail in the Mobility Corridor will continue to be well-used by dog-walkers visiting the park. It will be enhanced with increased signage, garbage receptacles and dog waste bag dispensers.	The off-leash dog area in Jasper Viewpoint Park provides visitors an opportunity to enjoy the snow and winter views of the North Saskatchewan River with their four-legged friends. The new off-leash dog loop will be cleared in the winter, providing a new winter experience for dog-walkers.
<b>PLAY EXPERIENCES AND NATURAL PLAY</b>	Natural play and interpretive elements will be available to use in the winter near the pavilion, in Jasper Viewpoint Park and Sheriff Robertson Park. These elements will be educational and stimulating for people of all ages. Informal tobogganing will occur at the base of the River Valley Slopes.	The large natural playground adjacent to the amenity building will have a winter play focus, including activities that encourage children to interact with the winter elements. Tobogganing will be available at the base of the River Valley Slopes and on man-made berms in the play area in Concept 2.
<b>PICNICKING AND EVENTS</b>	Picnic tables will be available for winter use in both concept options. Informal winter gatherings are welcome to occur in Concept 1.	In Concept 2, the activity node can accommodate small winter events. Temporary fire pits and a larger amenity building provide creature comforts that help make cold weather events amenable for park visitors.
<b>VIEWING AREAS</b>	Lookout points in both concept options will be enhanced with vegetated or constructed wind breaks to improve comfort in the winter months, encouraging visitors to take in the River Valley views near the river or along the Jasper Avenue Promenade.	
<b>TRAIL ACTIVITIES</b>	Paved trails will be cleared of snow in the winter. Other recommended activities require minimal trail maintenance in the winter months.	
<b>COMMUNITY ART PROGRAMMING</b>	Community art, such as the KinnArt mural project in Kinnaird Ravine, adds much appreciated colour and interest to the winter landscape. Community driven projects such as this will be encouraged in the Master Plan.	



Figure 6.20 Winter Activities Concept 1

**Winter Activities: Concept 1**

During the winter months, a smaller building footprint in Concept 1 provides shelter and comfort indoors as a warm up space and encourages outdoor-based activities to enjoy.

**Legend:**

-  Winter Event Space
-  Winter Playground
-  John C. Hall Building (potential winter program)
-  Fire Pit
-  Major Park Entrance
-  Minor Park Entrance
-  Wayfinding Sign
-  Interpretive Sign
-  Trail Markers for Natural Surface Trails
-  Trail Markers for Aggregate and Paved Surface Trails
-  Snow Clearing Pathway
-  Snowshoeing / Hiking Trail
-  Natural / Fat Biking Trail
-  Dogs Off-Leash Trail
-  Dogs Off-Leash Area
-  Programmed Open Space
-  Winter Garden



Figure 6.21 Winter Experience Concept 2

**Winter Activities: Concept 2**

Trails are upgraded

**Legend:**

- Winter Event Space
- Winter Playground
- John C. Hall Building (potential winter program)
- Fire Pit
- Major Park Entrance
- Minor Park Entrance
- Wayfinding Sign
- Interpretive Sign
- Trail Markers for Natural Surface Trails
- Trail Markers for Aggregate and Paved Surface Trails
- Snow Clearing Pathway
- Snowshoeing / Hiking Trail
- Natural / Fat Biking Trail
- Off-Leash Trail
- Off-Leash Area
- Programmed Open Space

## Environmental Mitigation Measures

The environmental sensitivity analysis of Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine, which was completed for the Master Plan, was used as a check point for the concept option recommendations. The sensitivity levels in the park directly informed the location and intensity of proposed amenities and activities. Most areas in Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine are classified as having moderate to high sensitivity levels. General management and programming techniques for sensitive park zones are described in the Environmental Sensitivities Report for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine, published in February 2017. The report is available on [edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan](http://edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan).

Through the development of two concept plans for the park, specific environmental consequences of proposed activities and amenities have become apparent.

In this section, environmental mitigation measures for these consequences are explained and items requiring further analysis in an Environmental Impact Assessment are outlined.

The Environmental Sensitivities Report for Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine concluded with recommendations for park use and management based on sensitivity levels in the park. The City's goal is to align with the recommendations from the Environmental Sensitivities Report wherever possible to protect and manage the natural areas in the park responsibly. Public preferences and City priorities have provided direction for the program and management recommendations which, in some cases, conflict with the conclusions from the Environmental Sensitivities Report. The environmental consequences and mitigation measures of the proposals in both concepts are summarized below.

## Environmental Consequences and Mitigation

### CONSEQUENCES FROM HUMAN ACTIVITY

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The concept options propose amenities and activities that are generally compatible with moderate to highly sensitive natural areas. However, human use of park spaces will always have an ecological impact of some degree. The uses described here are foreseen to need some form of mitigation to decrease their ecological impact.

It is expected that the increased amenities proposed, especially in Concept 2, will lead to higher numbers of park visitors. Consequences of higher park use include: larger volumes of garbage, increased noise levels and increased vegetation and wildlife disturbance. Parking requirements in Concept 2 necessitate a parking lot with a larger footprint.

The trails in Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine invite park users into areas of higher sensitivity, such as the River Valley Slopes and Kinnaird Ravine. Visitors that do not stay on designated trails can increase erosion on the slopes and disturb wildlife in the park.

In a similar way, off-leash dogs have a large impact on the ecology of the park. They tend to disturb wildlife in the park, decrease the stability of the slopes and increase the spread of invasive plants. The concept options localize and restrict off-leash areas to minimize impacts to the entire park, but negative consequences of this activity are still expected to occur.

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR HUMAN ACTIVITY

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Public education will be a major tool in addressing potential environmental consequences from human use. Park signage will indicate highly sensitive areas and will regulate park and trail use to protect sensitive areas. In some cases, natural or constructed barriers will be used to keep people and dogs out of areas with the highest sensitivity levels, such as fish habitat.

Higher intensity activities and amenities will be located in areas of the lowest sensitivity. Low impact development techniques will be used in infrastructure such as the expanded parking lot and amenity building. Throughout the park, supporting amenities will be used to reduce ecological impact, such as waste receptacles and dog bag dispensers.

## CONSEQUENCES FROM INFRASTRUCTURE & CONSTRUCTION

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The proposed construction and improvement of trails in both concept options have the potential for negative ecological impacts such as increasing erosion potential on slopes and disturbance to vegetation and wildlife.

Both concept options also propose new access points from Jasper Avenue and Ada Boulevard down to the Mobility Corridor. Formalized entrance points direct people down the slopes, deterring park visitors from using goat paths that contribute to slope instability. The proposed wooden staircases also create less of a disturbance on the slopes than steep pathways or switchbacks. However, the construction of staircases through vegetated areas will create temporary impacts such as vegetation removal and wildlife disturbance.

In a similar way, the formalized river access points and viewpoints will help to reduce the creation of informal access routes to the river which are currently increasing erosion along the River Edge. The construction of larger viewpoints and docks will have a larger ecological impact, but even the construction of small staircases and or platforms will require construction equipment to be driven through the park, for vegetation to be removed and wildlife to be disturbed.

The two largest infrastructure projects that are proposed in both concept options are the removal of the Rat Creek culvert and the removal of the existing pavilion to construct a new amenity building and activity node. These projects will require large construction equipment and a longer construction timeline. Although these elements will result in increased enjoyment for park visitors and improved habitat potential, their construction will result in short-term disturbance of vegetation and wildlife in the park, especially around Rat Creek and Kinnaird Ravine.

In Concept 2, a suspension bridge is proposed across Kinnaird Ravine. The construction of this bridge has potentially high environmental and geotechnical impacts in the park.

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE & CONSTRUCTION

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The potential impacts of infrastructure construction throughout the park can be reduced through responsible practices and preventative techniques.

A nest sweep should be performed before any construction occurs in the park. Construction should not occur during critical migration, nesting or spawning periods.

New trails that are constructed must meet City of Edmonton standards for construction. Natural trails should follow best practices for design and maintenance. Existing trails that do not meet standards for sustainability will be repaired, re-routed or closed.

When large equipment must be moved through the park, existing trees and natural areas should be protected with fencing. If it is necessary to remove trees for construction, they will be transplanted where possible or replaced. Slopes will be appropriately stabilized during and after construction.

## CONSEQUENCES FROM MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

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Currently, waste removal in the park is an energy intensive operational process. Camping activity results in large personal items being carried down the slopes and abandoned in the park. Removal requires City staff to drag these items up the slopes, damaging vegetation along the way.

Lighting the activity node of the park has potential negative ecological impacts.

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

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A natural area management plan should be developed to balance operational needs with habitat protection. Vegetation may be pruned in areas that are frequently accessed by operations staff.

Natural areas will not be lit. In cases where lighting is necessary, dark sky guidelines will be followed.

# Stay Involved!

**The City would like your feedback on the two concept options presented in this report. Your feedback will be used to develop a refined concept plan for the Dawson Park and Kinnaird Ravine Master Plan.**

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An open house was held on May 30, 2017 at E4C, Alex Taylor School to receive public input on the two concept options presented in this report. The City would like feedback on the vision statements, specific park elements and overall approaches to both concept options.

If you would like to contribute your feedback, participate in the online survey available on [edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan](http://edmonton.ca/dawsonparkmasterplan). The survey will be open until June 16, 2017.

Input from the open house, 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. A summary of feedback from all Phase 3 engagements will be available in July, 2017.

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



