

Executive Summary – Whitemud Integrated Plan – *EDA Collaborative Inc.*

INTRODUCTION

The Whitemud Integrated Plan area encompasses a very important area of Edmonton's southwest river valley. The area is home to several popular recreation destinations including Fort Edmonton Park, John Janzen Nature Centre, Whitemud Equine Centre and Whitemud Park. It is also a popular destination for joggers, nature lovers, fishermen, canoeists, kayakers, tobogganers, and cyclists. To date individual facilities have developed independently and there has not been a comprehensive review of the area as a whole. Pressure for use of this valuable area has been increasing as existing facilities consider upgrading and expansion, and as new development proposals come forward.

An Advisory Committee was formed from area stakeholders and residents to review current plans and proposals and determine the best course of action for the area as a whole. During the site analysis phase, environmental and historic resources, existing infrastructure, and transportation issues were reviewed. Current operations, programming and site use, and current plans and proposals were also evaluated to identify areas of conflict and overlap. Through a year of committee meetings and a public open house, a Concept Plan was developed to reflect the Advisory Committee's vision for the area. A detailed review of the trails around Ft. Edmonton Park was completed and reviewed by the public in June 2002.

VISION STATEMENT

The Whitemud Integrated Plan Area is a special part of Edmonton's river valley. It is a place where the natural environment is protected and carefully managed while permitting a diversity of low impact recreational and interpretative opportunities for the public. These opportunities will build upon and complement the natural landscapes and existing cultural features.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

The Advisory Committee endorsed the vision, basic principles and planning objectives outlined in the Ribbon of Green Master Plan, and added the following specific plan objectives:

1. There will be no net loss of natural vegetation through future development. Clearing, if required, will be kept to a minimum, and an equivalent area will be revegetated elsewhere within the study area.
2. Where possible, buffer zones will be provided between areas of significant environmental value and intensive use areas.
3. Existing facilities and attractions will continue to operate within their current boundaries, with upgrading or expansion following plans currently approved.
4. The area will continue to be accessible to all City residents and visitors. Alternative modes of transportation to reach the site will be actively encouraged, including extension of the streetcar operations outside of Fort Edmonton with connections to public transit, and various means of trail access. Increased parking demands will be addressed primarily through joint program co-ordination, sharing of existing facilities, and the use of the streetcar between current parking facilities and destination areas. New parking facilities would be a last resort.
5. Existing informal public use of the area including fishing, picnicking, tobogganing, canoeing and kayaking and all modes of trail use will continue to be accommodated.

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CONCEPT PLAN

The Concept Plan proposes low impact development in several areas as described below. Detailed design, environmental review and public input will be required for each component of the plan, prior to implementation. All work must meet the requirements of the River Valley Bylaw.

Whitemud Ravine Trailhead (South of Fox Drive)

Whitemud Park south would continue to serve the existing uses (tobogganing, programmed day camps, Whitemud Ravine trailhead) in upgraded facilities.

- removal of existing trailer and garage
- new multi-purpose trailhead (public warm-up area, program space, public washrooms)

Whitemud Park Upgrading (North of Fox Drive)

Whitemud Park north would continue to serve the existing park users with some general upgrading. Proposed upgrades would include:

- new permanent public washroom building near the north end of the site
- existing vehicular access and parking area would be retained with some upgrading to ensure efficient use of the available area
- multi-purpose open space to be shared with the Equine Center.

Trail System Improvements

- class one (paved) trail connection to link future river bridge at south end of Fort Edmonton with new the river bridge at Whitemud Park (to replace the Quesnell bridge trail), and Keillor Road
- bridge over Whitemud Creek at mouth to accommodate all trail users and streetcar
- class one trail connection from future South University Campus (University Farm) to Keillor Road.

Renaturalization of Farm Site

- remove majority of current horse grazing operations
- remove existing buildings and septic field
- revegetate or renaturalize area.

Streetcar Extension

- extend streetcar line from Fort Edmonton to Fox Drive and Equine Center including installation of a bridge over Whitemud Creek.

Fort Edmonton, Whitemud Equine Center, John Janzen Nature Center

- existing facilities would continue to follow their existing approved Master Plans, ensuring that all development is in accordance with recommendations outlined in this study.

Transportation and Streets

The City of Edmonton Transportation and Street Department is proposing to widen Whitemud Drive from Terwillegar Drive to 149 Street. Two components of their proposal affect the Whitemud Integrated Plan area:

- widening of Whitemud Drive is to include the addition of two lanes of traffic on the Quesnell Bridge. It has been determined that the existing bridge structure will not accommodate the extra traffic lanes and a multi-use walkway, therefore a new pedestrian river crossing bridge would be constructed downstream from the current bridge location.
- Improvements to the access into Fort Edmonton from the south were recommended in the Whitemud Drive study. A new exit ramp will be constructed from the current Fox Drive exit ramp, providing access to Fort Edmonton through the existing controlled intersection.

Refer to Attachment 1 – Page 4 - Concept Plan

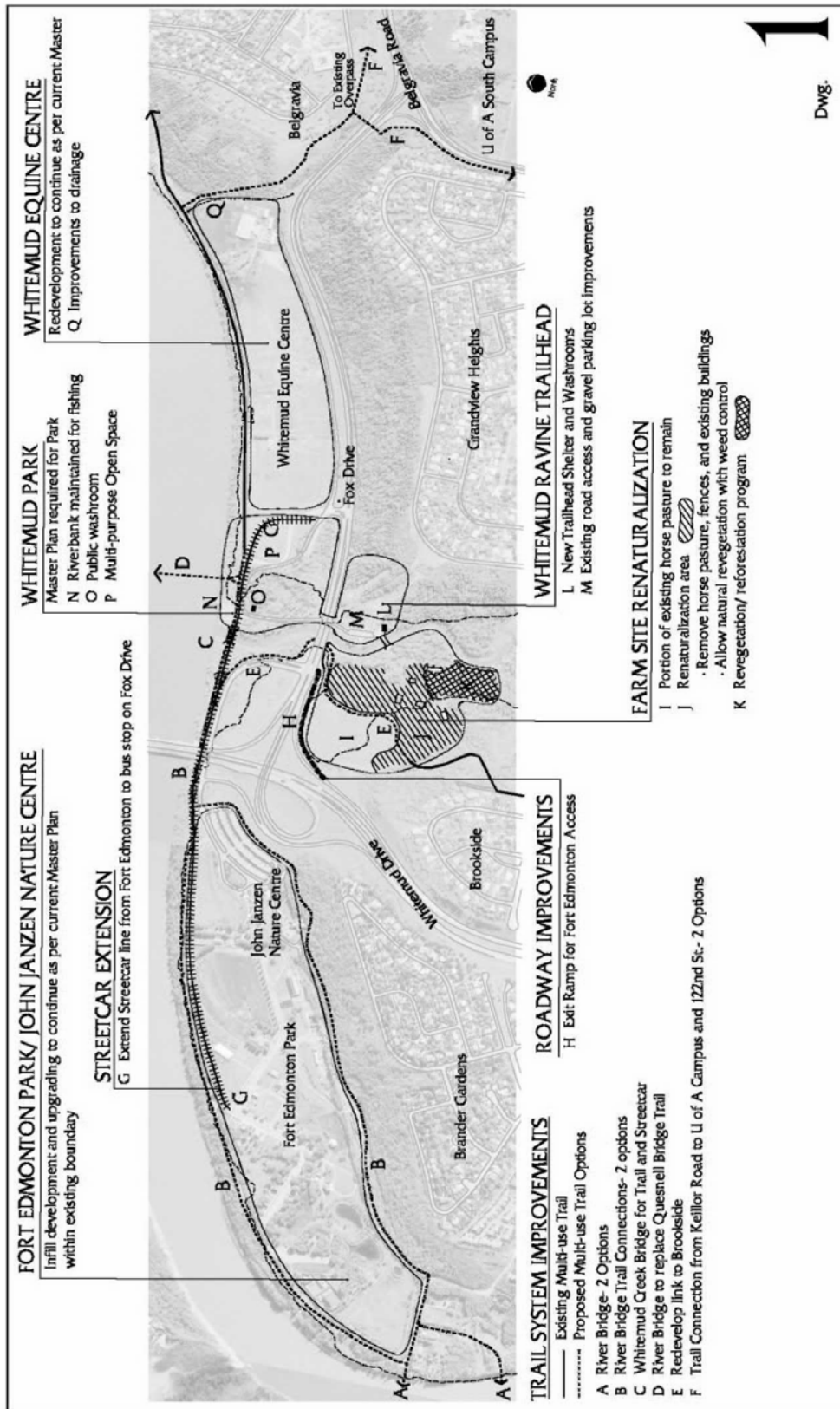
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IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Whitemud Plan will occur over a number of years. General redevelopment of the trail, bridges and park buildings will be budgeted for by the Community Services Department. The Whitemud Equine Center redevelopment, Edmonton Radial Railway Society extension, John Jansen Nature Centre and Fort Edmonton Park facilities will continue to be developed through partnerships with between the City of Edmonton and area stakeholders. Transportation and Streets projects are not included in the budget estimate.

	TOTAL BUDGET	PHASE 1 2 year	PHASE 2 5 year
1 FOX FARM RENATURALIZATION / HORSE PASTURE	\$250,000	\$250,000	
<i>Building Demolition</i>			
<i>Planting / Reforestation</i>			
<i>Naturalization (Weed Control / Seeding)</i>			
<i>Fencing</i>			
2 WHITEMUD RAVINE TRAIL HEAD	\$350,000	\$350,000	
<i>Whitemud Ravine Trail Head Shelter</i>			
<i>Existing Building Removal / Rehab</i>			
<i>Parking Improvements</i>			
<i>Interpretive Signage</i>			
3 WHITEMUD PARK	\$250,000	\$250,000	
<i>Whitemud Park Washrooms</i>			
<i>Parking Improvements</i>			
<i>Multi-purpose Display area</i>			
<i>Riverbank / Fishing</i>			
4 TRAIL SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS			
<i>Priority 1</i>			
<i>Class One Trail - Fort Edmonton</i>	\$300,000	\$300,000	
<i>Whitemud Creek Bridge</i>	\$700,000	\$700,000	
<i>Priority 2</i>			
<i>Class One Trail - Farm Site Extension</i>	\$200,000		\$200,000
<i>U of A South Campus Connection Trail</i>	\$300,000		\$300,000
<i>Fort Edmonton / Wolf Willow River Bridge</i>	\$4,500,000		\$4,500,000
TOTAL ALL COMPONENTS	\$6,850,000	\$1,850,000	\$5,000,000
RECOMMENDED BUDGET	\$ 6,850,000	\$ 1,850,000	\$ 5,000,000

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WHITEMUD INTEGRATED PLAN
Concept Plan

