

2.2 SITE INVENTORY

2.2.1 SOUTHWEST EXTENSION AREA:

**Fort Edmonton Park, Whitemud Park, Whitemud Ravine Nature Reserve,
Hawrelak Park, Kinsmen Park**

Existing development is shown on Maps 2, 3, and 4.

This segment of the river valley park extension proposal stretches along the south bank of the river from the downtown area through the west central river valley. The area is composed of several existing developed park areas, and specialized city-wide facilities. These are Fort Edmonton Park, the John Janzen Nature Centre, Rainbow Valley campground, Snow Valley Ski Club, the Whitemud Equine Centre, Hawrelak Park, the Mayfair Golf and Country Club, Emily Murphy Park and Kinsmen Park. A variety of granular trails presently connect these facilities, and many casual, unimproved trails link the river valley to adjacent neighbourhoods. Planning has been completed for the portion of the Whitemud Ravine Nature Reserve between Fox Drive and Whitemud Freeway, with construction of granular trails and pedestrian bridges scheduled for 1992/93. In the longer term it is proposed to extend top-of-bank trails south of 23 Avenue along Blackmud Creek to 111 Street. These trails will ultimately link to the Twin Brooks district park at 119 Street and 15 Avenue. The section of Whitemud Creek between its junction with Blackmud and the RDA alignment is a forestry preserve area.

The communities adjacent to this section of the river valley are predominantly mature single family neighbourhoods, with fully developed community facilities. The University of Alberta campus is immediately adjacent to this area and is a significant consideration in planning trails for the area. Future projects affecting this area include west LRT extension and the proposed closure of Keillor Road, and the Rosedale Water Intake Project.

A broad range of recreation opportunities and activities are presently available in this section of the river valley. Most activities are focused around the one-of-a-kind facilities presently existing, and are both extensive and intensive. These activities include historic and natural science programs and interpretation, camping, downhill and cross country skiing, horseback riding, fishing, picnicking, aquatics, sports, children's day camps and boating. Although the existing trails in this sector are not developed to a high standard they support a wide variety of casual trail based activities including walking, jogging/running, cycling, nature observation, dog walking, berry picking and photography.

A detailed description of the trail system in this area is included in Appendix 2.1.

2.2.2 NORTHWEST EXTENSION AREA:

**Patricia Ravine, Wolf Willow Ravine,
Laurier Park, Buena Vista Park, McKenzie Ravine, MacKinnon Ravine**

Existing development is shown on Maps 2 and 4.

This segment of the river valley park extension proposal includes the north bank of the river from MacKinnon Ravine south and west toward Patricia and Wolf Willow Ravines. The most prominent features of the area are the large flat river terrace in Buena Vista Park and the steep and narrow river and ravine banks in the north and west ends of the area. Several large ravines, McKenzie, Patricia and Wolf Willow, join the main river valley in this section.

Much of the park and ravine areas are informally developed, and evidence of human disturbance is common. Granular trails extend around the river edge perimeter of Buena Vista and Laurier Parks. Many narrow unimproved trails provide access from adjacent neighbourhoods to this river edge granular trail. The extensive network of hard packed earth footpaths in Buena Vista Park connecting the neighbourhoods to the river edge are evidence of the desire for access. There are casual unimproved trails in the upper portion of Patricia Ravine, linking into the Old Country Club Road. In Westridge trails are limited to the Old Country Club Road and top-of-bank walks. In the area adjacent to Rio Terrace are remnants of roads leading to an abandoned picnic ground. Human disturbance includes utility development and farmsteads, service buildings, casual roads and material stockpiles. Portions of the Great Meadow in Buena Vista have served as a dump site for soil and debris.

The formally developed park areas are found in Laurier Park. The area east of Buena Vista Road contains the canoe and rowing clubs and a parks maintenance yard. A hard packed earth trail extends the length of McKenzie Ravine linking to the river valley granular trails. Further north, between McKenzie and MacKinnon Ravines, a hard packed earth trail presently provides access into the existing trail system.

The communities adjacent to this section of the river valley are mature predominantly single family neighbourhoods, with fully developed community facilities. The west portion of the area adjacent to the Edmonton Golf and Country Club is still developing. The major physical constraints in planning for this area are the steep and narrow banks which prevent continuous access along the river edge, areas of sensitive wildlife and vegetation and unstable slopes. The continuity of the park and river bank is further interrupted by the Whitemud Freeway/Quesnell Bridge. Future projects which may affect this area include the west LRT extension and one alternative alignment of the Rosedale Water Intake project.

Formalized recreation activities are limited to the Valley Zoo and the Laurier Park picnic grounds. Amenities include ball diamonds, a small playground, a boat launch and washrooms. A day camp is located at the bottom of "Melton Road" in Buena Vista Park. Government House Park contains a sliding hill, approximately ten picnic sites along the trail

and toilets. Renovation of the Government House Park area is proposed, adding approximately 15 picnic sites, removing abandoned roads and landscape restoration. A site for a future amenity shelter has been identified at Government House Park.

Other existing recreation activities are casual and trail based including: cycling, walking, jogging/running, nature observation, dog walking, photography, berry picking, etc.

A detailed description of trails in this area is included in Appendix 2.1.

2.2.3 NORTHEAST EXTENSION AREA:

Rundle Park, Hermitage Park, Kennedale Ravine, Kernohan Ravine

Existing development is shown on Map 5.

This section of the proposed River Valley Park extension stretches from the existing end of formal river valley park development at the Strathcona Science Park Bridge in Rundle Park through Hermitage Park, the "Back-40" of Hermitage Park and includes Kennedale and Kernohan Ravines. Portions of this area were partially developed with funding from the original CCRP development in the late 1970's, but development was never completed due to lack of funding.

The area contains a granular trail which extends from the present end of the paved trail system in Rundle Park along the river edge into Hermitage Park and to the north end of the Hermitage lake system. In the "Back-40" a packed earth trail circuits the lake; an unpaved service road also provides access to the extreme north end of Hermitage Park. In Kennedale Ravine an asphalt trail (developed in 1989) extends from the end of the ravine at 47 Street to 40 Street; in the area east of 40 Street there are intermittent unimproved trails. East of Victoria Road a hard packed trail leads to Hermitage Park. In Kernohan Ravine, a packed earth trail leads from the school and playground area through the ravine to the Hermitage Park "Back-40".

The major physical problem in trail and park planning in this park area is the substantial number of large utility lines which cross the site. These include the storm sewer line down Kennedale Ravine and the Trans-Alta power corridor which runs lengthwise through Hermitage Park. These lines meet in the area north of the Hermitage lakes creating an area of very intense utility disturbance. The area was also heavily impacted by the tornado which destroyed many trees in the north part of the park. Major projects affecting this area in future are the proposal by Trans Alta for a new 240 KV power line through Hermitage Park, and a future outer ring road river crossing east of 17 Street.

The communities adjacent to this sector are newer single\multiple family residential areas. Community facilities and schools are partially developed. The neighbourhood of Canon Ridge adjacent to the park access road has been only partially developed.

Recreation activities in this area are presently limited to low intensity activities. The trail-based activities include walking, jogging, cycling, and cross country skiing, nature observation and photography. The activities in the park areas are limited to picnicking, unstructured play, sledding and nature observation. More intensive and organized activity areas are available in nearby Rundle Park, (playgrounds, aquatics, picnic areas, interpretive sites). Some reorganization of the Hermitage Park picnic areas will be required to make them more attractive and functional.

A detailed description of trails in this area is included in Appendix 2.1.

2.2.4 SOUTHEAST EXTENSION AREA: Upper Mill Creek

Existing development is shown on Map 6.

This section of the proposed river valley park extension stretches from the Whitemud Freeway west of 50th Street southeast along Mill Creek Ravine to 34 Street north of 34 Avenue, and covers approximately 3.5 kilometres of ravine. This area contains a section of the creek which has been cut off by industrial and commercial development from the lower portion of Mill Creek Ravine, which was developed with trails and bridges in the mid 1980's. The area is adjacent to the Millwoods Golf Course and the Jackie Parker Recreation Area. The ravine presently contains a narrow hard packed earth trail and several primitive log creek crossings. Mill Creek is crossed by the Whitemud Freeway, 50th Street and 34 Street in this section, disrupting the continuity of the trail.

The communities adjacent to this section of Mill Creek are either new or developing predominantly single family neighbourhoods. Schools and community facilities are developed in the older communities on the southwest side of the creek, but are not fully completed in the new neighbourhoods on the northeast side of the creek. The main project affecting this area is the development of Jackie Parker Recreation Area, which is in the planning stage.

Present recreation activities in upper Mill Creek Ravine are limited to passive, trail-based activities such as walking, jogging, nature observation, photography, and cross country skiing. Sledding is occurring in two locations on the ravine: on the Trans-Mountain Pipeline right-of-way, and north of 38 Avenue.

More intensive activities and amenities are located in the Millwoods Golf Course area and in other Millwoods parks. Recreation activities proposed for Jackie Parker Recreation Area include skating, picnicking, day camps, playgrounds, water play area, environmental demonstrations and an amenity shelter. Washrooms, drinking water, phones and parking are also proposed for Jackie Parker Recreation Area, where they could serve both trail users and recreation area users.

A description of the trails in this area is included in Appendix 2.1.