

# 07

## PARK MASTER PLAN

## 7.1 OVERVIEW

### QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK: A GATHERING PLACE

Queen Elizabeth Park has a multi-layered history with many cultural narratives. The recurring “theme” of many of these stories is that of a gathering place, a theme that is embodied and celebrated in the Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan.

The site was a popular gathering place for Aboriginal groups, as evidenced by archival information and archaeological findings. It was also home to early Edmonton settlers in the Waltherdale area. Nearby was the location of the first cable ferry across the North Saskatchewan River, thus establishing it as an important transportation junction linking the settlements of Edmonton and Strathcona. Noted for its central location and superb views, Queen Elizabeth Park (originally called South Side Park) was established in 1909 and it quickly became a popular destination for family picnics, swimming, and live concerts at the park bandstand.

The tradition of public gathering continues to the present day, from small picnics between family and friends, to group activities with River Valley Programming, to thousands of Edmontonians congregating to delight in the fireworks on Canada Day. Queen Elizabeth Park continues to support important transportation connections from Old Strathcona to downtown Edmonton, namely along Queen Elizabeth Park Road and along the park’s trails that connect people across the North Saskatchewan River.

The Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan celebrates the park’s rich history as a gathering place by enhancing existing park amenities that support time-honoured park activities, such as picnicking, enjoying views, walking, and cycling. The master plan expands the variety of ways that a diversity of people can experience the park by adding a bike skills facility, a public Art Park, and enhanced areas for children’s play and River Valley Programming. As the populations of Rosedale, downtown and Old Strathcona densify, the park’s central and easily accessible location positions it to be a destination that supports connections amongst communities and to the natural environment.

In order to respect the existing “natural” character of the park, while making it more accessible and engaging for people of all ages and abilities, the approach to design takes a light touch. The interventions in the park are intended to conserve the undeveloped and steeply sloping areas, with new and exciting park programming opportunities in previously disturbed parts of the park. The aesthetics of new development in the park (structures, furnishings and amenities) will be timeless and contemporary with a high quality of design and construction to fit well within the

park’s existing character. Recognizing the park’s potential to connect many neighbourhoods, the design makes Queen Elizabeth Park an accessible place to connect with nature and to support active living. The rich cultural heritage of the river valley will be revealed through sensitively integrated interpretive elements that act as reminders about the park’s historic and present role as a gathering place.

### CHARACTER OF THE PARK

The long history of Queen Elizabeth Park and its position in the river valley has given it an eclectic character with unique ecological and cultural elements to be revealed and celebrated.

The park is cradled along the south bank of the North Saskatchewan River Valley with steep, forested slopes and several large, open terraces that are used for picnicking, informal play, walking, biking, bird watching, and enjoying the scenery throughout the year. The park welcomes guests to be active while experiencing the river valley, its ecosystems, and the views of the downtown skyline.

The park’s north-facing slopes support areas of mature white spruce forest, which is a relatively unique forest type in the city. This evergreen forest cover creates pockets of quiet, sheltered respite throughout the year. Other parts of the park support deciduous forest, which is more open and allows filtered views in winter.

Cultural artifacts in the park are plentiful. The historic O’Keefe Brewery building is located on the south side of the park, with large, corrugated steel retaining walls rising up from the forest floor. The park also contains infrastructure remaining from one of Edmonton’s early wastewater treatment plants, which operated from the 1950s until it was decommissioned in 1981. Most prominently, the park contains a large pile of fill that was placed in the park almost 50 years ago for a bridge that was never built. Named “Dantzer’s Hill”, after a former mayor, the large hill now serves as a well-used vantage point for watching fireworks on Canada Day.

The park is unique in the river valley and differs from nearby parks (i.e. Louise McKinney Riverfront Park, Gallagher Park, Victoria Park, Kinsmen Park) by its mostly forested character and its primarily passive recreation uses, characteristics that Edmonton residents highly value about the park.

## KEY FEATURES OF THE MASTER PLAN: OVERALL PARK FEATURES

The master plan for Queen Elizabeth Park will establish new and diverse public spaces to support a range of civic, recreational and gathering functions, enhancing opportunities to enjoy and experience this unique setting in the central river valley. The resulting plan will:

- Improve green space, city views, and access to the river;
- Accommodate Edmonton's first curated public Art Park;
- Accommodate Edmonton's only river valley bike skills park;
- Provide a variety of safe, accessible and multi-modal connections;
- Provide opportunities to connect to nature;
- Improve connectivity between the upper and lower park; and
- Connect Edmontonians to the cultural history of the site.

The Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan was primarily developed based on the ideas of Concept 2: **Vibrant Riverfront**. This approach creates a vibrant riverfront by improving connections into the lower park and creating destination activities near the river bank. A north-south multi-use trail will lead visitors through the park from Saskatchewan Drive, connecting the upper and lower parks with an attractive pedestrian overpass and bold landform. A river access point is created near the new Walterdale Bridge, and a new bike skills area is integrated with "ruins" from the old wastewater treatment plant by the river bank. Contrary to Concept 2 the master plan locates River Valley Programming in the upper park to provide better access to amenities.

The master plan (Figure 7.1) is shown on page 104. The following is an outline of the master plan elements.

## PARK ACCESS

- Park access from the south will be improved with a new multi-use trail between Saskatchewan Drive at 106th St and the old Queen Elizabeth Pool site. The trail will have a moderate slope (< 8%).
- Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure will be improved along Fort Hill Road to improve access to the west end of the park from Strathcona.
- The stairs east of the hairpin turn (at the top of Queen Elizabeth Park Road) will be extended to improve access into the east end of the park from Saskatchewan Drive.
- The intersection mid-way down Queen Elizabeth Park Road will be improved, increasing pedestrian safety and creating an improved entry experience to the city for visitors arriving by vehicle. Sight lines will be improved, road geometry will be made clearer, new park identification signage will be added and aesthetic improvements to the landscape will be made.
- Parking capacity will decrease very slightly, from 93 to 86 stalls. Two new parking spaces for buses will be added.
- A new drop-off area will be added in the upper park for school buses or charter buses to load and unload passengers.

## NEW MULTI-USE TRAILS + TRAIL CONNECTIONS

- The new overpass and trail connections will form a strong north-south axis and connect Saskatchewan Drive to the new Walterdale Bridge.
- A new stairway from the lower park picnic area to the riverbank will be established to improve connectivity through the northeast section of the park.
- A new service road, built as part of the new Walterdale Bridge project, will be a shared route for pedestrians, cyclists and service vehicles (no public vehicle access).

## AMENITIES

- The existing picnic sites will be upgraded (new picnic tables, new barbecue stoves) and new picnic amenities will be added to the upper park and lower park (near the bike skills area).
- A shade shelter will be incorporated into the upper park for picnics and small group gatherings. A “pay-per-use” electrical plug-in may be provided.
- The existing play area will be enhanced to provide a wider variety of play experiences, including nature-based play.
- The existing washrooms will be upgraded for accessibility and to improve aesthetics.
- A new amenity building, including washrooms, will be built in the lower park to serve trail users and new areas of activity (Bike Skills Park, flexible open space, toboggan hill).
- A fire pit will be built in the lower park facility node to enhance user comfort year round.
- A composting toilet will be added to the upper park for users of the Aboriginal Art Park and River Valley Programming.
- Drinking fountains will be provided at the nodes where major trails intersect (one in the upper park and one in the lower park).
- Potential for Wifi internet access in the upper park
- Lighting will be incorporated into the main parking lot (upper park), and services will be provided in the upper and lower parks to allow incorporation of temporary lighting when needed (e.g. Art Park, toboggan hill)

## INTERPRETATION, WAYFINDING AND PUBLIC ART

- Interpretive elements will be added to reveal place-specific stories that enhance visitors’ understanding of and appreciation for the park. Refer to section 7.18 for an overview of the interpretive elements.
- Interpretive themes for the park will include:
  - Aboriginal culture and history;
  - Ethnobotany (cultural uses of native plants);
  - Old Queen Elizabeth Pool and leisure history; and
  - Old wastewater treatment plant
- Wayfinding signage will be added at entry points and intersections throughout the park to orient park users and help with navigation.
- Queen Elizabeth Park will be home to Edmonton’s first curated and designated public Art Park, which will enhance the park’s role as a place for art appreciation. The first phase of the Art Park will focus on works by Aboriginal artists.

## ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

- Forested areas will be left in their natural state as much as possible.
- New development is proposed primarily in previously-disturbed areas.
- Formalizing some single track trails will help reduce ad hoc trail development in the forest.
- High level recommendations for ecological management have been made within the master plan to help protect and enhance the site’s ecology.

## WINTER PROGRAMMING

- The master plan has been designed for year-round use, with a new toboggan hill, fire pit, winterized washrooms, and additional multi-use trails that will be kept clear in winter.
- A large open event space is designed to support diverse winter events and uses, which may include winter warming huts, and snow fort competitions.
- Secondary trails, including sanctioned single track trails, will be uncleared to allow improved opportunities for snowshoeing and winter hiking.

## KEY FEATURES OF THE MASTER PLAN: PARK ELEMENTS

### PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS ACROSS QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK ROAD

- A new connection between the upper and lower park will be created with an accessible and attractive pedestrian overpass over Queen Elizabeth Park Road. The overpass will include seating and will take advantage of good views toward downtown.

### MOUND AND FLEXIBLE OPEN SPACE

- The site of Dantzer's Hill will be transformed into a functional and inviting focal point within the park. A large, defined mound will be created to provide opportunities for elevated lookouts and tobogganing in the winter. The mound will also provide a landing for the proposed pedestrian overpass.
- The large slope will allow unobstructed views of the skyline and Canada Day fireworks, and will function as a toboggan hill in the winter.
- A generous flat open space at the base of the mound will function as a flexible, informal open space to accommodate a wide range of year-round activities and special events
- A new east-west trail will be built to connect Kinsmen Sports Centre with the new Bike Skills Park.

### BIKE SKILLS PARK

- A Bike Skills Park will be established in the lower park. It will be the first of its kind in the city, and will provide a unique new activity that enlivens the riverfront.
- The Bike Skills Park will be easily accessed by people using the river valley trail system and will be visible from the multi-use trail, mound, field, and road.
- The Bike Skills Park will provide an opportunity for users to practice safe riding techniques, and to learn about good mountain biking etiquette in the river valley.
- The Bike Skills Park will combine both sanctioned single track forest trails and a full-featured skills park for all ages and abilities.
- The skills area will be located at the site of the old wastewater treatment plant and storage compound.
- The bike skills area is to be integrated with the former wastewater treatment plant as a means of re-purposing this defunct industrial use into a lively recreation facility.

- The sanctioned single track trails component will be built in a designated area in the lower park adjacent to the bike skills area. They will be developed using best-practice design, construction and maintenance standards.
- Having single track trails in a designated area is intended to help manage the demand for this type of trail use while limiting degradation to natural areas from unsanctioned use.
- A potential "flow trail" may be incorporated into the lower park, situated southeast of the existing washroom building in an area with ad hoc trail development.

### RIVER ACCESS

- New pedestrian access down to the river will allow people to "touch the water." There is potential to integrate the steps down to the river with the shoreline stabilization required for the new Waltherdale Bridge construction.
- East of the new Waltherdale Bridge construction area, the natural areas of the river bank will be protected and enhanced.

### RIVER VALLEY PROGRAMMING

- River Valley Programming will be relocated near the O'Keefe Yard, where it can be easily accessed by trail or service vehicle, and where it can make use of the O'Keefe Yard retaining wall as an archery backstop.

### LOOKOUTS

- New lookouts will be created along Saskatchewan Drive, in the Aboriginal Art Park, and along the riverbank.
- Existing lookouts along Saskatchewan Drive will be rehabilitated and/or expanded to provide more opportunities to enjoy views of downtown and the river valley.
- Selective clearing will be undertaken to ensure the views from formalized lookouts are maintained.



## 7.2 ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

### INTENT

The Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan has been developed with a clear recognition of the important ecological functions of the river valley, and of the high value that Edmontonians place on the river valley's natural character. The design response sought to thoughtfully improve access to and through the river valley to allow Edmontonians to enjoy this valuable natural asset in a way that strives to limit environmental impacts and restore degraded areas. This approach was strongly supported by the majority of participants at the public consultation events (see more below). Detailed park design will be informed by detailed environmental reviews (as required by the North Saskatchewan River Valley ARP - Bylaws No. 7188) and Ecological Constraints Mapping to ensure park development protects the ecological integrity of the site.

Specific objectives regarding ecological protection and enhancement are as follows:

- To protect existing forest areas and habitat connectivity.
- To focus new development in previously-disturbed areas.
- To minimize clearing for new paths and program areas.
- To mitigate development impacts, such as through rehabilitating degraded areas and adding new native plantings.
- To recommend strategies for enhancing ecosystem health through management strategies.
- To sensitively locate and design sanctioned single track trails associated with the Bike Skills Park.

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Protect and enhance the ecological health of the forest and riverbank: A top priority in the online survey for 30% of respondents. There were many comments received throughout the public consultation in support of preserving the park's natural qualities.
- Valued natural qualities: The majority of online survey #1 respondents indicated that they strongly valued the park's natural qualities and wanted to see these protected.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

#### PROTECT EXISTING FOREST AREAS AND HABITAT CONNECTIVITY

- Forested areas are left in their natural state as much as possible (see accompanying diagram for indication of areas of disturbance)
- The design of all park elements will be informed by detailed environmental reviews and Constraints Mapping\* in order to mitigate impacts to ecologically sensitive features.
- Design elements and management strategies can be incorporated into all design phases to support target species (e.g. snags, coarse woody debris) and to enhance the health of the forest.

#### FOCUS DEVELOPMENT IN PREVIOUSLY-DISTURBED AREAS

- The Bike Skills Park is proposed to be sited largely within the footprint of the old wastewater treatment plant and compound in the lower park. The associated single track trails will incorporate existing unsanctioned trails where appropriate and/or reroute single track trails to prevent erosion, minimize impact and keep riders on the designated course.
- The area identified for river access is within the construction footprint for the new Walterdale Bridge work. As part of the bridge project this section of riverbank will be armoured with riprap and interplanted with native vegetation to provide a measure of riparian habitat. The master plan proposes the integration of stone steps into or adjacent to the riprap to provide a simple way for people to get down to the river's edge.
- New picnic sites, the enhanced play area and Art Park spaces will be incorporated into existing cleared areas of the park to minimize vegetation removal.
- The new toboggan hill and flexible open field are to be located in the existing footprint of Dantzer's Hill.

*\*Ecological Constraints Mapping for Queen Elizabeth Park was being prepared at the time of printing. Commissioned by the Office Of Biodiversity, the intention of this mapping is to graphically depict important ecological elements and wildlife habitat in the area so as to inform design of park elements and various mitigation strategies.*



## MINIMIZE REQUIRED CLEARING FOR PARK MASTER PLAN

### Selective clearing for new paths and program areas

- Improved trail connections will require clearing in selected areas of the park to improve circulation connectivity. Clearing will be required for the new multi-use entry from 106 Street, the pedestrian overpass, the upgraded new east-west trail north of the O'Keefe site, and new trail connections between the lower park picnic area and the riverbank.
- Some clearing will occur for the new River Valley Programming site (north of the O'Keefe site).
- Selected trees will be cleared in the Bike Skills Park to improve the area's visibility and safety.
- Small areas of new parking in the lower park off the existing park road have been sited to avoid mature trees, thereby protecting existing vegetation. In the upper park some trees will be removed for a new bus drop-off loop, but the existing parking spots west of the old Queen Elizabeth pool site will be removed and returned to park.
- Vegetation clearing and construction activity will follow municipal (e.g. City of Edmonton Corporate Tree Management Policy C456A), provincial and federal government guidelines, and adjustments to proposed clearing areas or trail locations may occur depending on the results of environmental reviews.

### Selective clearing to restore views

- Selected trees or parts thereof will be removed to restore lookout points and create new lookout points in some places.
- The two lookouts along the riverbank are intended to have small footprints and they are located in areas that are already somewhat open. Minimal tree removal or pruning will be required to formalize these lookouts.

## MITIGATION OF DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

### Formalization of single track trails

- Formalizing some single track trails will help reduce ad hoc trail development in the forest. Design elements (e.g. logs, boulders, etc.) can be incorporated into the detailed design to help keep users on the trails. The layout of single track trails will depend on the findings from future environmental reviews and Constraints

Mapping.

### Stormwater management for new paved areas

- Stormwater runoff from new areas of impervious surfaces (i.e. new multi-use asphalt paths) is to be directed to adjacent vegetated areas for infiltration. Any stormwater entering the North Saskatchewan River is to comply with minimal provincial and federal regulations.



### Rehabilitation of degraded areas and new native plantings

- A existing, hazardous and severely eroded single track trail near the northeast corner of park is to be closed. Additional degraded areas are to be identified for rehabilitation during future phases of detailed park design. Exposed slopes are to be stabilized with erosion control strategies (e.g. biodegradable erosion control fabric and new plantings). In some degraded areas temporary fencing may be used to allow natural habitat regeneration. Exposed areas are to be replanted with native species appropriate to the site conditions.
- Tree replacement is to be in accordance with the Tree Policy.
- Enhancement of the small wetland area (east end of the park) to be explored during the detailed design of Phase 5.
- Selected areas of the park to be converted to native plant cover (e.g. forest, riparian) using native species, complex vegetation structure (trees, shrubs, groundcover), and woody debris for habitat value. Suggested areas for infill planting include:
  - Area between new multi-use trail (from 106 Street entrance) and O'Keefe site
  - West and/or east of pump house
  - Areas where invasive plants are removed
  - Riparian areas along the riverbank where there is exposed soil due to human disturbance.
  - New growing medium and riparian planting should be incorporated into sections of riverbank armoured with riprap.
  - Riverbank slopes in the east end of the park where



unsanctioned trail development has led to erosion and a loss of forest cover.

- Areas adjacent to improved single-track trails where realignment of existing trails occurs.
- Additional areas for rehabilitation and new native plantings to be identified in future detail design phases in collaboration with Urban Forestry and the Office of Biodiversity.

### **Use of green building practices**

- The City of Edmonton's green building policies should help inform the design and construction/renovation of new and existing structures in the park. Additional opportunities for innovative sustainable design and technologies are to be explored during future detail design phases of Queen Elizabeth Park.
- The new washroom in the upper park will consist of a composting toilet to reduce infrastructure requirements, reduce water demands, and to provide an educational opportunity for park users.
- The Bike Skills Park will repurpose existing structures from the old wastewater treatment plant, thereby reducing the need to remove these structures and to build new structures.
- The picnic shelter in the upper park will incorporate green building practices by incorporating durable, long-lasting materials, and directing rainwater to be managed on-site.

### **Mitigating impacts of increased human activity**

- Human activity will be concentrated in areas of the park that area already disturbed.
- Large areas of undeveloped forest cover will be retained to provide cover for wildlife movement. The detailed design of park elements is to be considerate of wildlife movement patterns.
- Improving trail connectivity and accessibility is intended to help encourage non-motorized travel to the park and reduce motorized vehicle traffic through the park.
- Providing ways for people to experience and appreciate the beauty of the river valley environment is intended to help foster an ethic of environmental stewardship for the park and river valley.
- The Bikes Skills Park design process and partnerships provide opportunities to educate and share responsibility for forest care with riders.

### **Fencing**

- Fencing is only required for the River Valley Programming site. Fence design should consider wildlife movement patterns and explore ways to minimize impacts to wildlife (e.g. seasonal fencing, fencing that allows small animal movement).

### **Utilities and lighting**

- New construction for utility upgrades in the park will be minimal. Utility connections should be aligned to minimize vegetation clearing, and to consolidate utility right-of-way development where possible.
- Lighting is intended to be kept minimal, and to seek a balance between maintaining park user safety and animating the space with impacts to wildlife.
- Lighting will be mainly used for the parking lot(s) and washroom buildings in order to maintain user safety and access to the amenities.
- Temporary or seasonal lighting may be incorporated into the Art Parks and toboggan hill. Guidelines for lighting art works to be developed with the Edmonton Arts Council.
- Strategies should be employed to limit the impacts of lighting on wildlife, such as using light fixtures that minimize light pollution by pointing downward and minimize glare, reducing light cast into natural areas, and restricting the hours of lighting to those required for user safety. Lighting design is to be evaluated during detailed design for each development phase.

### **OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK AREA**

#### **Walterdale Bridge construction**

- Some areas of the park will be impacted by work related to the new Walterdale Bridge construction. Applicable areas include: Dantzer's Hill, a section of riverbank east of the new bridge, and a new service road east of Queen Elizabeth Park Road. This work has been subject to a separate EIA process and the project has been approved by Council.

#### **New service road construction**

- A new service road is being built over an existing multi-use trail alignment to replace an existing service road in the lower park, which has to be moved due to the new Walterdale Bridge location. This work has been subject

to a separate EIA process and the project has been approved by Council.

- The new alignment of the service road is integrated with the multi-use trail to minimize vegetation clearing.
- Runoff from the new service road will be directed to adjacent vegetation areas for infiltration.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

High level ecosystem and vegetation management guidelines for Queen Elizabeth Park are outlined below. These have been developed based on available site information and relevant City of Edmonton policies. Future detailed design phases will be accompanied by environmental reviews, as required. Development of site-specific ecosystem management strategies to be developed together with applicable departments.



### Forest health assessment and enhancement

- Building on the City of Edmonton's current practice of undertaking annual tree health assessments (whereby trees are inspected and pruned for structure, tree health, public safety and utility clearance), the City may consider expanding the scope of this assessment to identify forest areas in the park whose ecological health could be enhanced. Such interventions are typically necessary in sites where natural processes and disturbance cycles have been altered (e.g. flooding, fire, wildlife-related plant dispersal, forest succession). In general, strategies for forest health enhancement may include selective removal of excessive deadfall in areas where it may be impeding seedling recruitment, invasive species removal, infill planting of native species (also see below), and management to support representative species diversity and forest age class structure. Specific forest health management strategies will depend on detailed site assessments and management objectives.

### Wildlife habitat assessment and enhancement

- Managing Queen Elizabeth Park's ecological health will contribute to enhancing its ability to support a variety of wildlife species. Some general strategies may include maintaining snags, some deadfall, enhancing wetland areas, and enhancing overall forest health (as above). Specific wildlife habitat management strategies will depend on future site assessments and management objectives for target wildlife species.

### Closure of selected areas to allow forest regeneration

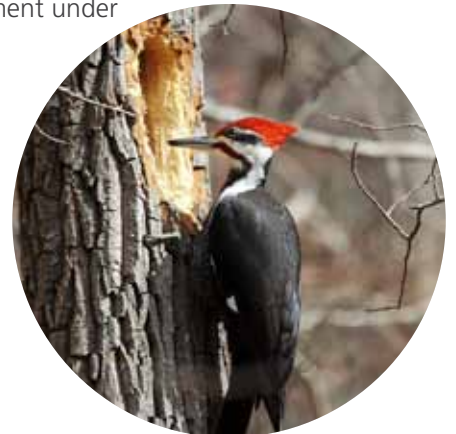
- In selected areas of Queen Elizabeth Park some access restrictions may be required to reduce ecological impacts and to allow natural forest regeneration. Restrictions may consist of temporary or permanent barriers to exclude public access during certain times of year or during certain weather conditions (e.g. after periods of rain when trail surfaces are more sensitive to damage). Areas to be protected will need to be identified during detailed park design.

### Infill planting with native species

- New planting of native species will enhance habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors. New planting locations to be determined in consultation with the City's Urban Forestry and Office of Biodiversity in detail design stages.

### Pests, disease, and invasive species management

- The City is developing an Integrated Pest Management Strategy, a detailed action plan to support healthy ecosystems and the objectives of the Way We Green (to be complete by end of 2013). This strategy will outline areas of responsibility, protocols and process to manage pest, disease, and invasive species management. The City will continue to proactively identify issues and carry out management under current guidelines.



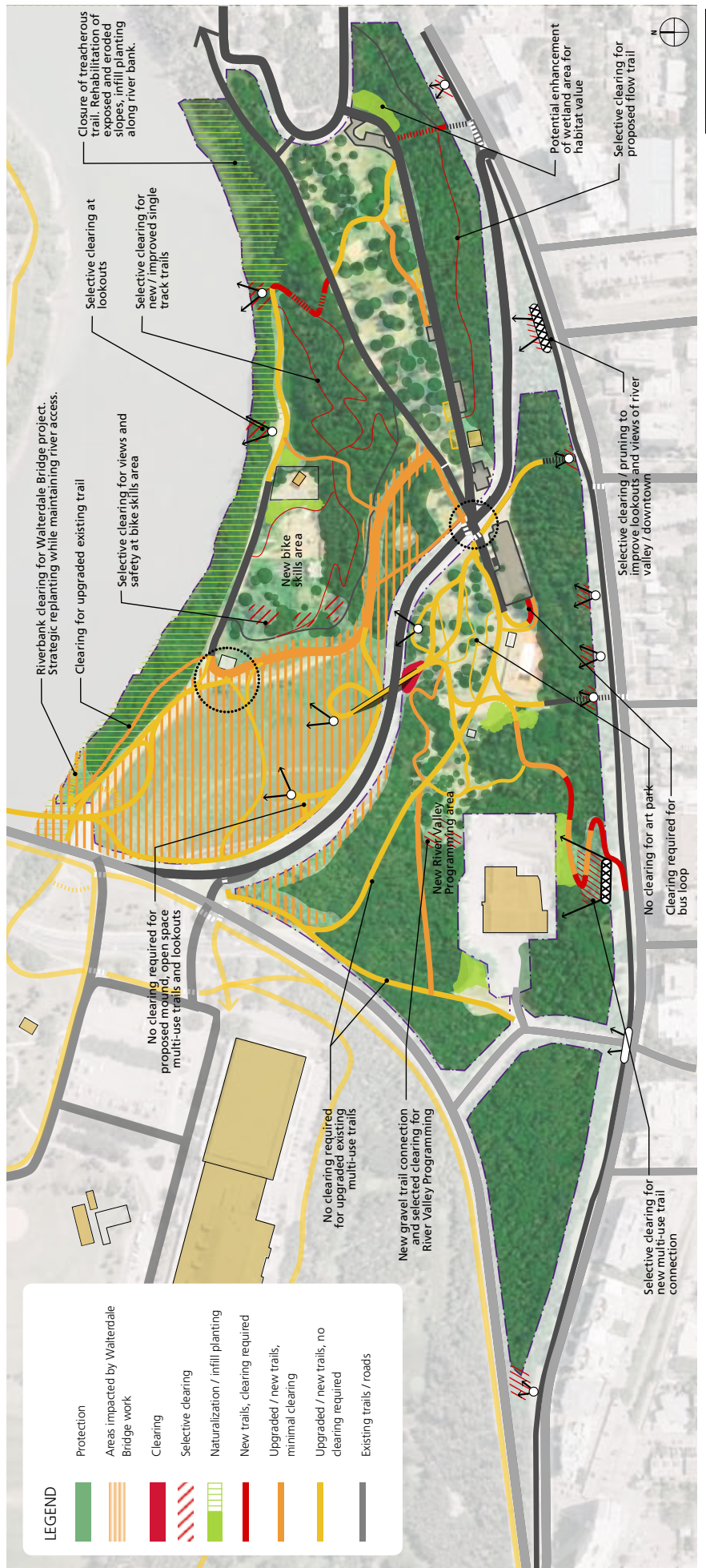


FIGURE 7.2: ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT



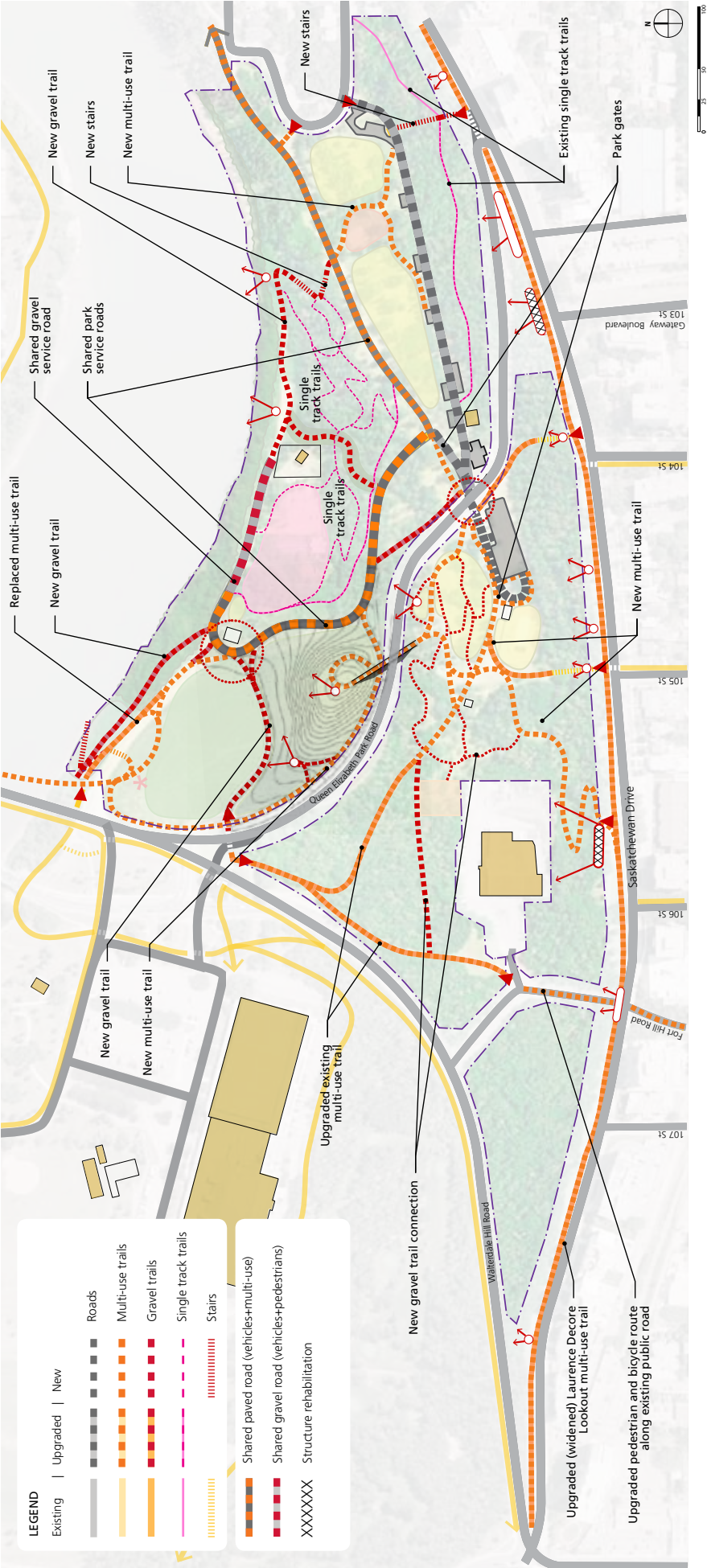


FIGURE 7.3: TRAIL HIERARCHY

## 7.3 TRAIL HIERARCHY

### INTENT

- To improve the circulation network with trail upgrades and new trail connections
- To identify priority routes for snow clearing
- To incorporate signage to direct user movement and ensure safety.

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- There was a good level of public support for improving the north-south multi-use trail connections, and expanding the multi-use trail network throughout the park.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

#### PARK SERVICE ROADS

Park service roads will continue to have gates to ensure that only authorized service vehicle access is permitted. Access to park service roads will be ensured for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized uses.

#### MULTI-USE TRAILS

- An expanded multi-use trail system will improve connectivity within the river valley trail system and improve accessibility from adjacent neighbourhoods.
- Multi-use trails consist of an asphalt surface that have a minimum width of 3m, and accessible slopes of under 8% (1:12) where possible.
- Main multi-use trails are to be cleared in winter for use by pedestrians, wheelchairs, strollers, cyclists, roller bladers, skateboarders, etc. in accordance with the Snow and Ice Control Policy. Refer to Section 7.16 Winter Activities for a diagram of snow clearing routes.
- Trails will experience occasional use by service vehicles for maintenance operations and emergencies.
- The trail adjacent to Saskatchewan Drive is proposed to be upgraded to 3m wide (shared-use path standard), and to be setback further from the roadway where possible to increase pedestrian comfort and safety. Community Services to work with the Transportation Department on this upgrade.

#### GRAVEL TRAILS

- Gravel trails consist of hard-packed crushed stone surfacing that has a width of 3m where space allows.

Trails can be 1.5m wide in areas with steep slopes, existing trees, or other environmentally-sensitive areas where a wider trail is not feasible.

- Gravel trails are intended for use by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Some gravel trails may be cleared in the winter. Refer to Section 7.16 Winter Activities.

#### SINGLE TRACK TRAILS

- Single track trails have an unpaved surface (e.g. hard packed dirt) and a minimum width of 0.5m.
- Some hardening of trails (e.g. with crushed stone) is acceptable in erosion-prone areas.
- Single track trails may be aligned through challenging / irregular topography and with reduced clearance to trees.
- Trails may have durable bike skills features incorporated in order to provide challenge elements.
- Single track trails are not cleared in winter. Refer to Section 7.16 Winter Activities.
- New single track trails are to be incorporated into the lower park in proximity to the Bike Skills Park. (Refer to section 7.13 Integrated Bike Skills Park)
- The potential for a “flow trail” from Saskatchewan Drive into the park will be explored.

#### STAIRWAYS

- Stairways are to be installed in locations where slopes are too steep or terrain too rough to allow a multi-use or gravel trail.
- Stairs are to be cleared in winter if they are on a primary circulation route (see diagram).
- Stairways are to include bicycle wheel ramps or adjacent trail for cyclists.
- A new stairway connection is proposed between the lower park picnic area and the riverbank trail to improve circulation through this part of the park.
- An upgraded / expanded stairway is proposed east of Queen Elizabeth Park Road, where a partial stairway currently exists.
- Stairways are cleared of snow in the winter. Refer to Section 7.16 Winter Activities.

## 7.4 CROSSWALK

### INTENT

- To improve the visibility and sense of safety at the Queen Elizabeth Park Road pedestrian crossing

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Improvements to the crossing between the upper and lower parks was one of the most requested park improvements from the first round of public consultation.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- The crosswalk will be redesigned and shifted further north to improve the pedestrian experience, and ensure high visibility, safety and universal accessibility (e.g. tactile warnings, curb cuts, wheelchair ramps).
- The sight lines for approaching drivers will be improved through selective clearing of vegetation south of the crosswalk.



FIGURE 7.4: EXAMPLE OF CROSSWALK AND MAIN VEHICULAR PARK ENTRY FEATURES



## 7.5 VEHICULAR CIRCULATION & PARKING

### INTENT: MASTER PLAN PARKING ACCOMMODATION

The Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan is intended to provide a level of public vehicular circulation and parking that supports park users who arrive by motor vehicle. The design of parking takes a balanced approach to providing convenient parking in areas of the park relative to anticipated demand, while consolidating parking along existing roads to minimize the footprint of impermeable surfaces and minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.

The master plan includes a total of 86 parking stalls and two bus parking spots. Parking is distributed between the upper and lower park areas to serve anticipated park uses on either side of Queen Elizabeth Park Road.

Overall, the number of stalls on site will be reduced from 93 to 86. Two new parking spaces for buses will be added in the upper park.

Bike racks will be provided in the upper and lower park nodes.

### PARKING ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the following assessment is to outline the rationale supporting the master plan's parking and circulation design and location. This assessment will outline anticipated parking usage throughout the year for various park uses/elements, provide a rationale for parking/circulation design, outline improvements for multi-modal circulation and to outline alternative parking accommodation for events.

### MASTER PLAN PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The master plan introduces a number of uses which will bring visitors to the park and will result in a demand for parking.

Existing program elements that will be revitalized and expanded include picnic areas, the play area, park trails, lookouts and River Valley Programming.

New program elements include an Art Park with two areas for permanent art and a transitory art space, a Bike Skills Park, passive open areas in both upper and lower parks with potential for small events, a toboggan hill, river access, interpretive elements, additional washrooms and other amenities to support park users.

### FUTURE PARKING DEMAND & ALLOCATIONS

Projected parking demand is based on several factors, including: observation of parking patterns at other river valley parks offering similar draws, discussions with River Valley Parks Operations, and also by surmising how many patrons each element/use can comfortably accommodate. Two uses contemplated in the master plan, the Bike Skills Park and the Art Park components, will have a regional draw and are new to Edmonton. For these uses the traffic generation indicated is based, in part, on interviews with municipalities offering similar uses.

Based on observations of other river valley parks, demand will be highest on weekends, followed by weekday evenings. The program elements will generate comparable parking demand in summer and in winter. The table on the following page illustrates anticipated parking demand (by season and time of day) as it compares to the total parking stalls available. Parking accommodation is designed to meet the typical peak parking needs for 99% of days over the year.

Future event programming has yet to be developed, however the two open areas are relatively small. Similar to Louise McKinney Park, if there is a festival on site then alternative site access options will need to form part of the event planning. In its current state, the Canada Day fireworks generate the most site visitors, but on this day the roads are closed and the parking areas cannot be accessed. Similarly, event planning for mountain bike races (currently hosted in Queen Elizabeth Park approximately 1 to 3 times per year) may require the designation of off-site parking for participants to ensure that regular park users are not displaced.

Special event days are estimated to be approximately 6 per year. The relatively small size of the open areas in Queen Elizabeth Park will limit the size of events that will be permitted to less than 150 participants. During major events, alternative means to access the site will need to be provided. These may include special bus transfers, special transit accommodations, and/or designated park and ride areas off-site.

### ASSUMPTIONS

A number of assumptions have been made with regards to the traffic generation for each use, as follows:

- **Picnic sites:** There are 11 picnic sites in the upper park and 8 in the lower park. Assuming two cars per site, and 85% occupancy at a maximum, typical demand



at peak times in the summer is anticipated to be 20 spaces in the upper park and 14 in the lower park.

- **Bike Skills Park:** Mountain bikers are significant users of river valley trails. Many bike skill park visitors will access the park from the trails that connect to the wider river valley trail system. As this Bike Skills Park is the only one of its kind in the city, it is expected that a number of visitors will also drive (or be driven) to the site. Individuals accessing the bike park by car may be up to 50% of bike park users. The parking demand generated for the Bike Skills Park generally reflects this far-reaching population.
- **Art Park areas, lookouts and other passive uses:** As the art pieces will be permanent and will form part of the passive enjoyment in the park, it is anticipated that the Art Park will generally generate low parking demand. Similarly, the use of improved and new lookouts, are anticipated to be part of park users' passive use of the park and/or trails, but not the sole reason to visit, and therefore will not contribute significantly to additional demand on parking. Groups visiting the Art Park can utilize the new bus drop-off area.
- **Toboggan hill:** The toboggan hill is expected to be a major attraction in winter. It is assumed that families with children will be the dominant participants in this activity with most arriving by vehicle due to the cold weather and short winter days. Up to 30 vehicles can be accommodated during weekends.
- **River valley trail system:** Queen Elizabeth Park is one of many locations from where individuals can park to access the river valley trail system throughout the year, therefore parking is maintained for this purpose. Alternative parking is available nearby at the Kinsmen Sports Centre.
- Other uses, including the play area, river access and interpretive elements are not specific destinations and will be used by individuals enjoying other park amenities (i.e trails, picnic sites). These uses are not listed in above table for this reason.

## SITE CIRCULATION DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENTS

- Generally, parking is provided on the side of the park with the activity it supports (lower or upper park).
- Enhanced connections between the upper and lower parks (i.e. intersection improvements, pedestrian overpass) will facilitate movement between parking areas and park amenities.
- Public vehicular circulation in the park will remain restricted to the existing park road between Queen Elizabeth Park Road and 90 Avenue in the lower park,

and the consolidated parking lot and bus loop in the upper park.

- Service and emergency access to the pump house, Bike Skills Park, lower park open space and facility node is accommodated by reconfiguring the existing multi-use trail to create a new combined multi-use trail / service road. All 3m wide multi-use trails in the upper and lower parks can also be used by service vehicles for park maintenance and emergency response.
- A new bus turn-around is included in the upper park to facilitate drop-off and pick-up of groups in a location that is safe and convenient. This bus loop can accommodate River Valley Programming participants, and also provides for potential tour buses or special shuttle buses during special events.
- The parking area in the upper park will be consolidated at the existing gravel parking lot on the west side of Queen Elizabeth Park Road to provide convenient access and reduce the overall parking footprint, thereby creating more area for 'car-free' park uses including trails and green space.
- The existing and proposed parking areas in the lower park are arranged in pockets to consolidate the parking along the existing park road, minimize the footprint of impermeable surfaces and to provide convenient access to picnic sites in the area adjacent to the road. Trails connect to many of the parking pockets to provide greater accessibility between parking, picnic sites and other park areas.
- Parking areas will be made more accessible by incorporating designated wheelchair accessible spaces, access lanes, sidewalks, ramps and curb cuts, as required by the Barrier-Free Design Guide. A minimum of two accessible spaces will be provided in the upper park and two in the lower park as required by the accessibility standards.

## BICYCLE PARKING

Allowances for bike racks (with a capacity of 4-8 bikes each) are provided with the following park elements:

- Phase 1: At the upper park open area and Commemorative Wall
- Phase 2: At the Park Shelter
- Phase 5: At the Lower Park Amenity Node, at the upgraded existing washroom building, at the enhanced playground, and at the Local Art Park and picnic area

The exact quantity will meet or exceed requirements under the Zoning Bylaw and will be determined at each phase of development.

TABLE 7-1: ANTICIPATED PARKING DEMAND

	ANTICIPATED PARKING STALLS USED (TYPICAL)						AVAILABLE STALLS
	SUMMER			WINTER			
	Weekday PM	Weekend AM	Weekend PM	Weekday PM	Weekend AM	Weekend PM	
UPPER PARK:							
Picnic sites	10	14	20	2	2	2	
Art park / lookouts / passive	4	8	6	2	6	2	
Open area	2	6	6	2	4	2	
SUB-TOTAL	16	28	32	6	12	6	40
LOWER PARK:							
Bike skills / trails	15	20	20	-	3	5	
Toboggan hill	-	-	-	10	30	20	
Picnic sites	10	14	14	4	8	8	
Open area	3	3	3	2	4	2	
SUB-TOTAL	28	37	37	16	45	35	46
NOT SPECIFIC TO QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK:							
River valley trail system	8	8	10	4	8	10	
TOTAL	52	73	79	26	65	51	86
DEMAND AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL AVAILABLE STALLS	60%	85%	92%	30%	76%	59%	

Accessible parking stalls are included in the total available stalls in the upper park and the lower park at the rate required by accessibility standards, which is for 2 accessible stalls per parking area of up to 50 stalls.

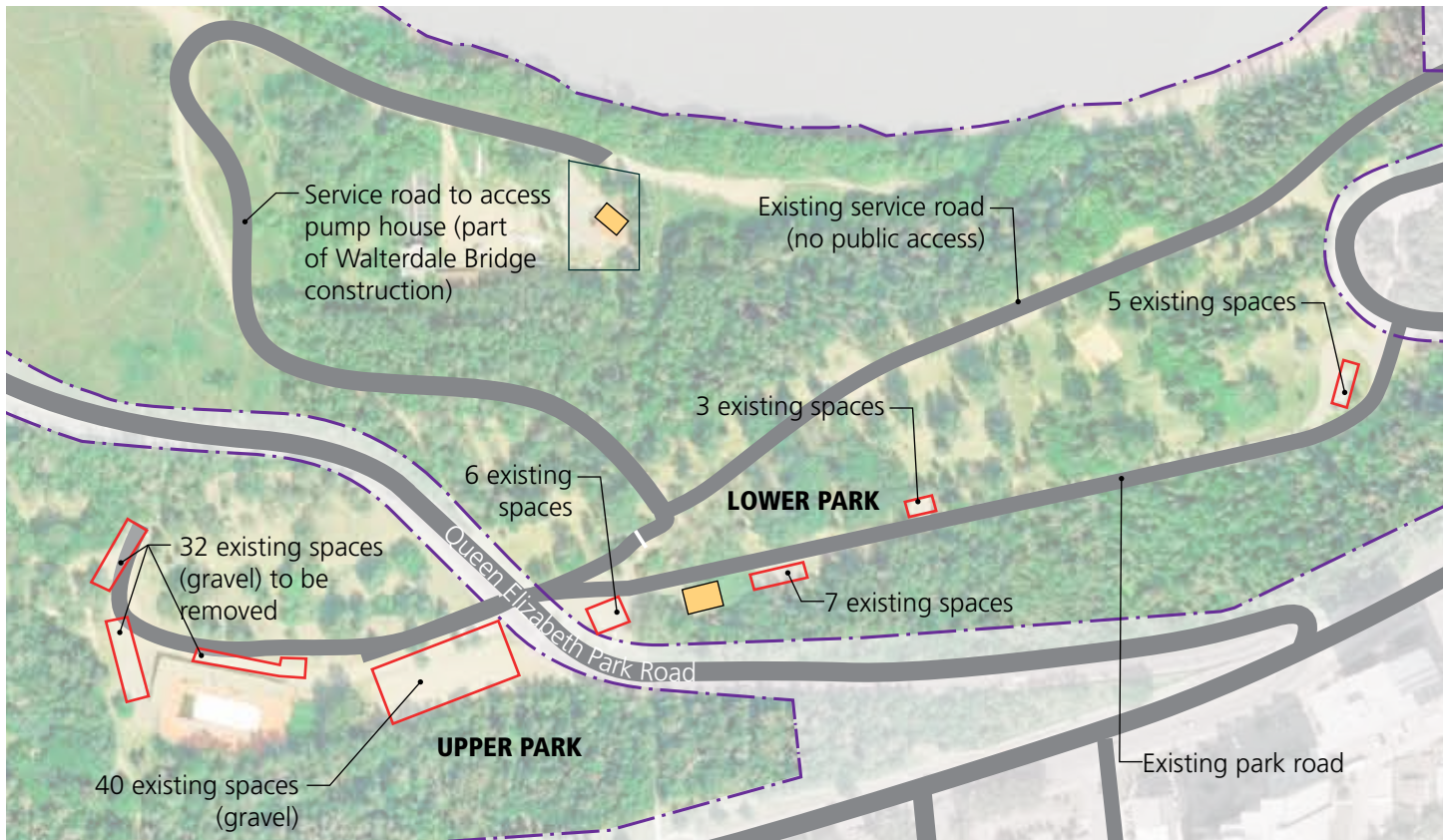


FIGURE 7.5: EXISTING PARKING AND VEHICULAR CIRCULATION IN QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK

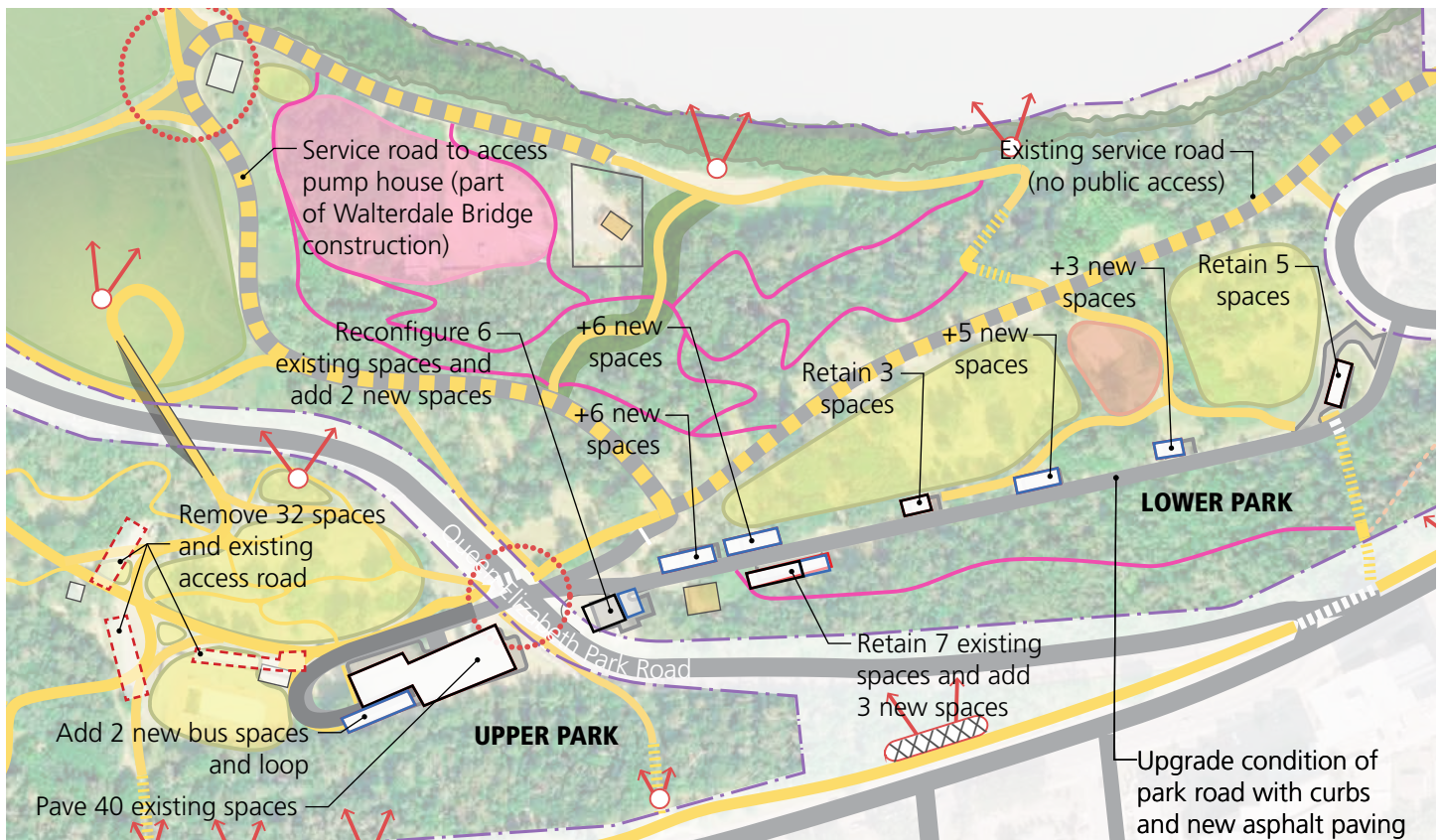


FIGURE 7.6: PROPOSED PARKING AND VEHICULAR CIRCULATION IN QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK



## 7.6 PARK ENTRIES

### INTENT

- To improve the visibility, safety and aesthetics of park entry points
- To improve pedestrian access to the park

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- There was strong support for improving access into the park from the south (i.e. from Saskatchewan Drive) for people of all ages and abilities, including seniors, people with mobility aids, families with strollers, and cyclists, among others.
- The addition of a new pedestrian entry from Saskatchewan Drive, near 106 Street, was the most popular of the different options presented for a new multi-use entry into the park. There was also support for improving the entry experience along Fort Hill Road.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- Pedestrian entries into the park are to be enhanced with improved landscape treatments and wayfinding signage.

- Some clearing is to be done to improve sight lines along existing staircases into the park from Saskatchewan Drive (also see Lookouts section, below).
- A major new multi-use park entry will be built from Saskatchewan Drive at 106 St to create an accessible route into the park from Strathcona neighbourhood.
- The main vehicle entry to the park will be upgraded with a large park name sign and new planting.
- Pedestrian access along Fort Hill Road will be improved with upgraded pavement, drainage, and on-street pedestrian route markings to delineate a multi-use route along the east side of the street. New plantings will be added by O'Keefe yard entry to screen the works yard and improve the entry experience.
- The entry stairway from Saskatchewan Drive east of Queen Elizabeth Park Road will be removed and replaced with a new park entry and stairway at the top of bank, 38m east of the hairpin.
- Wayfinding signage will be installed at all park entries and will be designed according to the Edmonton River Valley Parks Wayfinding Signage Guidelines (under development).



FIGURE 7.7: AT-GRADE LOOKOUTS HAVE DURABLE SURFACING AND SELECTIVE CLEARING TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN VIEWS OF THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER AND DOWNTOWN

## 7.7 LOOKOUTS

### INTENT

- To restore existing lookouts and designate new lookouts and view corridors from Queen Elizabeth Park and along its south boundary at Saskatchewan Drive. Lookouts will enhance the experience of park visitors and serve as destinations.

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Several comments were received during the public consultation regarding the desire to improve existing lookouts in the park.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Lookouts (existing and proposed) are to be created/enhanced with selective clearing at several locations along the trail adjacent to Saskatchewan Drive (Laurence Decore Lookout), and within the park where there are significant views and minimal clearing is required. In general, retain long-lived trees (i.e. spruce, pine, elm) when conducting selective clearing to promote forest health. Existing lookout structures along Saskatchewan Drive are proposed to be rehabilitated and potentially expanded. At-grade lookouts are formalized with hard surfacing (concrete paving or gravel paving) and seating. Where required, lookout structures/

platforms are to be well-built using durable materials, and detailing is to be simple and contemporary (see image on following page). Damaged interpretive signage panels at the existing Laurence Decore Lookout (near 106 Street) are to be repaired or replaced.

The following lookout locations are proposed:

- (A) Near 108 Street  
Clearing: to restore views at existing lookout  
Upgrades: Reinstate existing viewpoint, site preparation, new hardscape, seating (relocate bench to west), planting. Potential to relocate existing bench to the west to preserve the pine tree.
- (B) Viewpoint from Duggan Bridge (over Fort Hill Road)  
Clearing: none required  
Upgrades: none required
- (C) Laurence Decore Lookout (10m east of 106 Street)  
Clearing: selective clearing to retain views intended when existing structure was initially installed  
Upgrades: repair and painting of structure, refurbish interpretive panels. Note: east end of structure will be removed to accommodate 'park entry' that will lead to new accessible trail connection



FIGURE 7.8: NEW AND EXISTING LOOKOUTS IN QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK



- ④ 10m wide view 25m east of 105 St Stairs  
Clearing: Create a wider clearing to open up views to downtown while retaining desired conifers and healthy deciduous. Remove dead, hazardous and declining trees.
- ⑤ 10m wide view 125m east of 105 Street  
Clearing: Widen the clearing to open up views while retaining desired conifers and healthy deciduous. Remove dead and declining deciduous trees. Create 'habitat' trees by topping declining species  
Upgrades: New lookout with accessible seating, hardscaping and planting.
- ⑥ End of Gateway Boulevard (103 Street)  
Clearing: Greatly enhance views towards downtown from this prominent location through clearing and pruning. Remove vegetation up to existing pole that lies west of existing structure. Keep conifers and potentially some healthy deciduous to frame view.  
Upgrades: Rehabilitate existing structure/seating area and widen it to the west.
- ⑦ Viewing Area (38m east of hairpin). Views toward Hotel MacDonald.  
Clearing: Selective removals, convert 3-4 trees to habitat trees.  
Upgrades: Potential to combine with new entry node into park therefore include new hard surfacing, seating, planting. Refer to Park Entry ③.
- ⑧ Viewing Area in upper park (north of the first phase of the Art Park).  
Clearing: Selective clearing and pruning to create/maintain views  
Upgrades: Accessible bench on a concrete pad, low planting on slope between lookout and Queen Elizabeth Park Road.
- ⑨ Lookouts integrated with the mound (2)  
Clearing: none required  
Upgrades: Curved seating wall, low planting, and hard surfacing. (see section on Mound and Overpass)
- ⑩ Riverbank lookouts (2)  
Clearing: Selective clearing and pruning to open up views toward Rosedale  
Upgrades: Gravel surfacing, benches on concrete pads, potential signage

## PARK ENTRY CLEARING AND UPGRADES

The following improvements to park entries are proposed:

- ① 105 Street stairs (Existing park entry)  
Clearing: tree clearing on both sides of stairs for safety/security and CPTED.  
Upgrades: widen approach (path) at bottom, upgrade stair. New hardscaping, seating, planting at Saskatchewan Drive. Improve aesthetics at entry to staircase (paint and/or relocate 'sand box').
- ② 104 Street stairs (Existing park entry)  
Clearing: tree pruning and clearing on both sides of stairs for safety/security and CPTED.  
Upgrades: New hardscaping, seating, planting
- ③ 38m east of hairpin (Proposed park entry)  
Clearing: selective removals, convert 3-4 trees to habitat trees.  
Upgrades: New park entry node at top of proposed stairs connecting with southeast area of lower park (near play area). The park entry node to include paving, seating, signage and planting. Remove existing stairs connected to the boardwalk adjacent to Saskatchewan Drive. Potential to combine entry with lookout ⑦.

## TREE REMOVAL ONLY

North side Queen Elizabeth Park Road at hairpin  
Clearing: Remove hazardous, dead or declining trees on north side of Queen Elizabeth Park Road at hairpin. Only those trees that pose a falling hazard to cars will be removed; this area not intended for views



VIEWS TOWARDS  
ROSSDALE AND  
DOWNTOWN

EXAMPLE  
OF NEW  
LOOKOUT  
STRUCTURE



## 7.8 UPPER PARK: FORMER POOL SITE & AREA

### INTENT

- To create a vibrant, usable space in the upper park
- To improve connections into and through the upper park
- To commemorate the old Queen Elizabeth Pool
- To provide space for a variety of programs, including picnic areas, River Valley Programming, Aboriginal Art Park, and small events.
- To celebrate views toward downtown and the river valley
- To provide amenities to support user comfort (e.g. toilet, seating, drinking fountain, WiFi, electricity)

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- During public consultation sessions and surveys, the old Queen Elizabeth Pool was identified as an important and memorable part of the park, and was considered by many to be the heart of the park. Several people suggested commemorating the old pool in some way.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

#### FORMER QUEEN ELIZABETH POOL

- The pool site will be commemorated with a low wall (max. 0.6m tall) that is integrated into the topography of the site to create a small terrace. The wall location will trace the outline of the old pool.
- The commemorative wall will have interpretive graphics and text incorporated into the top and sides to communicate imagery and stories about the old pool and the park's history of recreation.
- Picnic sites will be provided in the grassy area around the commemorative wall.

#### SHELTER AT THE OLD POOL SITE

- A small shade shelter will be installed to provide cover for small group gatherings and picnics. The shelter will be a focal point in the upper park and be designed with a plaza that will tie-in with the formal entrance to the Aboriginal Art Park.

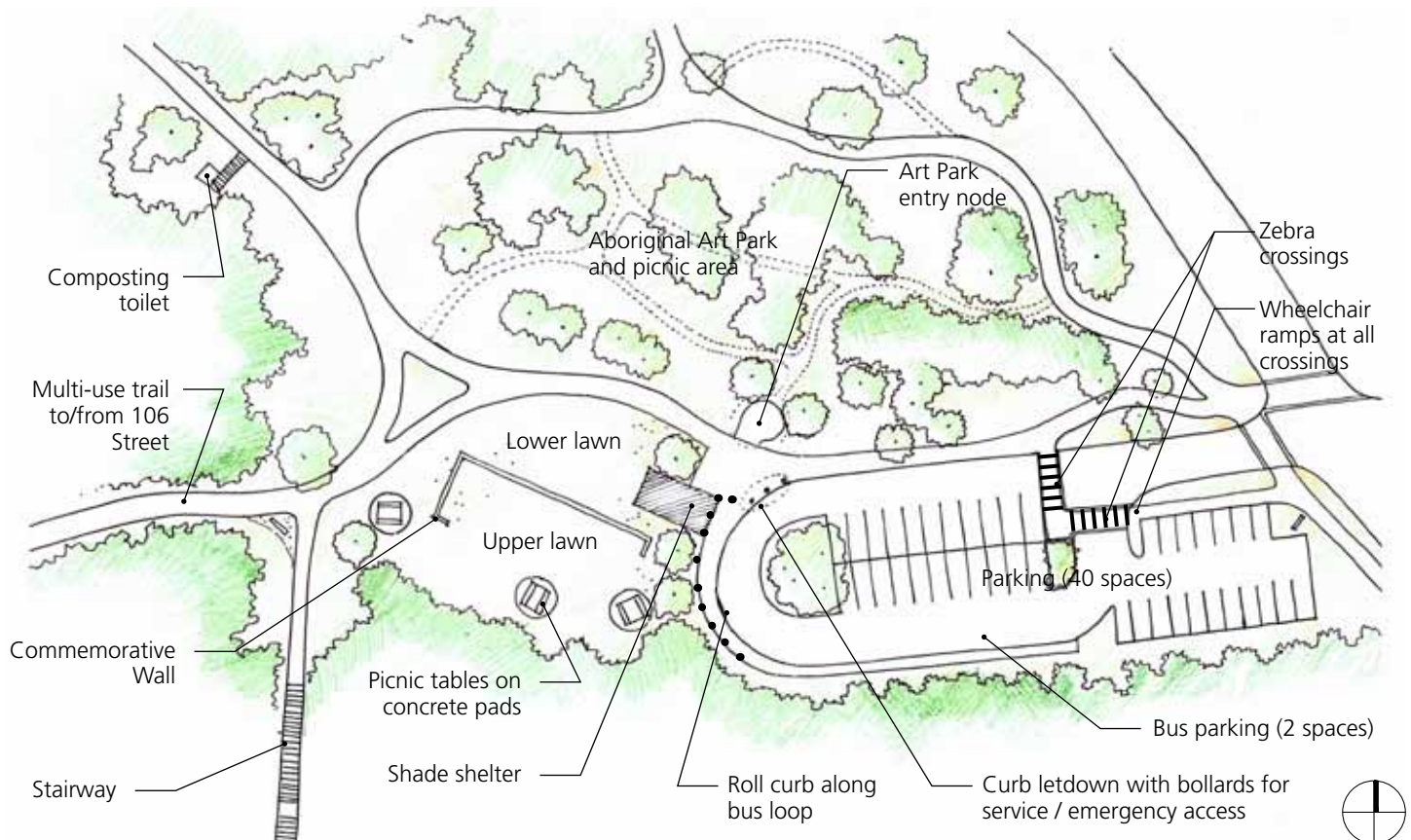


FIGURE 7.9: CONCEPT FOR ABORIGINAL ART PARK, PARKING AREA/BUS LOOP, SHELTER AND OPEN AREA AT FORMER POOL SITE



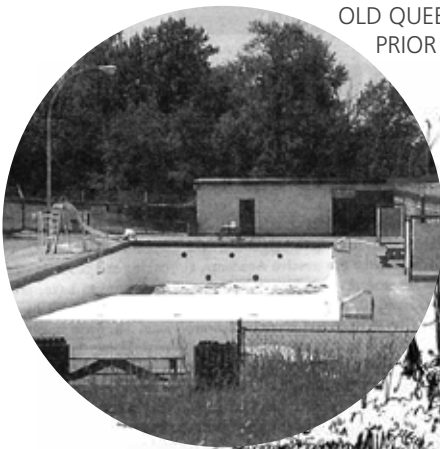
- The shelter is intended to be flexible and to fit well into the park setting. This will allow the shelter to function as a meeting place, a gathering place (e.g. for small events or picnics), or a quiet sheltered place to relax and enjoy the scenery.
- The shelter is to have a refined, simple and clean look that does not distract from the art pieces of the adjacent Aboriginal Art Park. It is to be constructed using high-quality, durable materials that are well detailed, practical and authentic, avoiding anything overtly flashy or trendy that may appear dated in the near future.
- Good sight lines through the shelter are important both for public safety and to preserve views.
- The shelter will include a hosebib for water and electrical servicing for events, potentially on a user activated, pay-as-you-go system to make access to electricity convenient and affordable.



THE DESIGN INTENT OF THE SHELTER IS TO BE SIMPLE, TIMELESS, AND WELL-INTEGRATED INTO THE PARK

## TRAILS

- The area around the old pool site is envisioned to be an important node in the park, where several trails converge.



OLD QUEEN ELIZABETH POOL  
PRIOR TO DEMOLITION

EXISTING CONDITIONS  
AT OLD POOL SITE

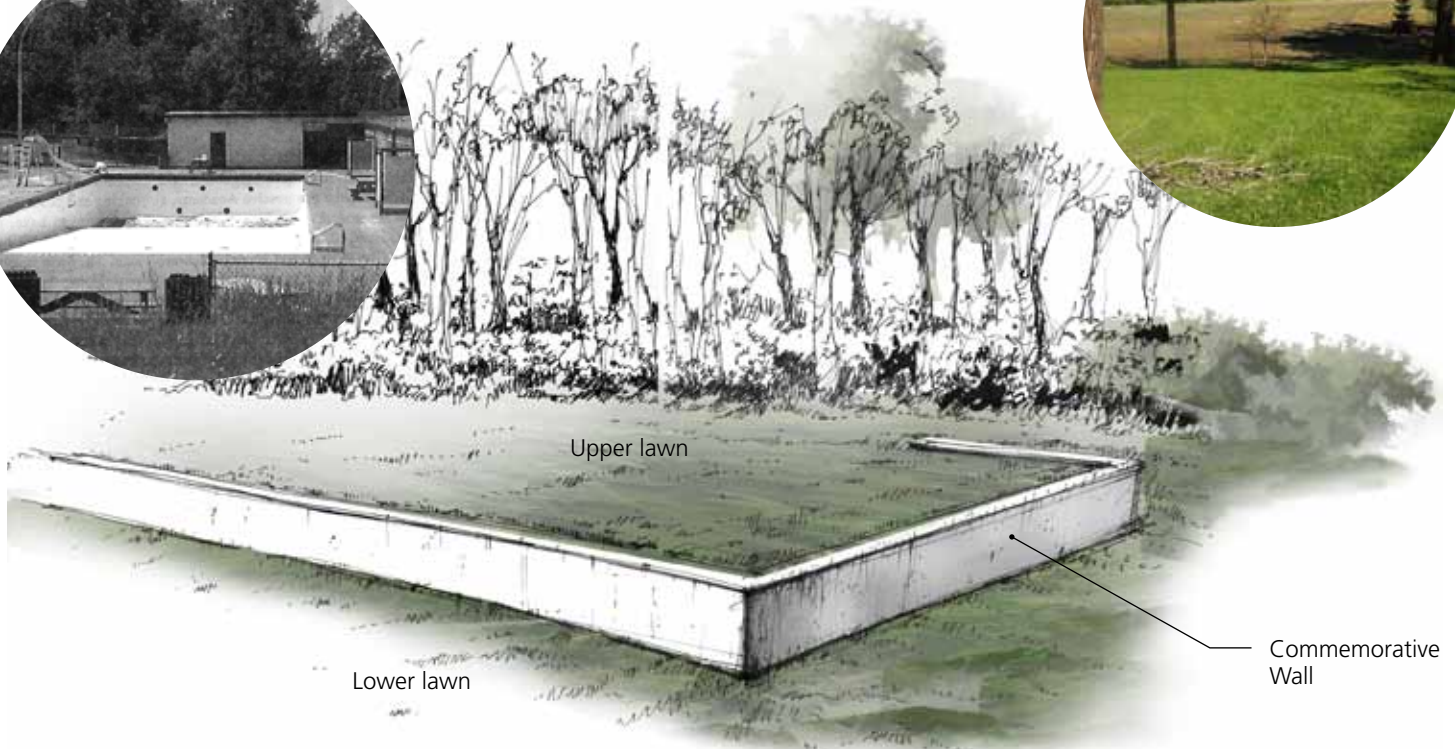


FIGURE 7.10: CONCEPT FOR COMMEMORATIVE FEATURE AT OLD QUEEN ELIZABETH POOL SITE

- An accessible, multi-use trail will lead pedestrians and cyclists from Saskatchewan Drive into the upper park (see section 7.3, above). In conjunction with the pedestrian overpass this trail will provide an important new north-south connection through the park.
- Minor gravel trails within the upper park will augment pedestrian circulation through the Aboriginal Art Park.
- A new east-west multi-use trail will connect Fort Hill Road with the main upper park activity node.
- Emergency vehicle access will be provided for the new River Valley Programming site.

### AMENITIES

In addition the shelter, the upper park will include several new amenities to support user comfort, including:

- Picnic sites in the grassy areas around the commemorative wall and in the Aboriginal Art Park.
- Drinking fountain
- BluFone (emergency phone)
- Seating (most of which will be barrier-free)
- Bike racks
- Composting toilet for park visitors and River Valley Programming participants. The composting toilet will reduce servicing requirements, lower the environmental footprint, and provide an educational opportunity.

### PARKING AND DROP-OFF AREA

- The parking lot will be designed to accommodate barrier free, pedestrian-friendly elements, including low curbs, bollards, zebra patterns at designated crossings and the required number of spaces for persons with disabilities.
- The existing parking lot will be formalized and paved to provide 35-40 spaces.
- A turnaround/drop-off area will accommodate tours to the Aboriginal Art Park or groups participating in River Valley Programming. Bus parking spaces long enough for two buses will be included east of the proposed shelter.
- See section 7.5 Vehicular Circulation and Parking for more details on parking strategies for the park.
- Portions of the parking lot may be used to support small events, expanding pedestrian areas and or for food trucks.

### RIVER VALLEY PROGRAMMING

- The new site for River Valley Programming will be situated against the north wall of the O'Keefe site. This site will allow easier bus access from Queen Elizabeth Park Road, will be buffered from other park activities, and will be situated next to a new washroom (composting toilet), drinking fountain, and shelter. River Valley Programming activities can also help to activate this otherwise under-utilized area of the park, and the large retaining wall can provide a backdrop for archery or a future climbing wall. This site has been endorsed by River Valley Programming staff.
- A simple, attractive fence with low visual prominence (e.g. black metal 'Omega'-style fence) will provide security for the site when it is not used by River Valley Programming. It is important for this site to present well and be in keeping with the park-like environment.
- A high quality and visually integrated storage shed will be provided to support the site programs.

A SIMPLE, ATTRACTIVE MESH FENCE AND GATE CONTROLS ACCESS TO THE RIVER VALLEY PROGRAMMING AREA AND PROVIDES SECURITY WHILE MINIMIZING VISUAL PROMINENCE IN THE PARK



RIVER VALLEY PROGRAMMING CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE LARGE RETAINING WALL AT THE O'KEEFE SITE AS A BACKDROP FOR PROGRAMS



## 7.9 OVERPASS AND MOUND

### INTENT

- The pedestrian overpass will provide a grade-separated connection over Queen Elizabeth Park Road, connecting the upper and lower park areas in a way that ensures a high level of pedestrian safety.
- The grassy mound is built to function as a tobogganing hill in the winter, and to provide an excellent vantage point, particularly during festivals and special events.
- Together, the mound and overpass create 'framed views' for vehicles driving toward the Walterdale Bridge.
- The mound will provide a space for transitory art that will be visible from downtown and from passing park and road traffic

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Building a new pedestrian overpass over Queen Elizabeth Park Road was identified by online survey respondents as a top priority, with 81% support. It was also one of the "top 3" preferred elements by 37% of online survey respondents.
- Building a large mound for tobogganing and viewpoints was selected by two workshop groups as a top priority for implementation, and chosen as a "top 3" preferred element by 10% of survey respondents.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

#### MOUND

- The grassy slope of the mound will provide an excellent vantage point for enjoying views of the river valley and downtown skyline, and for watching fireworks on Canada Day.
- The slope can also function as a natural amphitheatre for special events and watching activities in the open lawn.
- The mound will help frame views of the new Walterdale Bridge.
- During the winter the mound will become a toboggan hill.
- Electrical connections will be provided to allow future lighting of the toboggan hill or transitory art installations.
- The slope forms part of the park space allocated for transitory art, whereby the installations can be viewed and enjoyed from the lower open area and across the river.



MOUND AS PUBLIC GATHERING SPACE IN SUMMER AND WINTER

## PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS

- The overpass provides a grade-separated pedestrian connection between the upper and lower park areas. The proposed overpass will be integrated into the site topography, with the mound providing a landing spot for the overpass on the north side of the road.
- The overpass is to have a light, elegant profile, with simple and contemporary detailing. The design should complement that of the future Walterdale Bridge and new art pieces.
- Pedestrians will be able to take advantage of the new vantage points from the overpass to experience the Edmonton skyline. The mound and overpass will also frame views of the new Walterdale Bridge, thereby enhancing the entry experience for people travelling north into downtown.
- In addition to the lookouts at each end of the overpass, seating may be incorporated into the overpass to provide more places to rest and enjoy views.

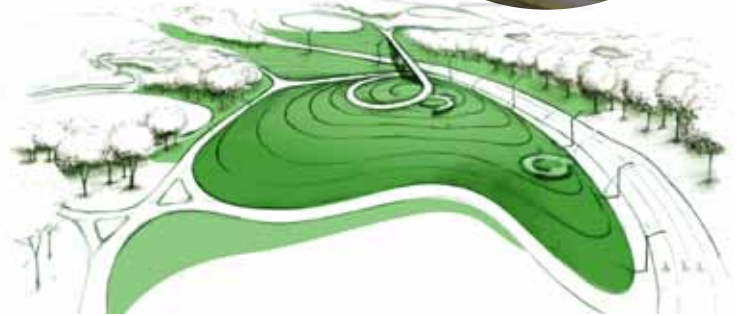


FIGURE 7.11: MOUND AND OVERPASS, LOOKING SOUTH

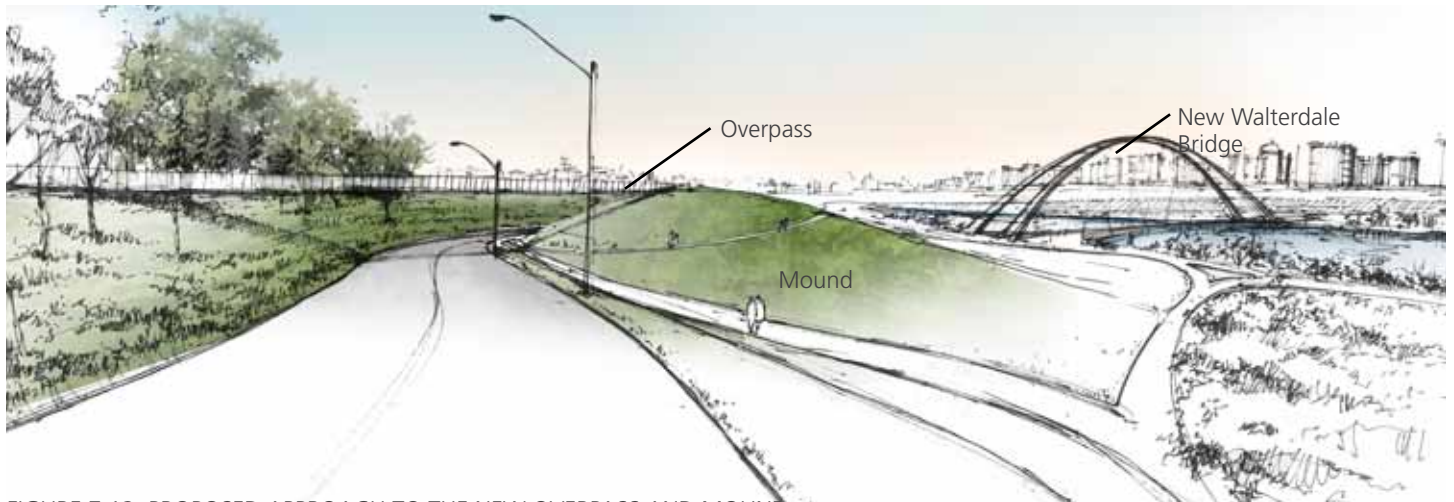


FIGURE 7.12: PROPOSED APPROACH TO THE NEW OVERPASS AND MOUND

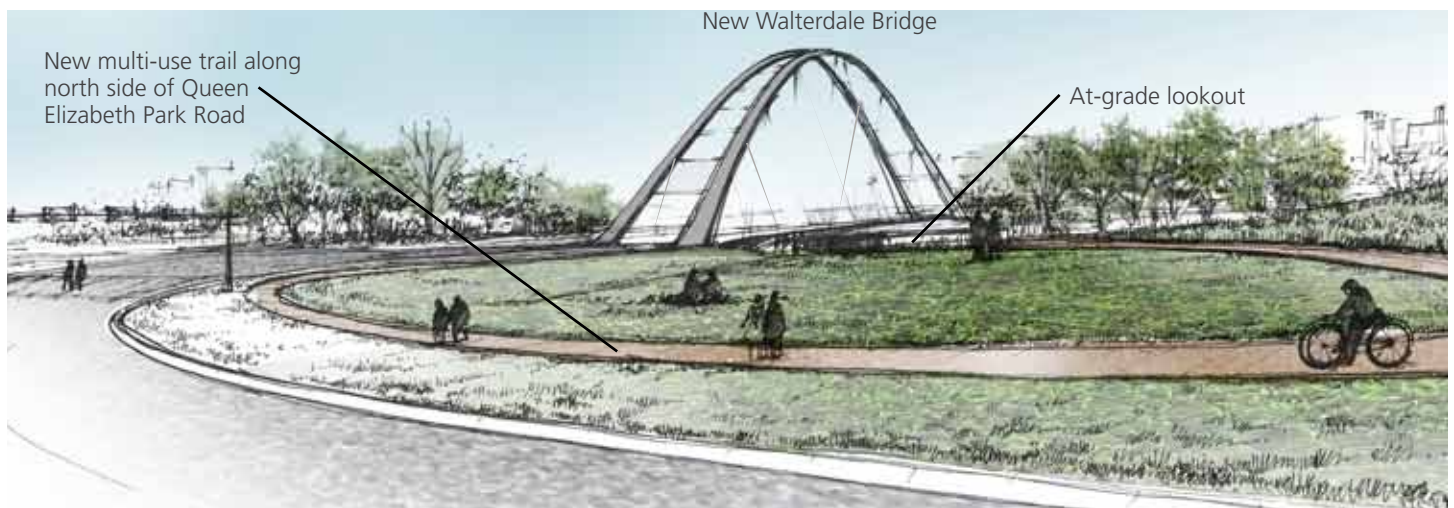


FIGURE 7.13: PROPOSED APPROACH TO THE NEW WALTERDALE BRIDGE



## MOUND LOOKOUTS

- Two formal, at-grade lookout points are incorporated into the mound to provide accessible locations from which to enjoy the views - One near the north side of the overpass and the second between the overpass and Walterdale Bridge.
- The lookouts on the mound are located strategically to take advantage of the stunning views of the downtown skyline, river valley and lower park uses (toboggan hill, flexible open field) while also giving users a sense of protection/separation from passing traffic.

- Lookouts are to be designed using high quality, durable materials, with a timeless, contemporary appearance and fit with the topography.
- Curved concrete seating walls can be integrated with the grades at each of the lookouts to provide both an clear edge that defines the lookout and seating that provides flexibility and can be used in a variety of ways in all seasons (i.e. users can sit, stand or lie on seating walls in multiple directions, by oneself, in pairs or in small groups).

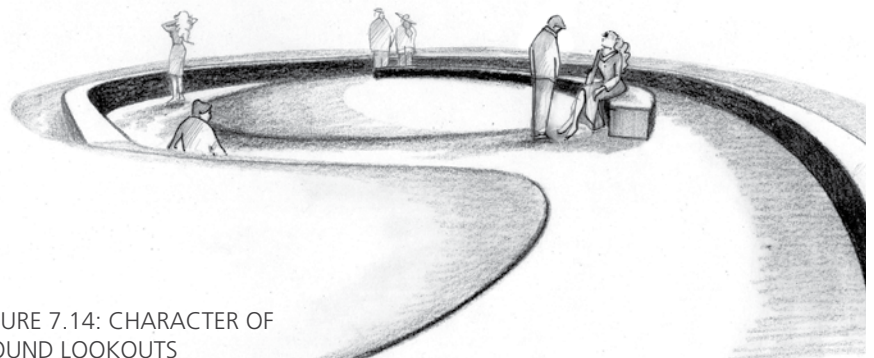


FIGURE 7.14: CHARACTER OF MOUND LOOKOUTS

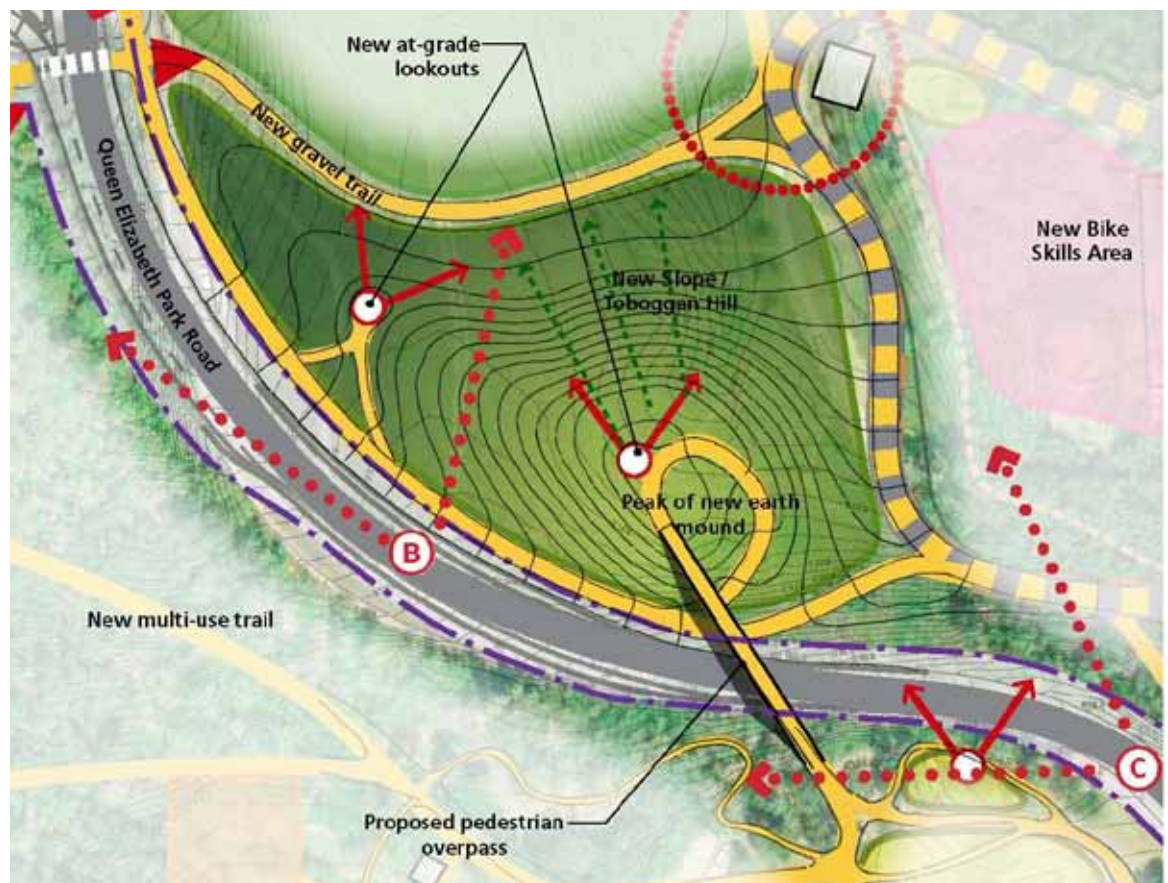


FIGURE 7.15: LOCATION OF PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS, MOUND AND MOUND LOOKOUTS

## 7.10 FLEXIBLE OPEN FIELD

### INTENT

- To provide a flexible open space that allows for a variety of year-round uses and special events

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Many participants expressed support for a hierarchy of spaces that can provide year-round activities in the park.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- The large, flat grassed area will be uniquely located in an easily accessible, visible and central city location to support a variety of small events and public gatherings. Park users will be able to enjoy views from the field to downtown, the river, and the new Waltherdale Bridge.
- The open space will be able to be used for small events, pick-up games, frisbee, sun-bathing, picnics and viewing fireworks in the summer, among other activities.

- Winter programming will include a run-out area for the toboggan hill, as well as the potential for temporary warming huts, small winter events and playing in the snow.
- The site will have electrical servicing to support events (see details under the Utilities section, above).
- The flexible open field will be supported by the new amenities (e.g. washrooms, drinking fountain, fire pit) at the lower park facility node.
- The field will be in close proximity to Kinsmen Park, allowing for overflow athletic event space.



FLEXIBLE OPEN SPACE CAN  
BE USED FOR A VARIETY OF  
EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



## 7.11 LOWER PARK: NEW AMENITY NODE

### INTENT

- To provide a lower park amenity node which includes winterized washrooms, a warm-up area, a drinking fountain, seating and a year-round fire pit.

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Several survey respondents expressed a desire for more washrooms to support new activities in the lower park.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- A major amenity node will be built at the intersection of trails and activities in the lower park. The amenities will be conveniently located to support the new programming in the lower park, including the flexible open field (possible event space), tobogganing hill, integrated bike skills area, and river access point.
- The node will include a small paved plaza with seating, bike racks, planting, wayfinding signage, a drinking fountain, and potentially a 'BluFone' emergency phone.
- A new amenity building will be architecturally designed and well-integrated with the site. The building is to have a refined, simple and clean look. It is to be constructed using high-quality, durable materials that are well detailed, practical and authentic. Consider the use of accent colours that convey a sense of playfulness and add winter interest to recognise the building's position in the centre of several active park use areas.
- It will be a year-round facility, including custodial storage, vending machine, warm-up area with views of the mound, and barrier-free public washrooms. The building can potentially include office/storage for bike skills.
- The amenity building will be built to LEED Silver standard as per City Policy C532.
- A custom-designed outdoor fire pit for winter warming will help commemorate the site's long history as a gathering place. Whether the fire pit is gas or wood-burning to be determined during detailed design. The fire pit will be designed with high quality materials and careful detailing and provide for safe enjoyment of the fire in winter. Seating around the fire pit will encourage gathering. The design of the fire pit and/or the seating around the fire pit may incorporate interpretive elements that to reveal the story of this area as a traditional gathering place and of nearby archeological discoveries.
- The design and materials of all structures and furnishings will be high quality for durability, simple and timeless to fit well within the park setting, and provide good aesthetics and functionality all year round (i.e. look good in the snow).

EXAMPLE OF A  
PERMANENT  
FIREPIT



EXAMPLE OF A  
FIREPIT FOR WINTER  
WARMING,  
EDMONTON

EXAMPLE OF PUBLIC  
RESTROOM BUILDING,  
MITCHELL PARK,  
GREENPORT, NEW YORK



EXAMPLE OF WASHROOM  
BUILDING WITH  
INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE  
AND PAVED PLAZA,  
WAGNER PARK, COLORADO



EXAMPLE OF PUBLIC  
RESTROOM BUILDING,  
IONA BEACH PARK,  
RICHMOND, BC





## 7.12 RIVER ACCESS

### INTENT

To provide access to the North Saskatchewan River for pedestrians. The steps are intended to be integrated with the armouring required for the new Walterdale Bridge so as to minimize disturbance to adjacent riverbank areas.

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Formalizing access to the river was selected as a top priority for implementation and received 75% support in both online surveys.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- Taking advantage of the shoreline disturbance and reconstruction that will result from the construction of the Walterdale Bridge, new pedestrian steps down to the riverbank will enable visitors to enjoy a unique perspective of the river and to “touch the water.”

- The “steps” may consist of large, carefully placed stones to create stairs that are integrated with the riverbank armouring (rip-rap) for the new Walterdale Bridge project. Alternately, these may be concrete steps along the edge of the bridge rip-rap.
- The large grade change precludes the route from being universally accessible.
- The idea of a boat launch in Queen Elizabeth Park was considered. However, several factors contributed to the decision against providing a boat launch here:
  - The riprap bank created by the Walterdale Bridge project will be too steep at this location to provide a suitable ramp for launching.
  - To minimize the footprint of paved parking areas and to maintain large areas of the park as green space for recreation, parking areas are consolidated near the park entry and public vehicle access to the bank is not provided.
  - Other locations in nearby river valley parks are being identified as preferable for boat launch facilities.

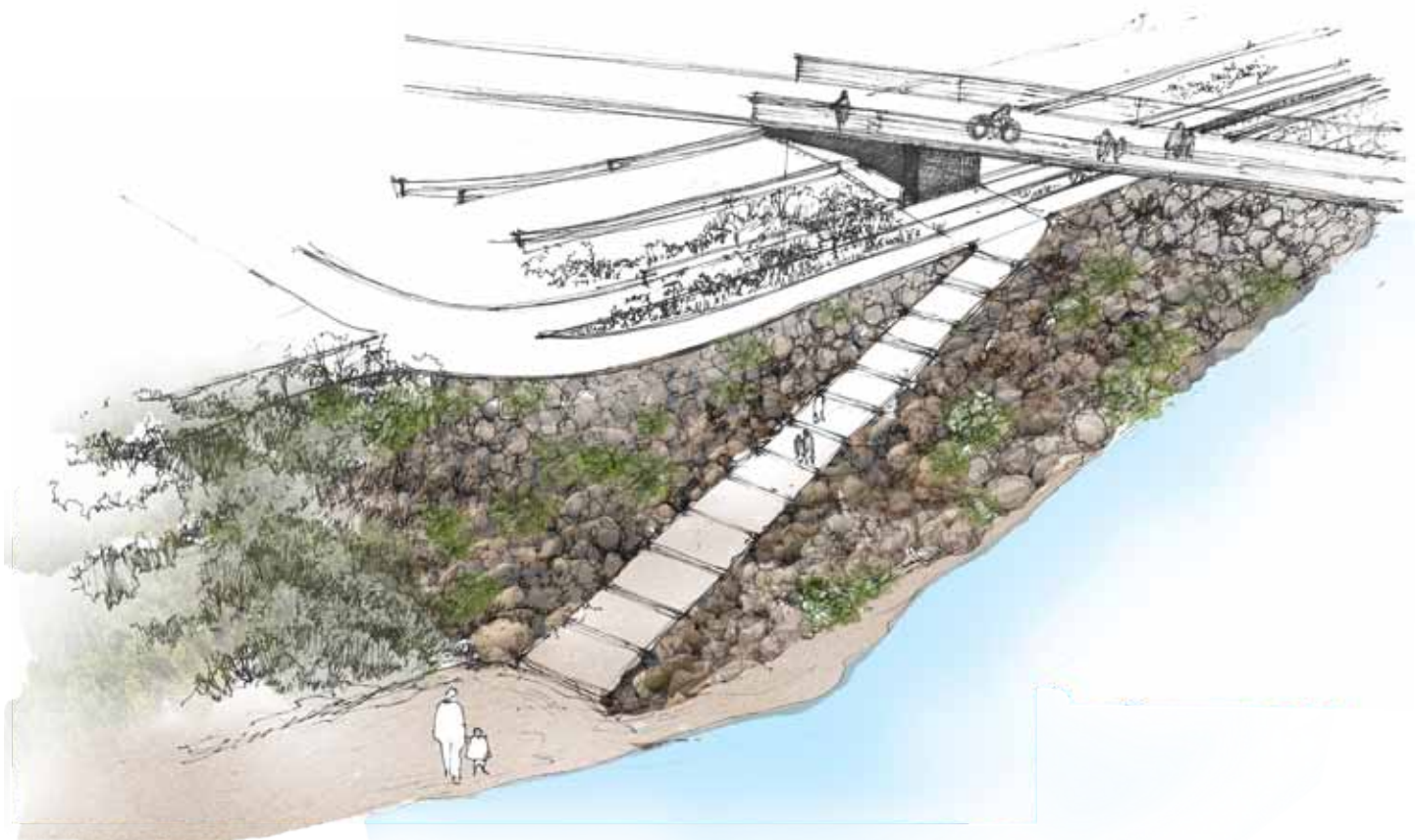


FIGURE 7.16: ACCESS TO THE RIVER IS PROPOSED BY THE NEW WALTERDALE BRIDGE, VIA A STEPPED RAMP MADE OF LARGE STONE SLABS (CONCEPTUAL)

## 7.13 INTEGRATED BIKE SKILLS PARK

### INTENT

- To create a successful bike skills park that balances environmental and recreational needs. The design will draw from best practices developed at other successful bike skills parks.
- To provide Edmontonians with a unique river valley activity that promotes health, safety and well-being in a central location that is easy to access.
- To provide diverse biking experiences for a range of ages and skill levels by integrating a Bike Skills Park with single track trails.
- To consult with the public and members of the biking community when designing the Bike Skills Park.
- To explore partnerships with local riding organizations to help create an inclusive, well-maintained facility and to foster environmental stewardship through engagement with the mountain bike community.
- To educate and promote stewardship amongst community, communicating the importance of taking care of the river valley's ecology and staying on designated paths and to reduce ad-hoc structures elsewhere in the park and river valley.

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- 88% support in online survey to build a new mountain bike skills area.
- Improve and/or expand single track trails throughout the park or in selected areas: Supported by 59% of online survey respondents.
- Incorporating "ruins" from the old wastewater treatment plant: 45% support in online survey.
- A mountain bike "flow trail" was frequently requested by participants during public consultation events.

CHALLENGE  
FEATURES  
CAN BE  
INCORPORATED  
INTO SINGLE  
TRACK TRAILS IN  
A WAY THAT HELPS  
REDUCE IMPACTS TO  
ADJACENT TREES



### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Successful bike skills parks (such as is in Hinton, AB) combine a skills area with single track trails and also tie into a perimeter trail to offer a wide range of skill development and riding experiences.



The integrated Bike Skills Park is comprised of two complementary parts: the bike skills area and the single track trails. See Figure 7.17.

The proposed size of the Bike Skills Park is intended to be substantial enough to be a destination. It is important that the bike park include both a skills area and trails to provide a variety of opportunities that support skills development among riders of ranging ages and abilities.

The Bike Park will also include seating (potentially customized), a picnic area, and the potential for a viewing platform.

This park will provide a wheeled recreation destination along the river valley trail system. The site can also be used for appropriately-sized bike events.

### BIKE SKILLS PARK

- The skills area will be approximately 5000+ sq. meters (54,000 sq ft) and will incorporate a wide range of features that will appeal to all levels of riders.
- It will be situated on the remediated site of a former wastewater treatment plant. In addition to this being an adaptive reuse of a former industrial site for recreation, this site provides the potential for "Ruins" of the old wastewater treatment plant to be incorporated into the design to create a unique and site-specific facility.
- Skills features will be designed to be high quality, durable, and aesthetically interesting.
- The area will be adjacent to existing trails, seating areas, a new washroom and a drinking fountain. Through the detailed design of the skills area, there is the potential to incorporate an elevated boardwalk/viewing area for spectators.

EXAMPLE OF BIKE  
SKILLS AREA IN  
VALMONT, COLORADO

## PROPOSED SANCTIONED SINGLE TRACK TRAILS

- The new sanctioned trail network will be located east of the skills area with an area of approximately 12,000 sq. meters (130,000 sq. ft).
- The trail layout will be determined during the detailed design phase and is anticipated to include approximately 550 lin. m. of single track trails.
- Trails will be designed, built and maintained to best-practice standards to ensure trails are durable, do not cause erosion, and safely support a range of skill levels.
- Maps and signs will identify trails, promote safe use, and encourage trail etiquette.
- A 400 lin. m. "flow trail" could potentially be incorporated into an existing informal trail south of the existing lower park washroom building. Further site analysis is required during design development of the Bike Skills Park.

## A SPECIALIZED APPROACH

- As the proposed Bike Skills Park with sanctioned single track trails is expected to be the first of its kind in the river valley, it requires taking a somewhat unique approach to community involvement, design, construction standards, management and maintenance.
- Special design considerations are required to protect the ecology of the site. Special education, maintenance, and management strategies are to be developed to foster a sense of stewardship and responsibility amongst users.

- The design of the Bike Skills Park will be developed in collaboration between an expert Bike Skills Park designer, the biking community, and City Departments (including Operations staff).
- The process should involve young people integrally in the development of facilities and programs related to wheeled recreation at the outset. Programs and policy need to be somewhat flexible to be able to respond to ever changing needs of young people.
- The process should involve park staff who are experienced with the existing single track trails to tie the existing single track trails into the Bike Skills Park and bring them up to the proposed standard.
- The Bike Skills Park approach will be design/build-oriented as general contractors and landscape companies typically do not have the expertise to design or develop these specialized facilities.
- There is potential to develop partnership agreements with local riding organizations to help with construction, maintenance, education and/or to dismantle 'unauthorized' structures. This will be an opportunity to help foster stewardship and to help ensure well-maintained facilities.
- As recommended in the Wheeled Recreation Destination Strategy, the development of this facility will involve a review of current design standards. There will also be a need to determine specialized maintenance requirements and to develop a maintenance schedule, budget and operations plan.

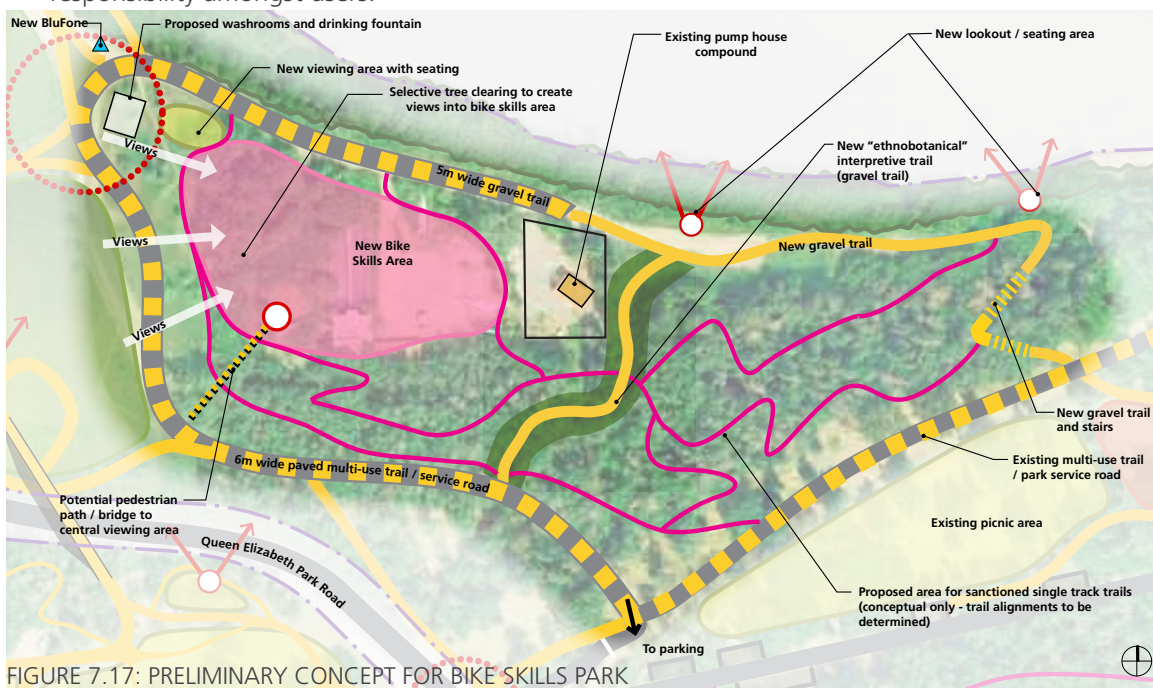


FIGURE 7.17: PRELIMINARY CONCEPT FOR BIKE SKILLS PARK



## 7.14 LOWER PARK: ESTABLISHED AREAS

### INTENT

To enhance existing areas within the lower park.

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Comments received during the public consultation spoke to the desire to maintain and enhance the existing picnic sites, play area and washrooms in the lower park.

- A majority (60%) of respondents agreed with the idea of an enhanced play area in the second round of consultation.
- 75% of respondents at the public open house supported enhancements to the picnic and play area. The other 25% were neutral and none were opposed.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Enhancements to the established areas in the lower park include the following:

#### PUBLIC ART

The second phase of the Public Art Park is the Local Art Park in the existing open grass and picnic areas in the lower park. Refer to 7.15 Public Art.

#### ENHANCED PICNIC AREA

Upgrades will be made to existing picnic facilities, replacing the existing tables and stoves with new picnic tables on concrete pads and wood stoves. A minimum of 25% of the picnic sites will be designated accessible with accessible tables and paths linking the picnic site with parking spaces.



EXAMPLE OF PICNIC SITE WITH CONCRETE PAD

#### ENHANCED PLAY AREA

The intent of the play area is to incorporate a greater variety of materials and play elements to stimulate a greater diversity of play experiences in the park.

The existing play area is to be replaced with an expanded play area of approximately 1000 sq. m. in the same location. The enhanced play area should provide more opportunities for open-ended play and interaction with nature.

Play area upgrades will include:

- Replacement of the existing conventional play equipment with nature-based and creative play elements to help connect children to the natural environment and maximize play value
- A restrained approach to new equipment
- Accessible paths and play opportunities
- Seating
- Signage
- Bike racks, and;
- Potential to include equipment for seniors, if appropriate



EXAMPLES OF NATURE-BASED PLAY

#### ENHANCED WETLAND HABITAT

Enhancement of the small wetland area (east end of the park) is to be explored during detailed design and may include:

- Removal of invasive plants
- Potential enlargement
- Adding native plants, and;
- Improving drainage under the road to fix seasonal overflow/washout in the parking area.



EXISTING WETLAND AREA

#### NEW PARKING

Additional angled parking spaces will be distributed in clusters along the park road where space permits to avoid disturbance to existing trees and provide convenient parking for the play area, picnic area, and Local Art Park.

The existing parking lot west of the washrooms will be reconfigured and expanded to provide parking for 8 vehicles.

Accessible spaces will be provided to meet standard requirements.

Refer to 7.5 Vehicular Circulation and Parking.

## **UPGRADED WASHROOM**

Upgrades proposed to the existing washroom building are intended to meet current accessibility standards, improve park user's sense of safety and comfort, and to comply with the Facility Assessment Recommendations Report (2009).

- Aesthetic upgrades include improvements to lighting (interior and exterior) and to add more windows/skylights.
- Exterior improvements include improved access routes (barrier free) and planting to improve the relationship between the building, the park entry and the areas of activity in the lower park.
- Refer to the Facility Assessment Recommendations Report (2009) for functional upgrades intended to extend the serviceable life of the washroom building.

## **NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTION WITH STAIRS**

A new accessible trail through the picnic area is intended to provide a connection between the proposed stairs to the riverbank and the stairs to the park entry on Saskatchewan Drive east of the hairpin. The proposed trail will provide access to the play area and a link with the picnic area and some of the parking spaces along the park road.

Refer to 7.3 Trail Hierarchy.

## 7.15 PUBLIC ART

### INTENT

- To enhance the park's role as a place for art appreciation.
- To engage with the local Aboriginal population, including local Aboriginal artists
- To connect Edmontonians and visitors with local artwork and stories

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- There was interest expressed at the first Aboriginal Community meeting for Queen Elizabeth Park to incorporate art that spoke to Aboriginal culture.
- Several participants in the first public online survey suggested incorporating public art and/or sculptural works into the park.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

#### PUBLIC ART PARK

Queen Elizabeth Park has been identified as an ideal location for Edmonton's first curated and designated Public Art Park, as it is centrally located between Downtown and Strathcona, two core areas of the city that are popular with residents and tourists alike. The vision for the Art Park is for high quality artworks that focus on contemporary techniques, composition, and ground breaking cultural interventions in public space through temporary or permanent projects.

The creation of a curated Public Art Park was a key recommendation of the Edmonton Public Art Master Plan. The concept of an Art Park also aligns with the goals and objectives of other approved City of Edmonton planning documents, including *The Art of Living* and *The Way We Live*. The proposed art park will also complement nearby City initiatives to increase the integration of artworks within public space. The vicinity of the new Walterdale Bridge, for example, will include art installations by Canadian artist Ken Lum.

The Art Park will provide opportunities to support and highlight the work of both local and international artists, with a special area to highlight Aboriginal artists. The park has significance for the Aboriginal community for a number of reasons. The area was important for trading and aboriginal settlement, and south of the site was Papaschase First Nations land. Today Edmonton has one of the largest Urban Aboriginal populations in North America, and many Aboriginal peoples from Northern Canada visit Edmonton for education, health care and economic purposes. Aboriginal artifacts have also been recently uncovered near the south side of the new Walterdale Bridge site. Discussions held by the Edmonton Arts Council with Aboriginal artists and art curators have revealed a strong interest in having an Aboriginal focused Art Park in Edmonton. This project positions Edmonton to be a leader in providing a voice for the Aboriginal art community as well as contemporary visual art communities.

The Edmonton Arts Council has developed a plan which locates three distinct public art areas within Queen Elizabeth



EXAMPLES OF TRANSITORY OR PERMANENT PUBLIC ART PIECES (LEFT TO RIGHT: Giovanni Caboto Park, Edmonton; Jaume Plensa, Yorkshire Sculpture Park; "Child's Play" by Robert Iveson and Tommie Gallie, Saskatoon; "The Gates" by Christo and Jean-Claude, New York City)

*\*Text adapted from Queen Elizabeth Park Public Art Plan, Edmonton Arts Council*

Park. The locations for public art include: a permanent public Art Park in the upper park with a focus on Aboriginal artists, a permanent Art Park in the lower park (east) with an emphasis on local artists and an area in the lower park for transitory art. See Figure 7.18.

#### ABORIGINAL ART - AREA ①

It is envisioned that this area would support 6 to 8 permanent artworks by local, national and/or international Aboriginal contemporary artists, directed by a prominent Aboriginal art curator.

A vision session is intended to kick-off the first stages of this phase. Working closely with Aboriginal artists in the first stages of the project will help ensure the project will encompass a broad spectrum of Aboriginal artists.

#### LOCAL ART - AREA ②

This area would support 6-8 permanent pieces interspersed with picnic sites. In the local art area the focus would be on displaying the works of contemporary Alberta artists.

#### TRANSITORY PUBLIC ART - AREA ③

Transitory public art includes temporary experimental or contemporary interventions with the public realm (i.e. light art, video projections, performance, etc.) The short-term nature of these projects helps to develop a greater understanding of public art and acceptance and demand for permanent public artworks.

The area identified for transitory art includes a linear corridor of a main multi-use transportation route, the mound, and the lower park amenity node. This will provide a range of potential sites and contexts for temporary art that are all highly visible and accessible to park users and passers-by.

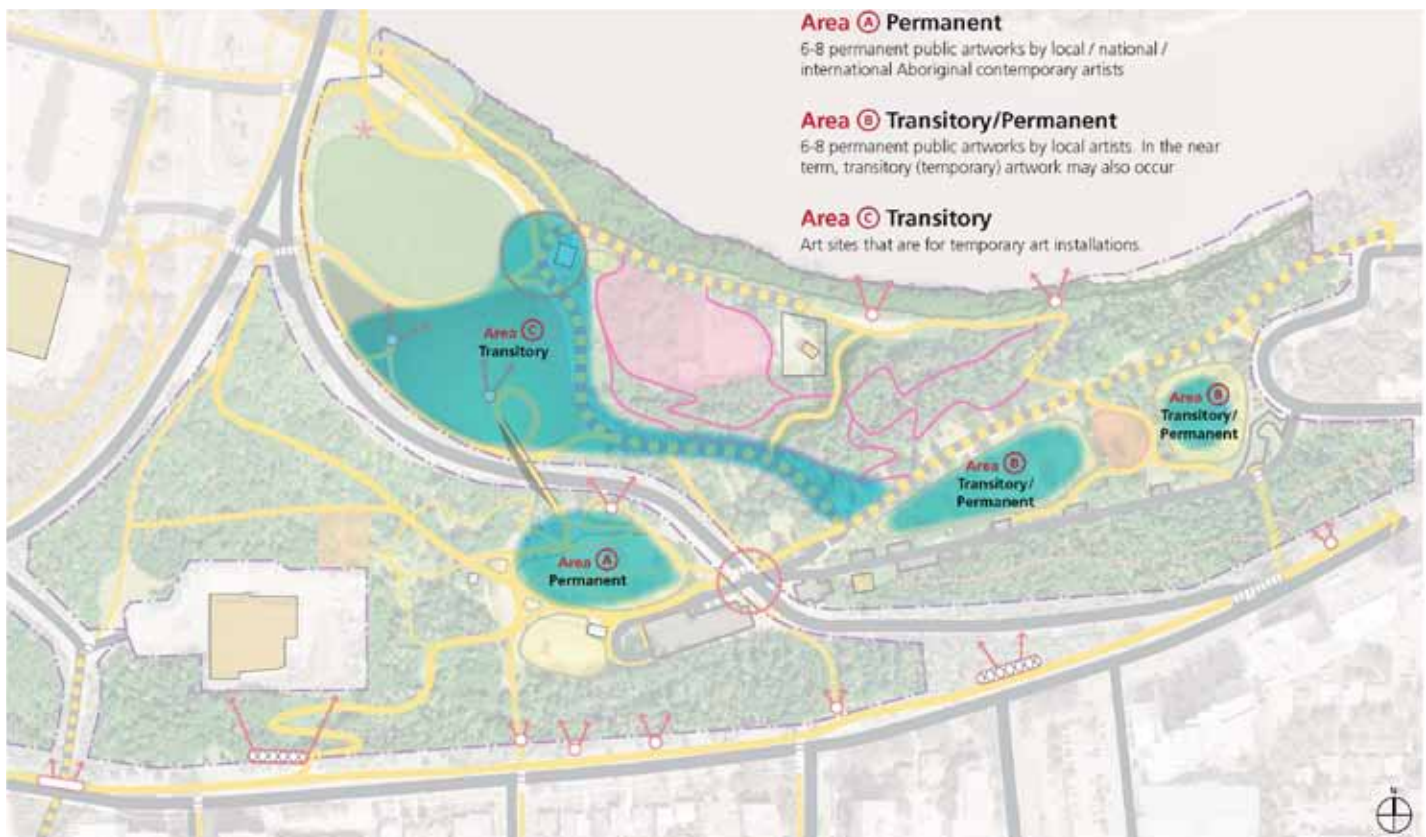


FIGURE 7.18: PROPOSED AREAS FOR TRANSITORY AND PERMANENT PUBLIC ART PIECES



## INFRASTRUCTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Temporary or permanent art pieces will require the establishment of some additional infrastructure. Requirements will be identified in consultation with the Edmonton Arts Council and may include pathways, seating, optional lighting, concrete bases for art works, and potential signage.

Detailed design and layout of Art Park areas should consider the way the pieces will fit in the river valley, the visibility of the locations and integration with other elements (existing trees, topography, picnic sites and paths/trails).

## ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Art Park areas will be accessible from the multi-use trail network and parking areas. Accessible circulation paths within the art areas will be provided using well-compacted crushed stone. Slopes on paths will be accessible (less than 5%) wherever possible and no more than 8% at any point.

The Art Parks are located in areas that will also have picnic sites. The locations and layout of art pieces, picnic sites, paths and site furnishings will be coordinated during the detailed design phase.

## 7.16 WINTER ACTIVITIES

### INTENT

- To maximize opportunities for year-round activities in all areas of the park
- To provide comfortable places to gather outdoors and indoors in winter
- To explore opportunities to utilize features in all seasons (e.g. gravel trails/snowshoeing trails)
- To capitalize on the new mound to create one of the best tobogganing hills in Edmonton
- To program the flexible open space at the base of the hill for a wide variety of winter activities
- To support the City of Edmonton's WinterCity Strategy

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

- Build a large mound for tobogganing, viewpoint, landmark: Selected by two workshop groups as a top priority for implementation.
- Winter activities: 82% of online survey #1 respondents said they were very interested in seeing winter activities (e.g. tobogganing, snowshoeing) enhanced in the park.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

#### FLEXIBLE WINTER OPEN SPACE PROGRAMMING

- The open field will provide a prominent and accessible site in the river valley for winter festivals and events, such as a festival of lights, snow sculpture competitions, snow fort building, snow slides, and ice-climbing walls.
- A fire pit will be integrated into the lower park facility node to increase user comfort and to create a winter destination in the park.
- Program ideas to be explored include inviting food trucks, installing vending machines with hot drinks and food, equipment rentals (e.g. snowshoes, toboggans) during special events and temporary warming huts.



TEMPORARY WINTER SHELTER  
COMPETITION AT THE FORKS,  
WINNIPEG

### NETWORK OF CLEARED TRAILS

- A network of trails will be kept clear in winter for running, walking, cycling and other year-round activities.

### UNCLEARED TRAILS

- Minor pedestrian paths will be left snow-covered in winter to allow snowshoeing, winter hiking, kick-sledding, and other winter activities (see Figure 7.18 Winter Activities for trail network.)



KICKSLEDDING AND SNOWSHOEING ON UNCLEARED PATHS

### WINTER ACTIVITIES ARE SUPPORTED

- Play areas and picnic area barbeques / stoves will be designed to allow year-round use.
- Due to the network of cleared roads and trails that crisscross the park, the steep topography, and the winter programming (i.e. tobogganing area) the park has limited opportunities for cross country skiing.

### SITE ELEMENTS AND FEATURES ARE DESIGNED TO MAXIMIZE WINTER COMFORT AND INTEREST

- Temporary warming huts will be explored.
- A fire pit will be added.
- Interesting lighting will be added to attract users to the park and support activities in winter evenings.
- Site features will have a colour palette that has year-round interest.
- Washrooms will be winterized.



INTERESTING LIGHTING  
TO ATTRACT USERS AND  
SUPPORT EVENING ACTIVITIES

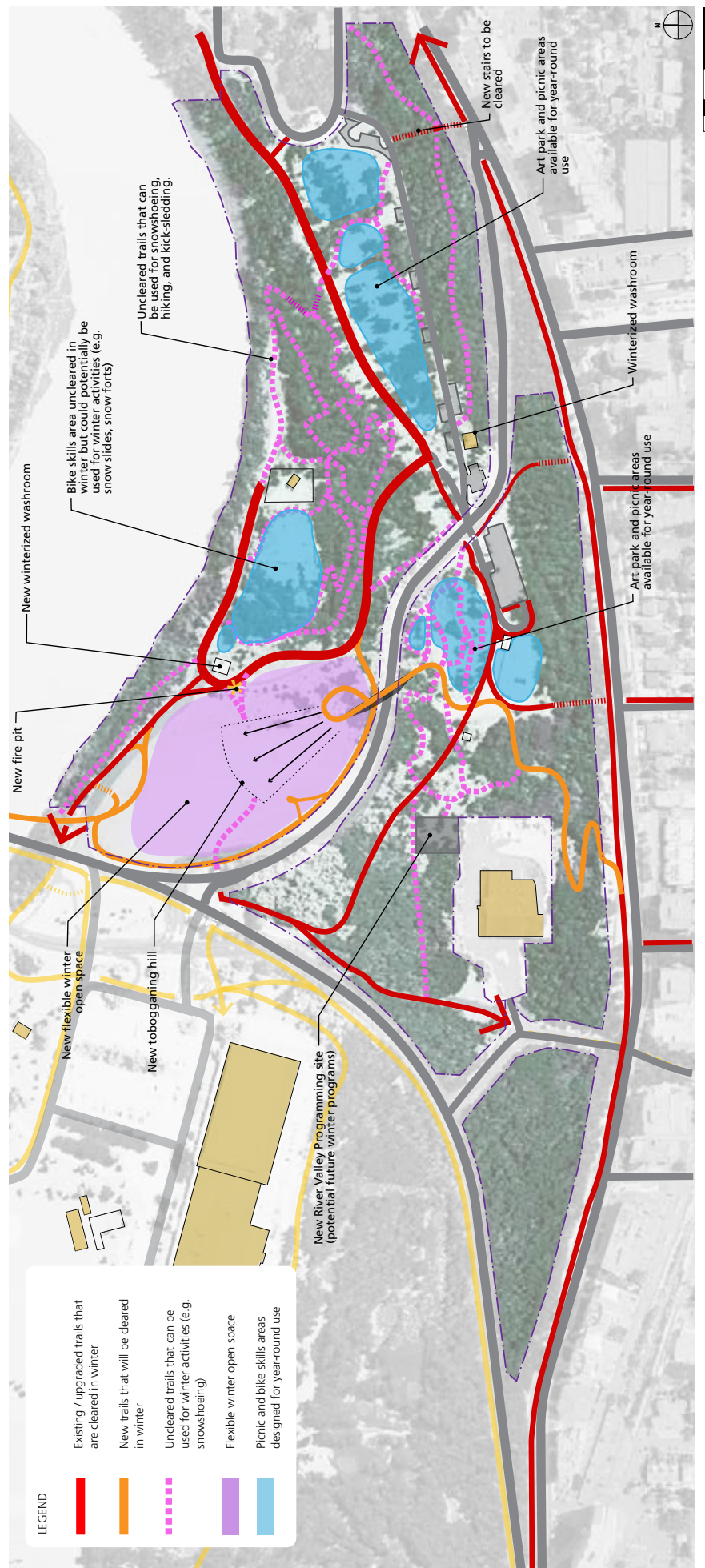


FIGURE 7.19: WINTER ACTIVITIES



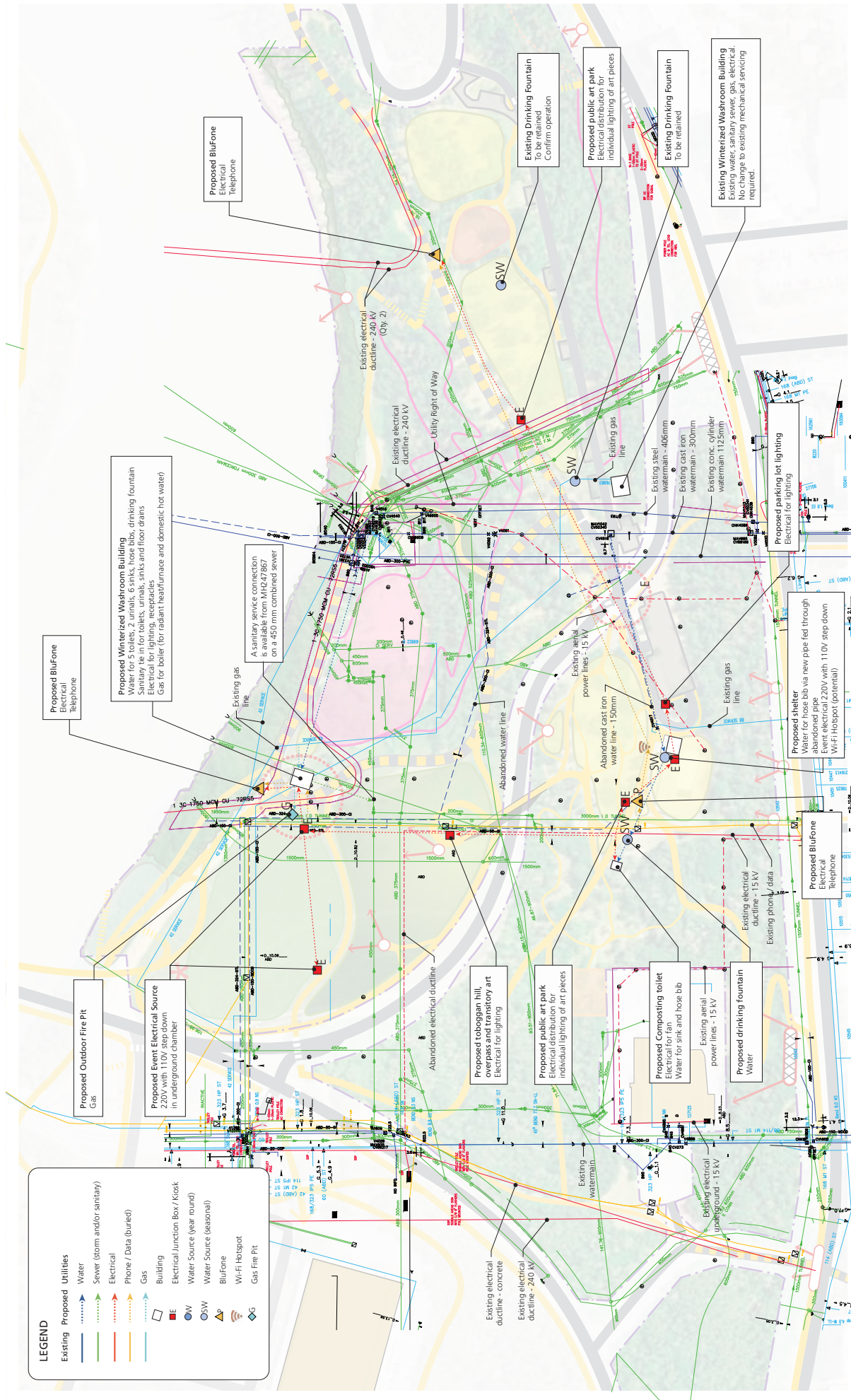


FIGURE 7.20: UTILITY SERVICING

## 7.17 UTILITIES

### INTENT

- Utilities and utility structures are intended to be hidden from public view and sited below-ground where possible. Where utility structures are visible they should be well-integrated into the landscape and built with a high quality, simple aesthetic.
- Stormwater should be managed at the surface where possible to reduce environmental impacts and servicing requirements.
- Electrical servicing for future or temporary lighting is to be incorporated into the Art Parks and toboggan hill.
- Main parking lot areas and washrooms will be lit.

### UTILITY ELEMENTS + DESIGN GUIDELINES

There are several utility and infrastructure elements required to support the existing and proposed programs in Queen Elizabeth Park, including utility servicing (electrical, gas, drinking water, potential stormwater drainage), surface stormwater management, and lighting. The pump house compound is an existing facility in the park overseen by the Drainage Branch, but is unrelated to the park programming.

### UTILITY STRUCTURE DESIGN GUIDELINES

- **Minimize size and scale:** As much as possible, the visual presence of utilities and structures should be minimized. Minimize the footprint and height of structures and remove unused structures when obsolete.
- **Cluster utilities / utility structures:** As much as possible, consolidate structures and functions to minimize redundancies and maximize efficiency.
- **Use quality surface treatments:** The form and finish (materials and colours) of utility structures should be carefully considered to provide integration with the park. The approach may be to make the structures as discrete as possible, so that they blend into their surroundings, or become something visually interesting within the park that adds to the park user's experience, such as a pleasing form and/or graphic treatment. Graphic treatments may be applied by wrapping the structures and may incorporate art. With either approach, it is important to ensure that the design and execution are high-quality. Consideration should be exercised so that materials and colours of utility structures have a consistent look.

- **Minimize light, noise and/or odour:** It is important to minimize negative impacts to the park user's experience from excessive light, noise and/or odour. Light pollution should be managed by minimizing night lighting and ensuring lights that are used are Dark-Sky compliant (reducing effects of unnatural lighting and energy use). Sound generated by the mechanical systems should be attenuated to minimize the perceptible sound that can be heard outside of the compound. Minimize steam and/or odours released from the utilities within the park as these draw attention to the utilities and detract from the user experience of the park. Lighting will be installed in nodal areas for safety and security purposes.
- **Use of landscape buffering:** In addition to the aforementioned principles, landscape buffering may also be explored to minimize the bulk of buildings and to screen utility structures. Landscape treatments should be of interesting design, contributing positively to the park experience. Options for screening may include vegetation, provided the species and layout are carefully considered, or modifications to the fencing that obscure the structures inside. Screening choices should consider the appearance year round. CPTED and security must be considered carefully as well as the type of screening to be used to ensure it fits into the context within the park.

### PUMP HOUSE COMPOUND

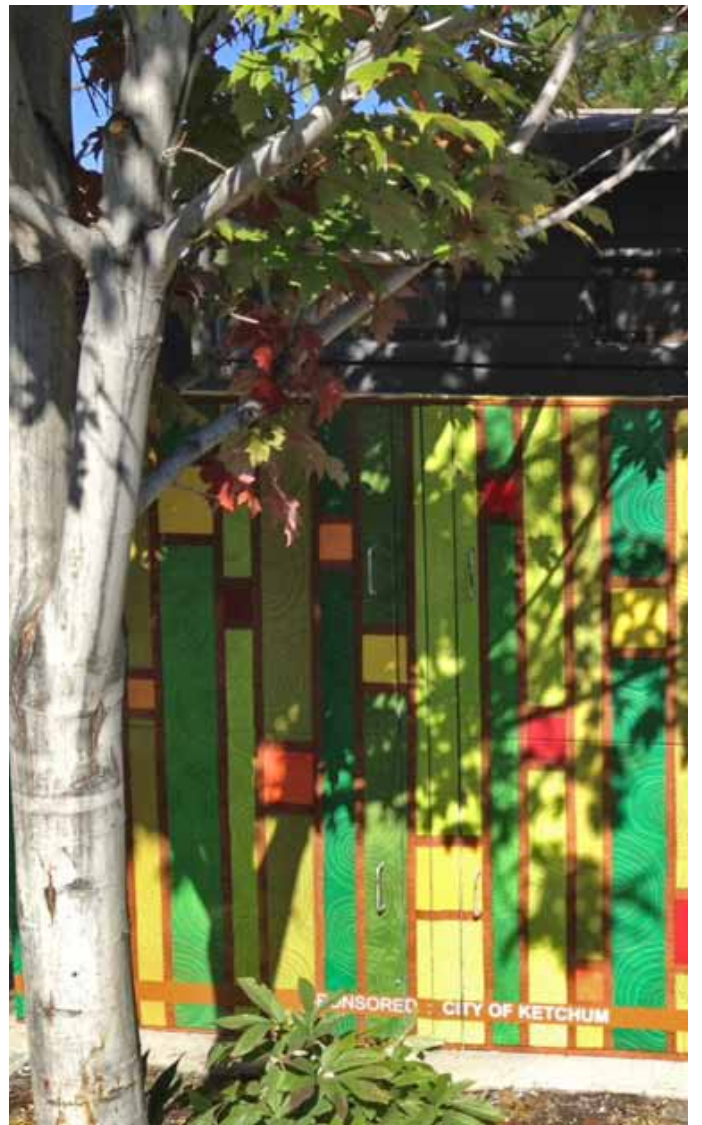
The pump house compound is located adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth Park compound. As features of the master plan are developed, improved circulation and new activity areas will attract many more park users to this area in close proximity to the compound. A bike skills area and trails will be developed on the west, east and south sides of the pump house compound. An ethnobotanical interpretive trail will be created to the east and south, and a riverside trail and lookout developed along the existing service road to the north. Whereas the pump house compound has historically been located out of the way, the redevelopment of the park and the Rosedale area will increase pedestrian and park-user traffic to this part of the park and the pump house compound will become a more prominent and potentially highly-visible feature.

Any development within or upgrades to the pump house compound should consider the future context proposed in the master plan and strive to integrate with the park redevelopment.





EXAMPLES OF HIGH-QUALITY MATERIALS FOR UTILITY STRUCTURES



EXAMPLES OF GRAPHIC TREATMENTS FOR UTILITY STRUCTURES



Upgrades to the pump house compound should consider the following in addition to the above design guidelines:

- Minimize the footprint and height of structures within the pump house compound, remove unused structures and explore opportunities to reduce the size of the compound itself, allowing realignment of the fences and improving setbacks from proposed park uses.
- Improve appearance of yard entrance and perimeter fencing. Fences may be upgraded to reduce their visual presence by using black chain link. The aesthetics and safety at the entrance to the compound may be upgraded through setbacks from the service road, low planting and gates that slide parallel to the fence or open inwards.
- As much as possible, consolidate structures and functions to minimize redundancies and maximize efficiency.

## UTILITY SERVICING

New utility connections will be required for the following park elements:

### Upper park

- Park shelter: electrical for event servicing (user activated pay-as-you-go system), seasonal water (hose bib)
- New drinking fountain: seasonal water
- Composting toilet: electrical connection for fan and lighting; seasonal water for sink and hose bib
- Aboriginal Art Park: electrical connections for potential lighting
- BluFone (1): electrical and phone
- WiFi: electrical and data
- Bury the existing aerial utility lines in the upper park

### Lower park

- New amenity building: year-round water (including exterior drinking fountain and hose bib), sanitary, electrical, natural gas
- Fire pit: gas / wood to be determined at detailed design
- Art Park: electrical connections for potential lighting
- BluFones (2): electrical and phone
- Flexible open field: electrical connections (2 points) for special events. Electrical connections are to be in lockable underground chambers that are covered in sod when not in use, with a 220V power source that can be fitted with a step-down to 110V.
- Mound: electrical connection for temporary or seasonal lighting (e.g. for tobogganing hill).

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater runoff is intended to be managed on-site where possible to reduce downstream environmental impacts and to reduce servicing requirements. Runoff from hard surfaces (paths, parking) currently drains to adjacent vegetated areas, and this strategy should continue for stormwater management.

If parking areas are upgraded to concrete curbs, runoff should be gathered and directed to surface or subsurface bioinfiltration areas that have appropriate subgrade preparation. Geotechnical consultants should review proposed infiltration sites to ensure that detaining water in these areas will not have any adverse effects on soil stability in the park.

Drainage will be reviewed at detailed design stage ensure conformance with City's best practices. If ever there is a concern with increased storm water into river, it will have to comply with City's best practices.

## LIGHTING

The general lighting strategy for Queen Elizabeth Park is to have minimal lighting overall, with strategic placement of lighting in key areas for pedestrian and user safety.

Lighting fixtures should be selected from the standard palette of City of Edmonton Park lighting fixtures for ease of maintenance. Preference should be given to energy-efficient (LED) lighting fixtures that minimize light pollution by pointing downward and minimize glare.

Lighting will be used in the following areas:

- Washroom buildings (indoors and outdoors)
- Main parking areas
- Seasonal lighting for tobogganing hill
- Lighting for art pieces
- Temporary lighting for seasonal displays

## ENERGY CONSIDERATIONS

Where possible, opportunities for integrating renewable energy sources (solar, wind) should be considered for powering site lighting and electrical services.

## EXISTING WASHROOM UPGRADES

Upgrades are proposed to the existing washroom building to ensure compliance with accessibility standards, and in accordance with Facility Assessment Recommendations Report (2009).

## 7.18 PARK AESTHETICS

### INTENT

To provide a sense of the visual and aesthetic qualities for park furnishings and structures that fit with the overall character of the park.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

During the Edmonton Design Committee presentation, it was stated that given the prominent location of the park, that a higher level of park aesthetic treatments and materiality was warranted.

The design and materials of all structures and furnishings will be determined during detailed design and should incorporate the following design objectives. Structures and furnishings should:

- be high quality, durable and easy to maintain,
- possess a simple and timeless and carefully detailed character to fit well within the park setting,
- provide good aesthetics with a colour palette that has year-round interest (i.e. look good in the snow), and;
- provide functionality all year round.

In specific feature nodal areas / focal points where more integration with the landscape or structures is appropriate and/or where more a more playful approach is warranted, opportunities for unique, custom furnishings may be explored. Between nodal areas throughout the rest of the park, City standards will be used for site furnishings to establish a consistent and unified aesthetic.

### NODAL AREAS

#### UPPER PARK SHADE SHELTER

- The shelter is to have a refined, simple and clean look that does not distract from the art pieces of the adjacent Aboriginal Art Park.
- It is to be well detailed and constructed, practical and authentic, avoiding anything overly flashy or trendy that may appear dated in the near future.
- Good sight lines through the shelter are important both for public safety and to preserve views.

#### AMENITY BUILDING IN LOWER PARK NODE

- A new amenity building will be architecturally designed and well-integrated with the site. The materials are to

be well detailed, practical and authentic.

- The building should be designed to feel safe and inviting with abundant natural light.
- The warm-up, vestibule area inside should be visually open to the outside to allow for views of the toboggan hill/flexible open space and potentially to the Bike Skills Park.
- The form and material palette should be appropriate for the park setting, but may also incorporate fun/unique colours or forms to strengthen it's presence within the amenity node as part of a focal point in the lower park and offer a bit of surprise/delight.
- Refer to Section 7.11 Lower Park Amenity Node.

#### EXISTING WASHROOM BUILDING

- In addition to functional upgrades, aesthetic upgrades include improvements to lighting, more windows/skylights to improve the sense of safety.
- Exterior improvements should include improved access routes (barrier free) and planting to improve the relationship between the building, the park entry and the areas of activity in the lower park.

#### FIRE PIT

- A custom-designed outdoor fire pit made of high quality, durable materials that are carefully detailed and provide for safe enjoyment of the fire in winter.
- Seating around the fire pit (potentially curved seating walls/benches) will be oriented toward the centre to encourage gathering. Consider backless seating around the fire pit to provide more flexibility, allowing people to also orient themselves toward the toboggan hill, flexible open space and/or river.
- The design of the fire pit and/or the seating around the fire pit may incorporate interpretive elements that help to reveal the story of the area as a traditional gathering place.

#### BIKE SKILLS PARK / PLAY AREA

- Furnishings around the bike skills park and/or play area may have their own unique design to enhance the aesthetics of the installation.

### FURNISHINGS

- Furnishings, generally include picnic tables, wood stoves, benches, bike racks, and drinking fountains.

- Typical furnishings within the park are to be from one family (style) for use throughout the park to provide a consistent unified look.
- Furnishings are to be barrier-free wherever possible.

## SEATING

- The park will include a mix of standard and custom seating options.
- Typical seating used along trails and at lookouts along Saskatchewan Drive and the river bank will be a consistent use of the City's standard types.
- Custom seating will be required in areas which warrant special consideration, like the lookouts on the mound, the pedestrian overpass, around the fire pit, at the amenity node plaza and entry nodes along Saskatchewan Drive).
- Custom seating may incorporate a concrete seating wall (straight or curved) with a wood bench top. Where skate deterrents are required, creatively integrate deterrents with the bench during detailed design.



EXAMPLES  
OF CUSTOM  
SEATING WALLS

## PICNIC TABLES

- Typical picnic tables will be of the City standard used in river valley parks to streamline maintenance and repairs.
- A detail for an accessible version of the standard picnic table should be developed to ensure that at least 25% of the picnic tables in each picnic area are accessible. All accessible tables should include an accessible path connecting them with the nearest parking area.

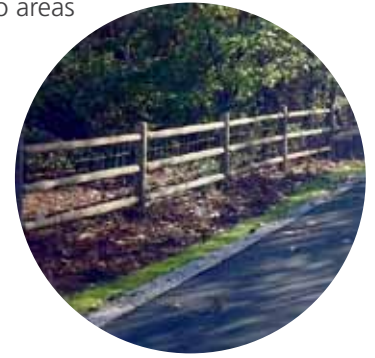
## FENCES

- Where new fencing is proposed (i.e. River Valley Programming Area), a simple, attractive fence with low visual prominence (e.g. black metal 'Omega'-style fence) will present well and be in keeping with the park-like environment.



OMEGA FENCE

- Fencing to deter access to areas of ecological significance may have a more rustic appearance such as a post-and-rail fence.
- The detailed design and placement of fencing should be considerate of maintaining wildlife movement patterns through the park.



POST AND RAIL FENCE

## LIGHTING

The general lighting strategy for Queen Elizabeth Park is to have minimal lighting overall, with strategic placement of lighting in key areas for pedestrian and user safety (i.e. main parking areas and washrooms).

When available, outdoor lighting fixtures should be selected from the standard palette of City of Edmonton Park lighting fixtures for ease of maintenance. Preference should be given to energy-efficient (LED) lighting fixtures that minimize light pollution by pointing downward and minimizing glare.

Lighting will be used in the following areas:

- Washroom buildings (indoors and outdoors)
- Main parking areas
- Seasonal lighting for tobogganing hill (requirement for lighting and/or fixtures to be determined during detailed design based on ambient lighting conditions)
- Lighting/illumination for art pieces
- Potential temporary lighting for seasonal displays

## WASTE AND RECYCLING RECEPTACLES

- Typical receptacles should provide for resistance to wildlife and ease of maintenance. Generally, receptacles will be of the City standard. Suitable locations and quantities are to be determined during detailed design.
- Custom enclosures for receptacles for nodal areas may be considered during detailed design, where appropriate.

## BIKE RACKS

- The typical racks to be used throughout the park should selected for functionality, ease of maintenance and aesthetics that fit well within the setting.



## 7.19 INTERPRETIVE ELEMENTS

### INTENT

To reveal place-specific stories that enhance visitors' understanding of and appreciation for the park

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Interpretation of natural and cultural history of the park received a good level of support based on online survey comments.

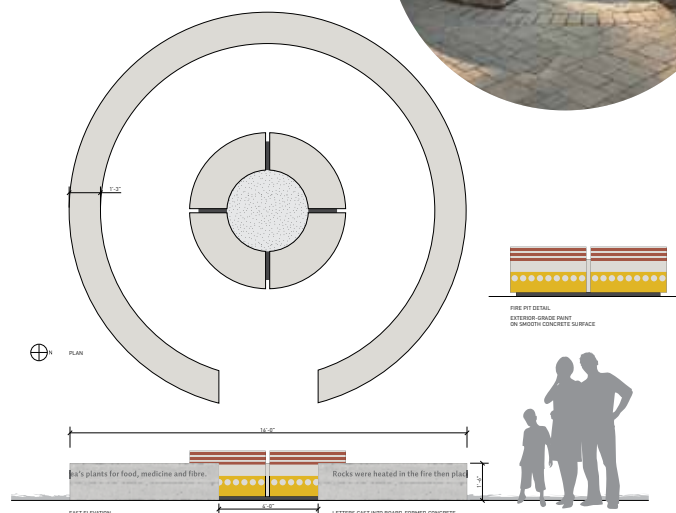
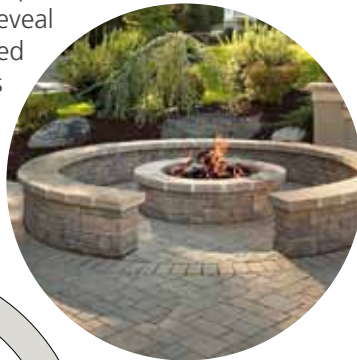
### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

#### INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Four interpretive themes have been identified for the park, and different strategies are proposed to interpret these topics.

#### Aboriginal culture and history

Edmonton's river valley is an important place for different First Nations groups, as it has been used for camps, hunting and food gathering for millennia. A recent archaeological survey carried out in conjunction with the new Walterdale Bridge project has revealed evidence of a pre-contact camp site and fire pit located under the proposed bridge approach road. Interpretive elements will be incorporated nearby, in the lower park, to reveal this history. Ideas being explored include interpretive elements with the fire pit to acknowledge the site's long history as a gathering place and the story of the archeological findings.



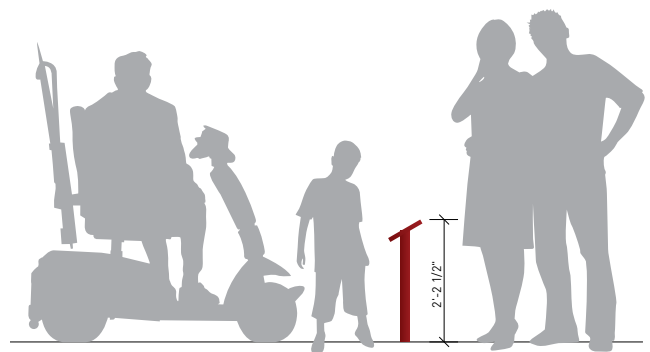
### Ethnobotany

Many trees and plants growing in park have been used by Aboriginal groups as traditional foods or medicines, and many Edmontonians expressed interest in these traditional uses during the public consultation events. The master plan includes an ethnobotanical trail through the forest in the lower park between the upper section of the service road and the east side of the pump house. As visitors walk the ethnobotanical trail they will discover various plant identification panels, each of which names a native plant of significance and describes its use by local aboriginal groups.

The reason the ethnobotanical trail is situated in this location is because this area of the park includes a naturally occurring, representative sampling of almost all of the highlighted plants. Furthermore, there is an existing goat trail in this location which means that impacts can be minimized.



INTERPRETIVE CONCEPT FOR ETHNOBOTANICAL TRAIL SIGNS

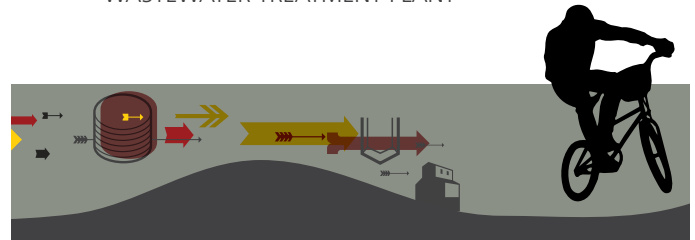
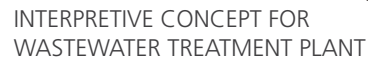


INTERPRETIVE CONCEPT FOR FIRE PIT

The old Queen Elizabeth Pool was very popular and its memory is highly valued by Edmontonians. The pool will be recognized with a low wall that traces the pool's outline, with a graphic panel that takes visitors back in time to the early days of the park. The panel will feature the pool history with use of engaging text, photos and newspaper headlines of the day. There will also be more general interpretation about the historical context of park visitor use.



Wastewater treatment plants operated in the park from 1929 to 1981. An artfully depicted wastewater-treatment-process diagram is proposed to be recessed into the concrete of the ruins for visitors to touch and explore. Minimal text identifies what used to be here and when it was in operation.



## 7.20 WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

### INTENT

To provide signage throughout the park, at entry points and intersections to orient park users spatially and help with navigation

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Comments received during the public consultation spoke to the desire for a clearer understanding of where trails lead in the park, and how they connect to other trails in the river valley.

### DESIGN AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Wayfinding signage for the park will be based on the Edmonton River Valley Parks Wayfinding Signage Guidelines, currently being developed by the City of Edmonton.

The accompanying signage plan indicates potential locations for wayfinding and interpretive signage within Queen Elizabeth Park.

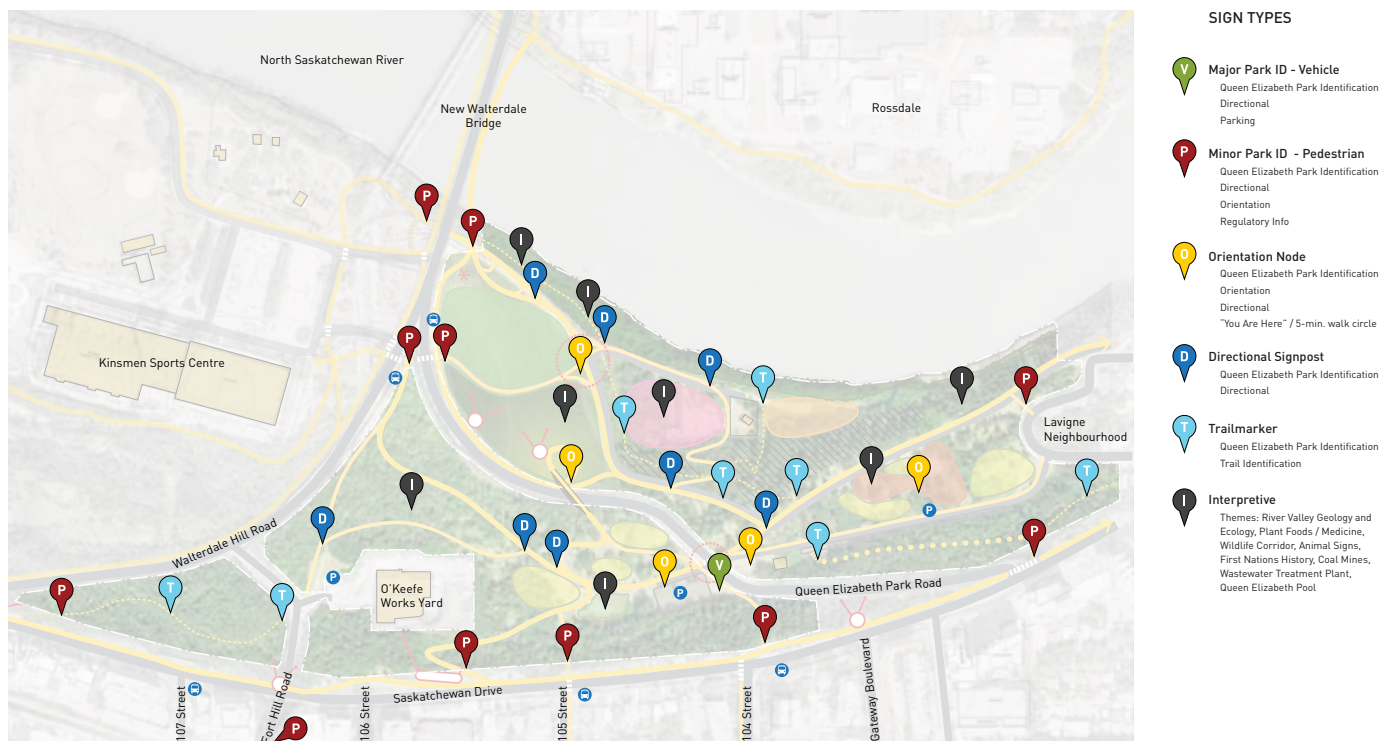


FIGURE 7.21: PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT FOR WAYFINDING SIGNAGE