

Welcome to the future of Terwillegar Park... **...a “Unique Natural Park”**



Terwillegar Park - Concept Plan Study

Introduction

The Terwillegar Park Concept Plan study will develop an overall concept plan, management objectives and development guidelines for Terwillegar Park for the next ten years.

The concept plan builds on ***A Vision for Terwillegar Park***, which was approved by City Council in 2005. The Vision Plan defined the vision, key values, preferred activities and required infrastructure to meet the needs of existing and future users while protecting and managing the natural resources of Terwillegar Park.

The approved vision for Terwillegar Park is: ***“A Unique Natural Park within the City of Edmonton’s River Valley Park System.”***

Purpose of this Open House

A draft of the final concept plan has been prepared and tonight we are looking for your comments as we work towards finalizing the concept plan and preparing a study report which will ultimately serve as a guide for the development and management of Terwillegar Park as a ***Unique Natural Park***



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Study Process:

Building on the Vision Plan, this Concept Plan Study began in the spring of 2007.

Phase 1: Analysis & Concept Development

1. Site and Environmental Analysis

All background reports are available on the project website (www.terwillegarpark.com).

2. Preliminary Concept Development

3. Public Open Houses - March

Phase 2: Final Concept Plan & Report

1. Draft Final Concept Plan

2. Public Open House (tonight)

3. Final Concept Plan & Report

Public Consultation:

The study's public consultation includes the following:

1. **Terwillegar Park Citizens Advisory Committee** – input to the design team throughout the concept design process
2. Stakeholder Workshop (October 2007) gathered information on potential park uses, trail and park access, site features and amenities, and site preservation
3. Website - www.terwillegarpark.com
4. Public Open Houses in March
5. Public Open House (tonight) to present the draft final concept plan

Concept Plan Consulting Team:

- ISL Engineering and Land Services
 - IMI Strategics
 - EDS Group
 - Spencer Environmental Management Services
 - Thurber Engineering
 - The Archaeology Group
- Please feel free to ask the consulting team representatives any questions regarding the study today.

Design Themes

- **Keep it Simple** – keep development unobtrusive and minimal both in extent and in visual presence, i.e. design to compliment and blend in to the natural setting
- **Connectivity** – a multiuse trail (MUT) through the park with connections across the river is necessary to achieve the overall vision for Edmonton's river valley defined in the Ribbon of Green Master Plan and the River Valley Alliance 'Capital Region River Valley Park'
- **Quality of Place** – the design of features and amenities must be of a high standard, sustainable ('green'), fit with the natural setting and be aesthetically pleasing to promote a sense of pride and ownership
- **Not all things to all people** – while the size and open space available may make it suitable for a range of recreational activities, many activities may not fit within the vision and should be located in other city parks
- **Design for all seasons** – design of features and amenities and the park management program must support four season use
- **Recognizing that use will increase** – improved infrastructure and management will be needed to ensure that the park environment is sustainable and that user needs can be met as use increases
- **Additional uses must fit the Vision** – the current uses in the park will be maintained and improved infrastructure and management are proposed to better meet needs of users. Proposed additional uses or activities must be compatible with the vision

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Natural Environment

The concept plan will include provisions for enhancing, interpreting and managing the natural environment of Terwillegar Park.

- **Naturalization and Habitat Enhancement** – selective planting of native plant species to increase the extent and enhance wildlife habitat diversity
- **Open Space** – designated areas to be mowed (1-2x/year) to manage weeds and maintain conditions for users and for event use. Some areas managed for weed control and restored to a native prairie
- **Ponds** – enhanced with reduced side slopes, planting upland and riparian vegetation, adding interpretive opportunities
- **River** – limit disturbance, a few locations for physical and visual access. Some existing informal access reclaimed and further impacts discouraged through signage
- **Education** – formalize environmental education and interpretive opportunities in the Park should be formalized to enhance the park experience for all users
- **Weed Control** - selective weed control may be desirable to allow native plant succession to occur



Restoration planting will be used to enhance habitat values



Environmental education opportunities will be created



Selective weed control

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Trails

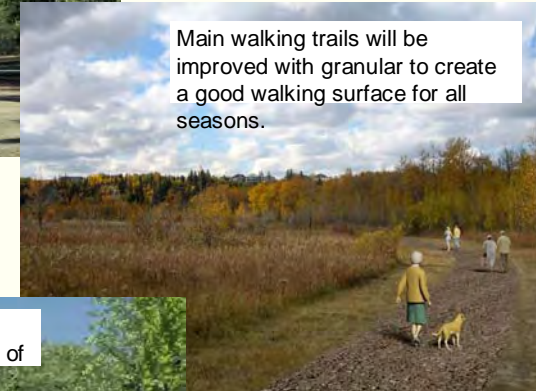
An extensive network of informal trails exists within the Park. A formal trail network would minimize impact to the natural environment and meet the needs of future users.

- **Regional Trail** – paved multiuse trail through the Park is proposed to provide continuity as part of the 'Capital Region River Valley Park'.
- **Enhanced Walking Trails** – improve main walking trails with granular surface and proper drainage. Other informal trails left as is or phased out.
- **Universal Access Trail** – a universal design trail to provide barrier free access to the Parks unique environmental features for users with all levels of ability.
- **Enhanced Mountain Bike Trails** – the majority of existing single track trails will be retained and some will be enhanced to improve mountain bike user experience, to reduce environmental impacts, and improve safety.
- **Cross Country Ski Trails** – the designated cross country ski trail route will be maintained with signage to encourage walkers to respect the ski trails

Regional Trail – paved, multiuse trail providing year round access through the Park



Main walking trails will be improved with granular to create a good walking surface for all seasons.



Universal Access Trail for barrier free access to parts of the Park



Single Track Mtn. Bike/Walking Trails to remain, some will be enhanced



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Infrastructure & Facilities

To meet the long term needs of current park users and to facilitate use by other user groups, additional infrastructure and facilities are being proposed.

- **Park Entrance Road and Parking Lot** – Proposed paved access road with school bus turnaround. Parking lot will be paved and expanded to 150 stalls. A designated overflow and event parking area (grass) has also been proposed.
- **Activity Area Access and Parking** - Proposed paved road and parking for new uses such as a canoe/kayak launch and picnic sites.
- **Designated On Leash Area** – a designated on leash area will be created to meet the needs of other user groups
- **Program/Washroom Building** – Proposed central washroom and program building to support outdoor education programs and events. Building would be designed as a 'green' building that fits visually with the natural feel of the park.
- **Remote Toilets** – three small, composting toilets are proposed – by main parking lot, at the far west end and at the east end close to the river.
- **Maintenance Building and Yard** – A small maintenance building would better support operations and management in the Park.



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Amenities

Proper amenities will enhance the experience of all users – current amenities are limited.

- **Viewpoints** – Proposed viewpoints, some with shelters provide destinations for users to view and learn about the Park and river valley
- **Seating** – benches and picnic tables provided at key locations throughout the Park to provide places for rest, contemplation or scenic viewing.
- **Trash, Recycling, Dog Bag Dispensers** – City will replace some garbage drums with new in-ground style receptacles and 'National Parks' style receptacles with lids. Bins for recycling will also be provided by the parking lot.
- **Picnic Sites** – individual and small group picnic sites have been proposed for the park. The picnic area would be the only site in Edmonton allowing on-leash dogs.
- **Nature Playground** – Logs, boulders, trails, and vegetation will provide a range of play, imaginative and physical challenges for children of all ages.
- **Bluphones** – additional Bluphones are proposed at primary trail access locations (ie. Pedestrian bridges) to increase safety and security
- **Signage & Maps** – a formal signage program will be developed to provide information including interpretive, directional, safety and regulatory. Trail sign/maps with location, route, distance and difficulty will be proposed through discussion with user groups
- **Drinking Fountain** – a drinking fountain is proposed as part of the washroom building or Park entrance node.



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Ponds, Lake and River

The ponds can be restored to provide improved water fowl habitat, nature interpretation, and access for off-leash dogs. A new constructed lake is proposed to meet the needs of the paddling community.

- **Pond Restoration** – modifying some shoreline slopes and planting and restoration of riparian vegetation will improve the ponds as waterfowl habitat
- **Shoreline Access** – improved access for people and/or dogs by formalizing some of the trail access points and removing steeper slopes. Providing formal trail locations and limiting access during restoration will minimize disturbance along the shoreline.
- **Paddling Lake** – a new lake is proposed for canoeing and kayaking within the Park. This area would be designated dogs on-leash. The lake could be used for skating in the winter.

The ponds edges can be restored to improve habitat and provide safer access



Access to the river at the 'Beach' will be maintained



A lake is proposed to meet the needs of paddlers

The river is a significant feature supporting a range of activities and experiences. Access to and protection of the river's edge is critical to the long term vision of the Park.

- **Shoreline Access and Restoration** – informal access locations that are dangerous or causing erosion issues will be restored. Some locations should be improved to allow safe access to the rivers edge.
- **River Access Infrastructure** – a formal canoe/kayak launch has been proposed to provide a suitable location for river access/egress. A seasonal dock, access road, turn around and parking area are being proposed.
- **The 'Beach'** – the 'beach' area is a heavily used area of the Park and will be retained to provide good access to the river's edge.



River access infrastructure will be provided for canoe and kayaks



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Interpretive, Events & Programs

Using the Park as an outdoor classroom will allow all users to learn about the natural features of the Park.

- **Park Entrance Node** – a central location that visitors can pass through to view a map of the park and to gather or post up-to-date information. A suitable location for an overall map of the Park with descriptions of the many environmental features.
- **Viewpoints** – the proposed viewpoints within the Park and along the river provide designated locations for viewing the Park and learning about the natural environment.
- **Interpretive Signs and Nodes** – an interpretive signage program is proposed to provide education on the many natural features of the Park.



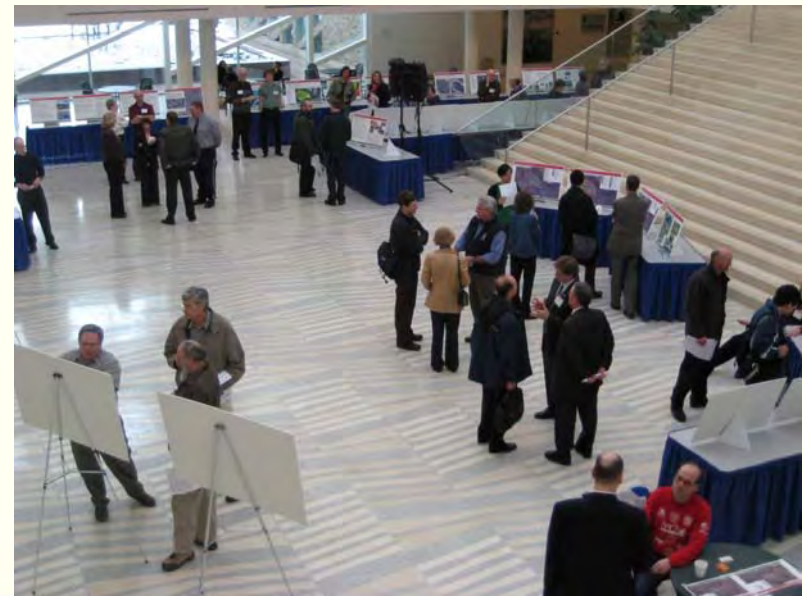
- **Events** – the Park already supports many significant events including the Klondike Raft Races, sanctioned mountain bike races (Alberta Biking Association and Corporate Challenge), and orienteering competitions (Edmonton Overlanders Orienteering and Corporate Challenge). Any additional events proposed for the Park should fit within the context of the natural setting, require minimal infrastructure or manicured open space, and have minimal impact on users.



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Public Open Houses

- Two open houses were held in March, 2008.
- A total of 228 individuals attended the Open Houses - 172 submitted comment forms.
- In addition, program and concept plan options were posted on the website and comments were received from 43 individuals.
- Approximately half of respondents (51%) identified dog-walking as their current single primary use.
- The remaining 49% of respondents listed mountain biking, walking, nature appreciation, jogging and cross country skiing as their primary uses.
- The activity identified as most appealing for future use of the Terwillegar Park are: connection to the river valley trails, bird-watching, skating, picnicking, canoe /kayak paddling, use of a universal trail, river access, nature interpretation, outdoor education and nature playground.



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What We Heard:

The following is a summary of how well respondents felt that the program elements fit within the vision of a “unique natural park”

- **80% or more of the respondents support the:**

- parking lot expansion
- the activity area access
- the regional trail
- the remote toilets

- **Between 70% and 79% of respondents supported the:**

- parking lot expansion
- the activity area access
- entrance node
- Dock & canoe/kayak launch
- enhanced walking trails
- universal access trail
- enhanced mountain bike trails
- sheltered viewpoints

- **Between 60% and 69% of respondents supported the:**

- picnic area
- program/washroom building
- designated on-leash area
- interpretive nodes
- paddling lake
- nature playground.

In the general comments section some of the recurring comments from respondents included:

- That in general, most respondents were happy with one or both of the concepts plan options - using words such as “good work”, “pleasantly surprised” and “pleased”.
- Some respondents still feel that Terwillegar Park should be “left alone”, that “less is more, or to keep the park “as natural as possible”.
- Some respondents felt that the proposed designated on-leash areas should be larger - generally, this was suggested as a way to better meet the needs of all users and in particular families with children.
- Some respondents including off-leash dog walkers indicated that the concept options reflected a “good balance” and “best of both worlds” in terms of off-leash area, natural area, and other proposed development.

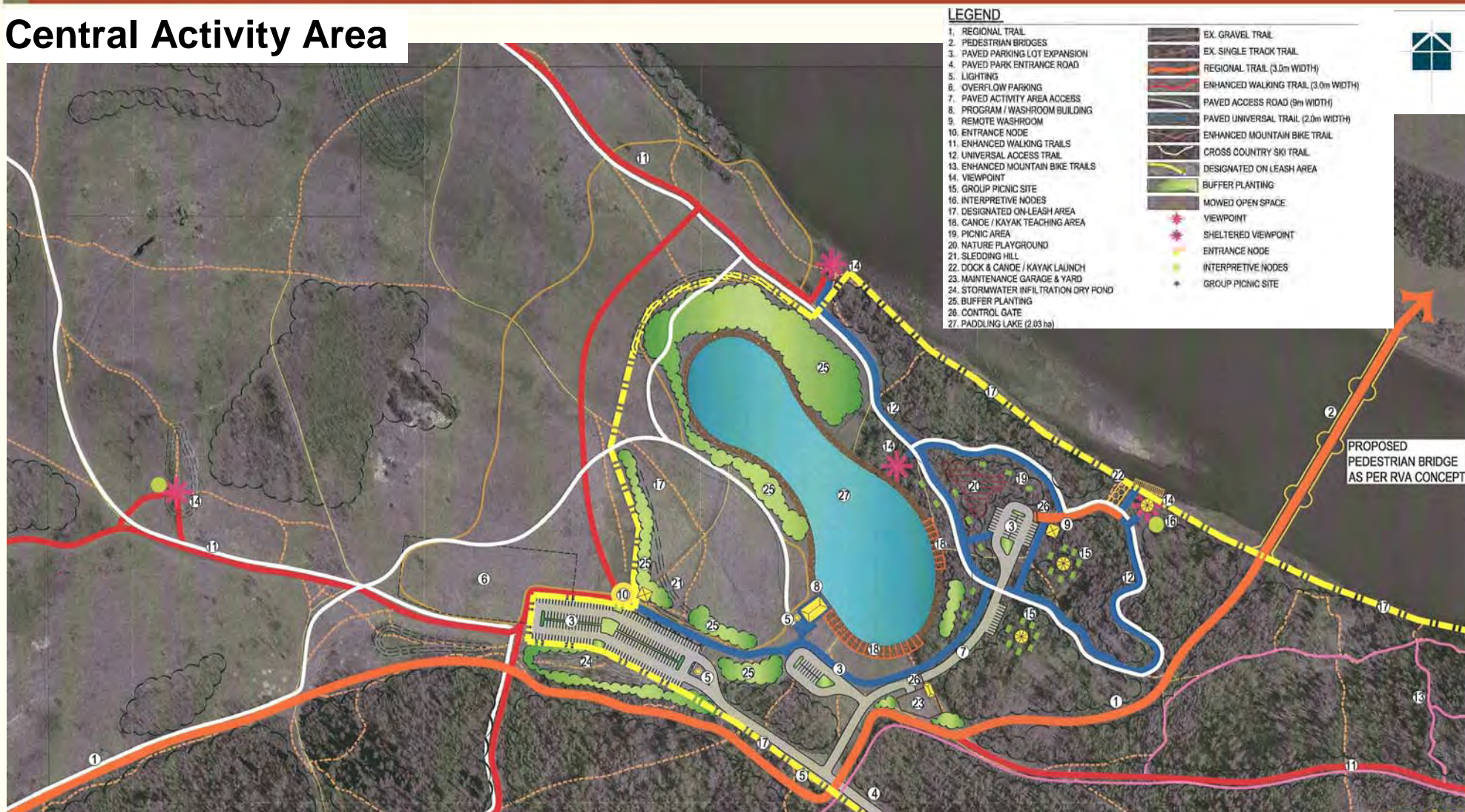
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Overall Concept



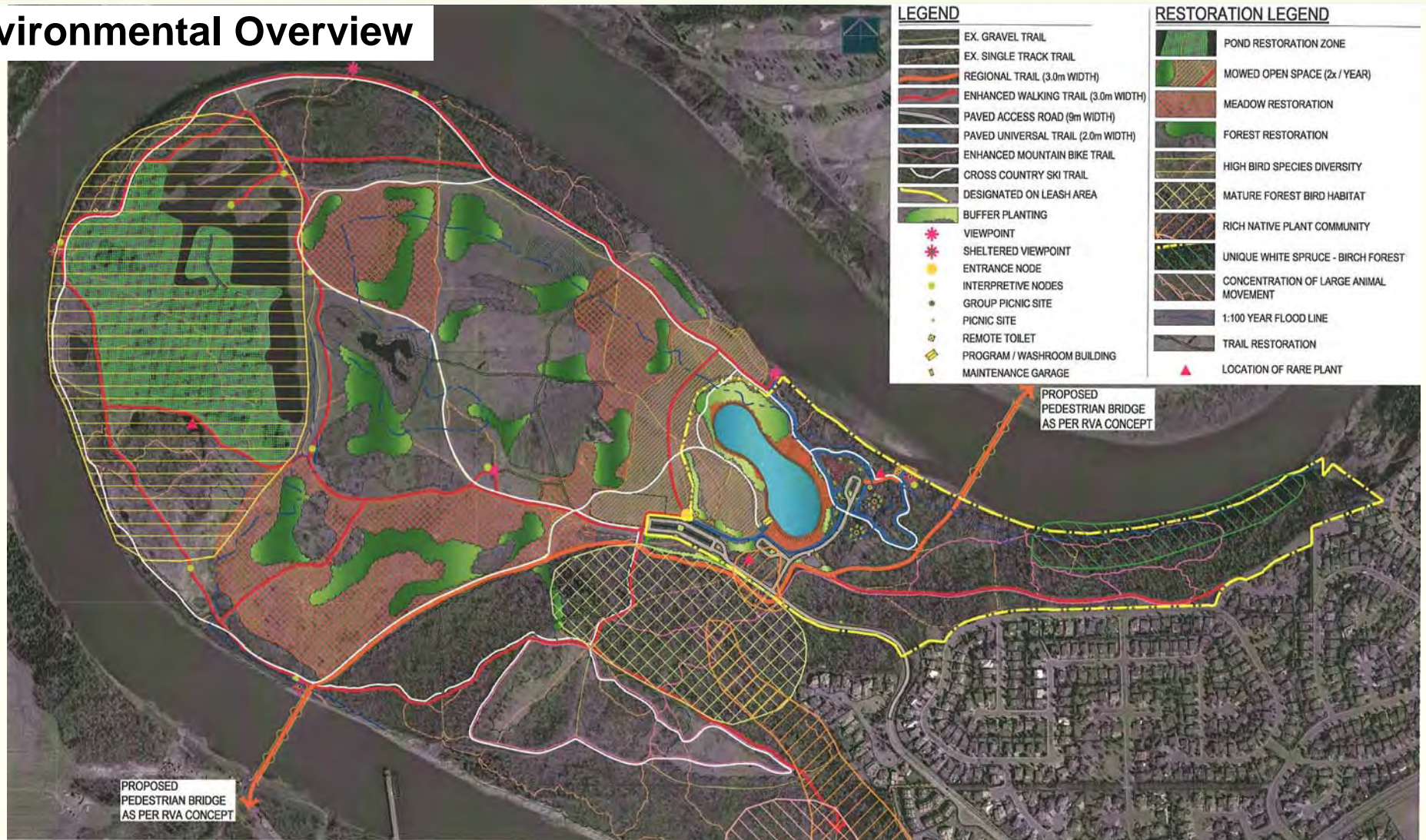
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Central Activity Area



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Environmental Overview



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Features and Character

Terwillegar Park's unique variety of environmental features will be preserved and enhanced for all to enjoy



The "Beach" will be maintained as a popular meeting spot for all users



Enhanced trails will improve walkability to all the Park's great natural features

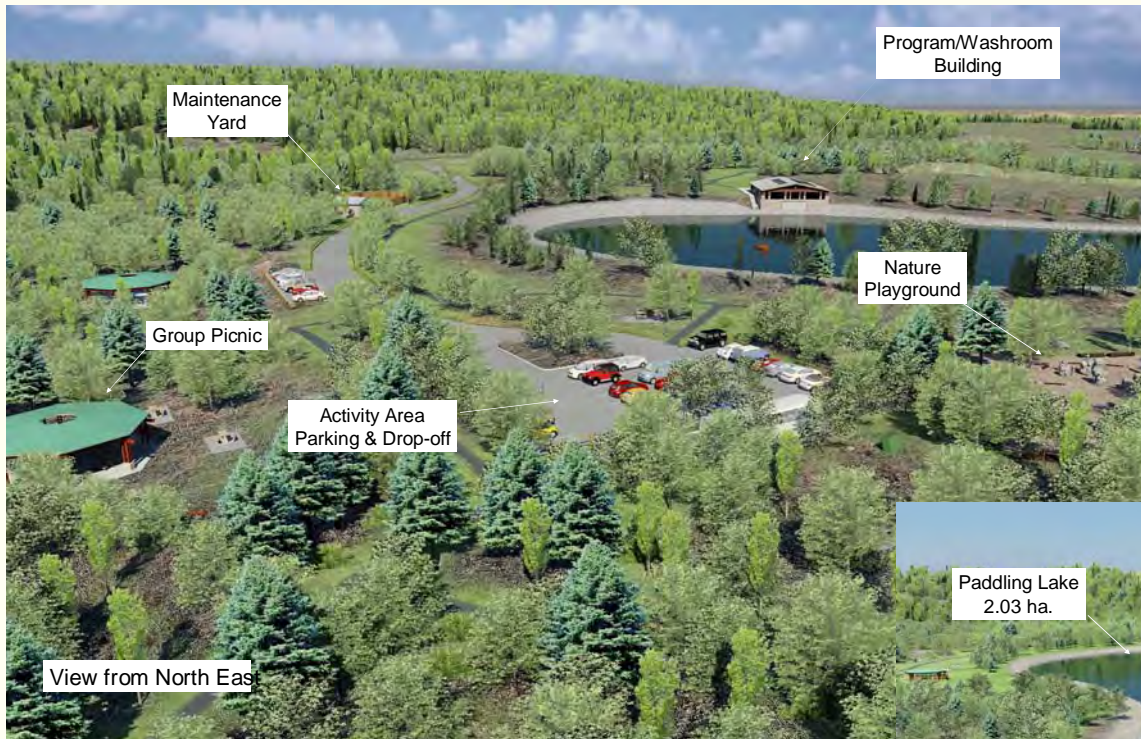


The main walking trails will be enhanced to improve access throughout the Park for all users as well as for emergency and service access



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Features and Character



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Management Guidelines:

The importance of management to the long term development, operations and sustainability of Terwillegar Park has been identified as a critical success factor for the project. The following is an overview of the recommended management guidelines that should be implemented by the City.

Management Infrastructure - There are a number of park infrastructure elements that must be provided in support of park management:

- Trash receptacles, dog bag dispensers, recycling containers
- Access Control – control gates, post & rail fences, bollards
- Emergency Response – Bluphones, proper access and route, location maps/signs, river access
- Signage – a range of regulatory, information and interpretive signage
- Maintenance Garage & Yard
- River access infrastructure – dock and canoe/kayak launch – emergency access
- Enhanced Trails – a 3.0 m wide loop trail to provide access for maintenance and emergency access

Maintenance Activities - Additional resources will be required in the park

- Trails - inspections, vegetation clearing, erosion controls, surface repairs, ski track setting and maintenance of trail structures and amenities.
- trash collection (once per week).
- built amenities – maintenance on viewpoints, signage and shelters, buildings, washrooms
- Mowing – twice per year
- Partnerships, Volunteers, “Friends of Terwillegar”

Rules & Regulations - education and bylaw control

- Education – communication/public relations plan and signage - rules/behaviour/etiquette for shared use
- Bylaw Control - Park Rangers - patrol and monitor the Park
- Local rules - may be applied in the application of the City Parks Bylaw.
- Edmonton Police Service – as required
- Maintenance building and yard - operations staff in the Park – ‘eyes in the park’
- River Valley Event Guidelines

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Development Phasing:

A 3-year phasing plan is proposed, final phasing will be contingent on budget. All program elements are included except the proposed pedestrian bridges which would be part of the Capital Region River Valley Park program. The projected capital cost of the entire project is \$13.8 million. Capital costs are still under review and a detailed estimate will be provided to the City with the final report.

Phase 1: Enhancing Current Features

- Remote Toilets – parking lot/west end of site
- Enhanced Walking Trails and Mountain Bike Trails
- Main Parking Lot – Grading/Gravel/Post & Rail
- Overflow Parking – Grading/Seeding
- Activity Area Access to Maintenance yard – Grading/Gravel
- Maintenance Garage and Yard
- Control Gates (4)
- Entrance Node, Amenities and Signage

• Restoration – Pond Area, Forest, Meadow
Phase 1 Estimated Capital Cost: \$ 4.90 Million

Phase 2: Paddling Lake and Activity Area

- Paddling Lake w/ canoe/kayak teaching area
 - Sledding Hill
 - Canoe/Kayak Launch
 - Buffer Planting, Restoration and Landscaping
 - Activity Area Access and Parking – Grading/Gravel/Post & Rail
 - Universal Trail – Grading/Gravel
 - Remote Toilet (picnic area)
 - Group Picnic, Picnic Sites, Nature Playground
 - Amenities and Signage – Activity Area
 - Interpretive Nodes and Viewpoints
- Phase 2 Estimated Capital Cost: \$ 4.25 Million

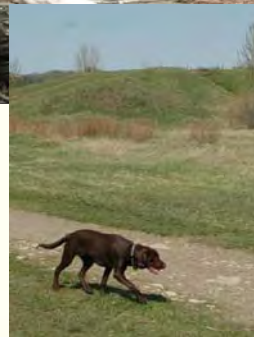
Phase 3: Entrance Road and Main Building

- Program/Washroom Building
 - Power & Lighting
 - Park Entrance Road – all work
 - Paving - Main Parking Lot, Activity Area Access and Parking, Regional Trail and Universal Trail
 - Final Restoration and Landscaping
- Phase 3 Estimated Capital Cost: \$ 4.65 Million

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Study Next Steps:

- Review of Open House Input
- Refinements to Final Concept Plan
- Preparation of Draft Concept Plan Report
 - Study Process
 - Opportunities and Constraints Analysis
 - Program Statement
 - Final Concept Plan and graphics
 - Management Guidelines
 - Phasing Plan
 - Capital Costs
 - Public Consultation Summary
- Draft Report Review and Refinement
- Preparation of Final Report
- Presentation to City Council



Questions?

