



NORTHEAST RIVER CROSSING

FUNCTIONAL PLANNING STUDY

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Northeast River Crossing Functional Planning Study?

The Northeast River Crossing (NERC) Functional Planning Study is a very early stage planning project to look at the potential location for a future bridge over the North Saskatchewan River and its connecting roads. The bridge would connect Strathcona County and the City of Edmonton by connecting Highways 21 and 15 (Manning Drive). Construction of this future bridge is 25 to 35 years away but by planning now, the land required will be protected as development in the area takes place in the coming years.

2. Who is doing this study? How long will the study take? What will this study do?

The City of Edmonton, the City of Fort Saskatchewan, Strathcona County, Sturgeon County and Alberta are project partners and owners of the Northeast River Crossing Functional Planning Study. They will work with a team of specialized consultants to complete the study by December 2018. This study will recommend how much land will be required for the recommended future bridge crossing and connecting roadways.

3. What is a functional planning study?

A functional planning study (FPS)

- Is one of the first stages in preparing road and bridge plans
- determines the general design and the best locations for the road and bridge placement
- determines efficient connections to existing roads and the area of land needed to build them on
- looks at many factors to decide the best location, such as: the environment, safety, connections to existing roads and trails, wildlife/fish habitat, cost, and the traditional, existing and future land uses.

At the end of this study the required land for the future roads and bridge will be recommended.

4. Where are the bridge and connecting roads going to be located?

They will be located within the Northeast River Crossing study area, in the northeast part of the Capital Region, within Strathcona County and the City of Edmonton. The study area was selected to meet the goals of the study: to connect Highways 21 and 15 across the North Saskatchewan River and to provide another connection to northern Alberta. Functional planning for roads and bridges looks at a large area of land to ensure there is enough room to consider several options for consideration. Several potential options will be developed within the study area and by the end of the study, one will be selected as the "recommended" location for the future bridge and connecting roads.

5. Why is this study happening now?

The City of Edmonton and Strathcona County are planning for residential, commercial and industrial growth in the northeast area of the Capital Region. It is necessary to plan for the future bridge, and connecting roads, before this growth occurs. This process typically requires many years to complete.

6. When will the proposed future bridge and connecting roads be built?

Study partners estimate construction of the future bridge and connecting roads to be 25 to 35 years away.

7. Where did the idea for a future bridge in this area come from?

In 2011, the Capital Region Board (CRB), recently renamed the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board, prepared the *Integrated Regional Transportation Master Plan*, which identified the need for a future link between Highways 21 and 15 across the North Saskatchewan River. Earlier studies support a similar connection.

8. What is the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (formerly the Capital Region Board)?

The Edmonton Metropolitan Board is a group of representatives from municipalities in the Edmonton region, responsible for planning and coordinating regional growth. Each of the Northeast River Crossing partner municipalities is a member of this board.



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9. Why is another bridge across the North Saskatchewan River needed in the future?

The Capital Region, an area that includes Edmonton and a number of surrounding communities, continues to grow. The Capital Region Board (CRB) has recommended a new river crossing in this area to help meet future transportation needs by providing a bridge between the bridges on the Anthony Henday Drive and on Highway 15 (a distance of approximately 14 km). This future bridge would provide an additional travel route in the northeast Capital Region, and a connection to northern Alberta.

10. How much land will be required to build the bridge and roads leading to it?

The functional planning study will determine how much land will be required for the recommended bridge crossing and connecting roadways. On flat ground the basic highway corridor would range between 100 to 150 meters wide. The corridor could be as wide as 300 meters for river valley crossings and interchange locations. The exact land requirements will not be known until closer to the end of the study.

11. When will the land for this bridge and connecting roadways need to be acquired?

When the recommended plan is approved by the five project partners, the process of protecting the future right-of-way will be defined. Obtaining the land needed for this type of project typically begins about three to five years before construction.

12. What kind of vehicles will be able to use the new bridge?

The new bridge will carry normal freeway traffic such as cars, buses, and trucks; vehicles that do not require a special permit.

13. What is a High Load Corridor and will this bridge be on one?

A High Load Corridor (HLC) is an Alberta Transportation designated route which accommodates vehicles that are too high, too wide, or too heavy for most highways. A special permit is required for these vehicles to travel on an HLC. At this stage in planning, the new roads and bridge will not be considered a provincial highway and would not likely be considered an HLC in the future. Alberta Transportation is currently conducting a separate study to evaluate existing and future High Load Corridors crossing the North Saskatchewan River.

14. What is being done to hear concerns and get input from the public and from study area landowners?

The project partners, and the consultant team, are committed to reaching interested citizens, especially those who may be directly affected when the bridge and roads are constructed. Opportunities to learn about and discuss the project will be provided during the two-year study. All stakeholder and public input will be considered as the study recommendations are prepared, along with other important factors, such as environmental impacts, slopes, soils, safety, policies, costs and technical design standards.

15. When will I have the opportunity to provide input on the location of the bridge and connecting roads?

As a first step, landowners in the study area were sent letters in March 2017 with information about the study and options for providing feedback. In addition, three public meetings will be held at different stages of the project; in April 2017, November 2017, and spring of 2018. Details of these meetings, opportunities to complete surveys, and contact information of project staff can be found at:

City of Edmonton: edmonton.ca/northeastrivercrossing

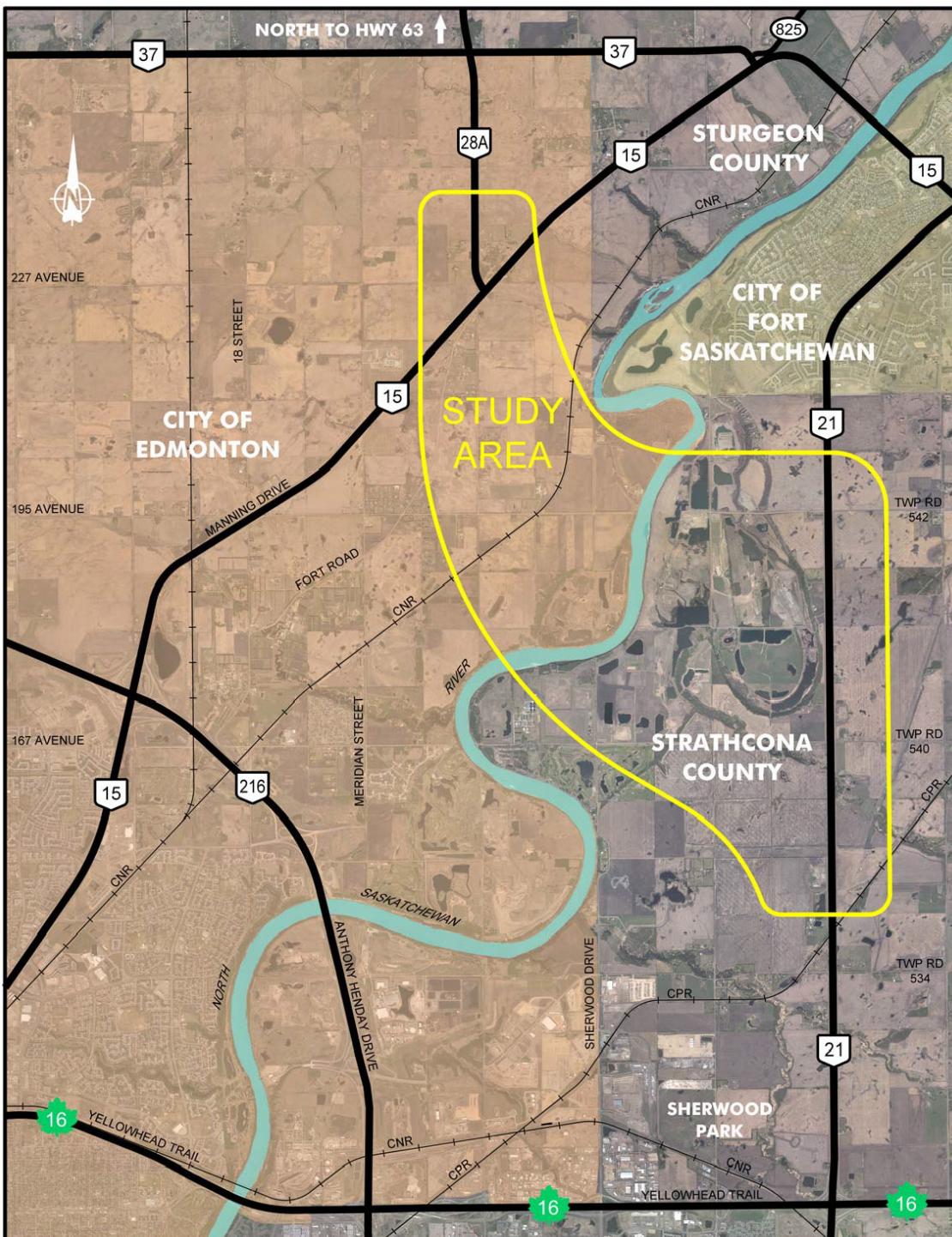
City of Fort Saskatchewan: fotask.ca/northeast-river-crossing

Strathcona County: strathcona.ca/rivercrossing

Sturgeon County: www.sturgeoncounty.ca/nerc

Alberta Transportation: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/6046.htm>

Northeast River Crossing Functional Planning Study - Study Area



November 2017