

# River Access Strategy

## Strategies Online Survey Report June 2015





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## *Background*

The River Access Strategy will inform future programming, operation and infrastructure improvements that support access to the river and activities associated with the river. Last summer, through extensive consultation, discussions and workshops, a set of 7 guiding principles were developed by the City. From these guiding principles, a number of strategies have been identified.

## *Methodology*

An online survey was designed to obtain public feedback on these strategies, as well as to provide opportunity for comments and to identify any gaps in the strategies. The same survey questions were also asked to members of the Edmonton Insight Community panel who opted in the May monthly mixed topic panel survey to receive the additional Strategies online survey.

The surveys were available from May 25 to June 30, 2015. There were 81 surveys completed on the strategies online survey, and 621 surveys completed from the 1,034 Edmonton Insight Community panel members who chose to receive the survey.



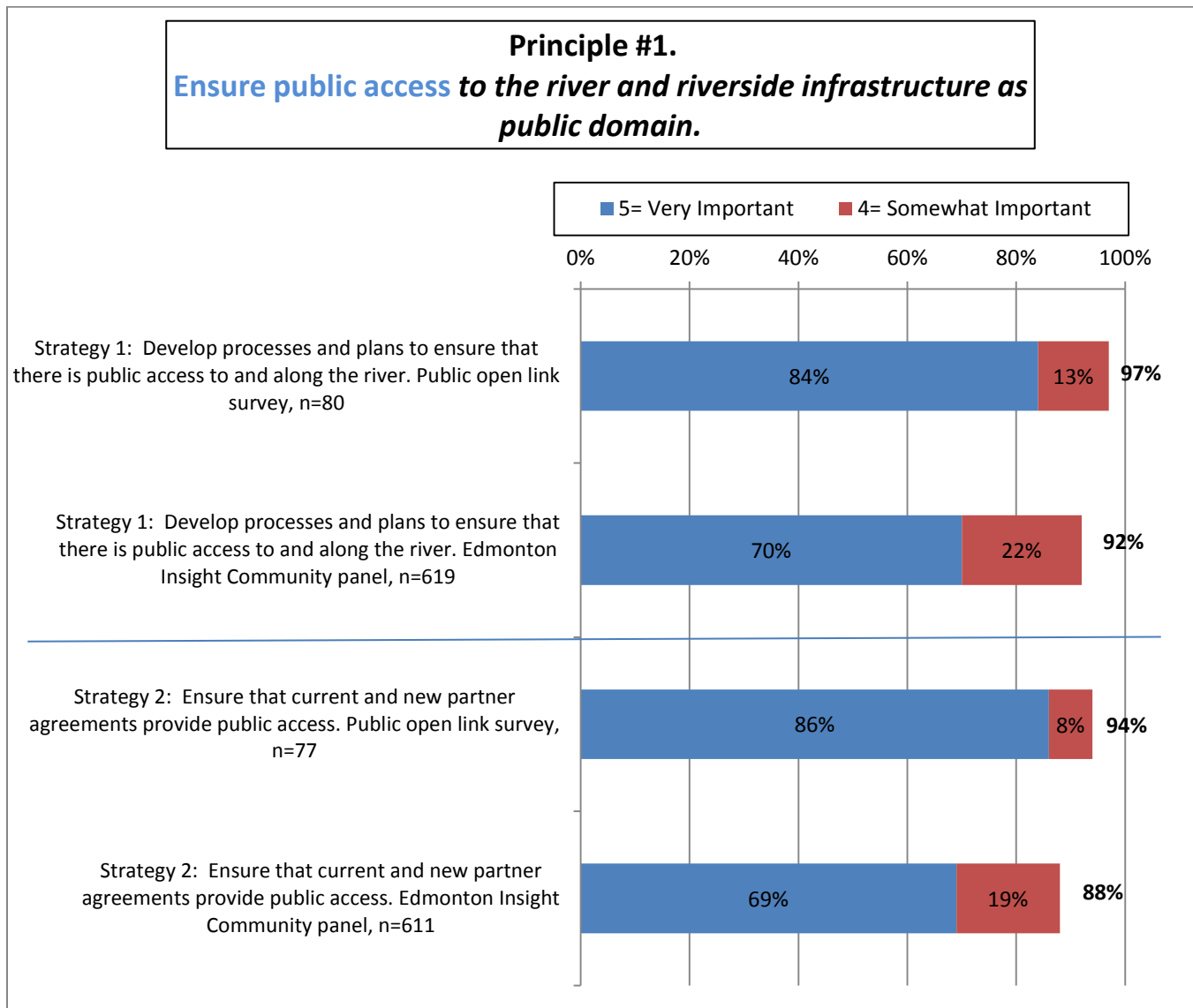
The River Access Strategy is a 10-year plan being developed to inform future programming, operations and infrastructure improvements that support access to the river and activities associated with the river. It will define locations, regulations and use guidelines for development of river-based amenities. It will also balance environmental stewardship while encouraging a broader appreciation for activities on the river. All of this will enhance enjoyment of the North Saskatchewan River for existing and future users, as well as provide direction and assurances to others.

## Survey Results

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of the 29 strategies that were developed for the 7 principles. For the purpose of the survey, the strategies were grouped under their 'primary' principle, although many of the strategies may pertain to more than one principle.

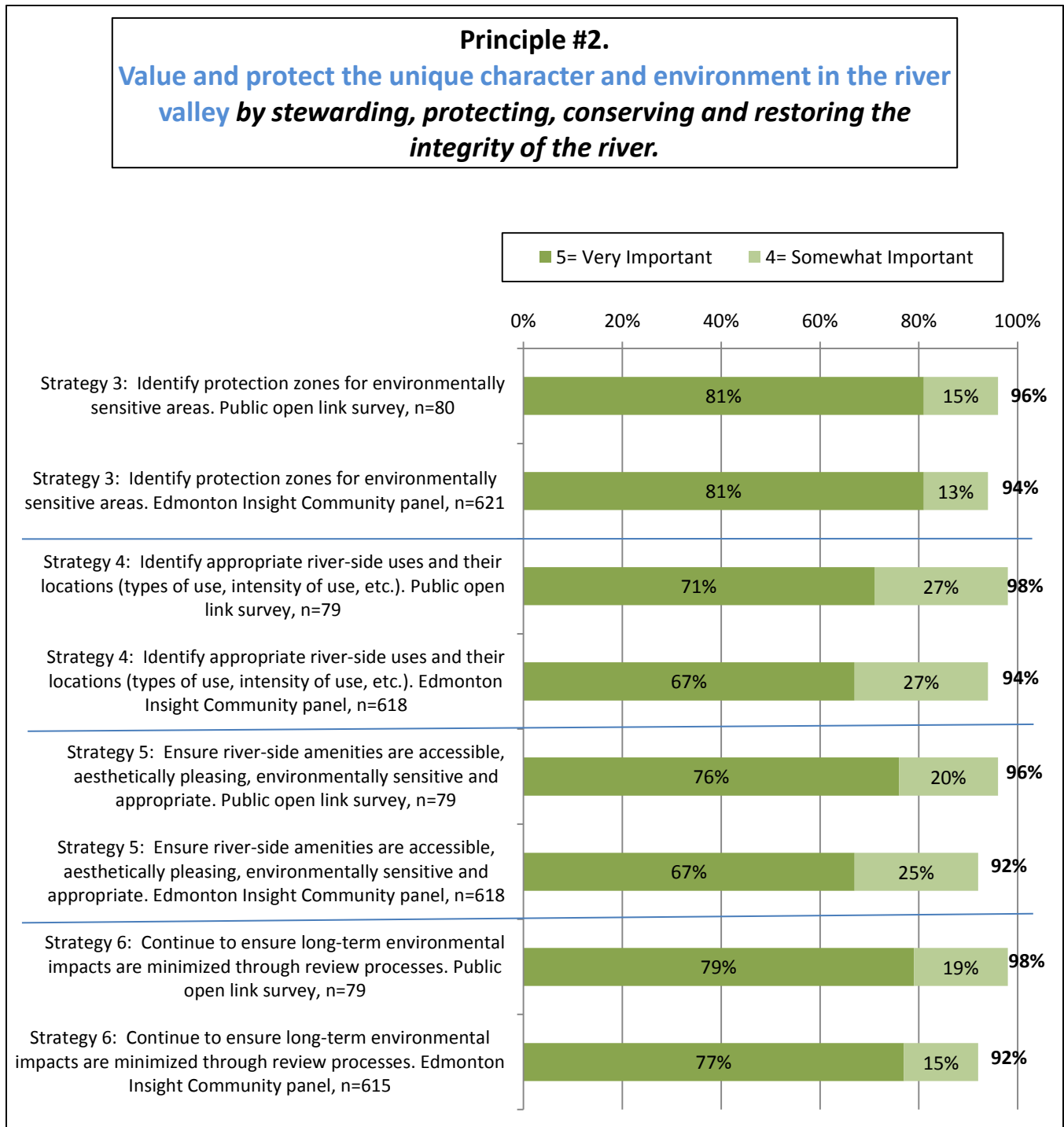
### Principle #1. Ensuring Public Access

Access for the public was rated as important by close to or over 90% of the respondents, with a majority rating these strategies as 'very important'.



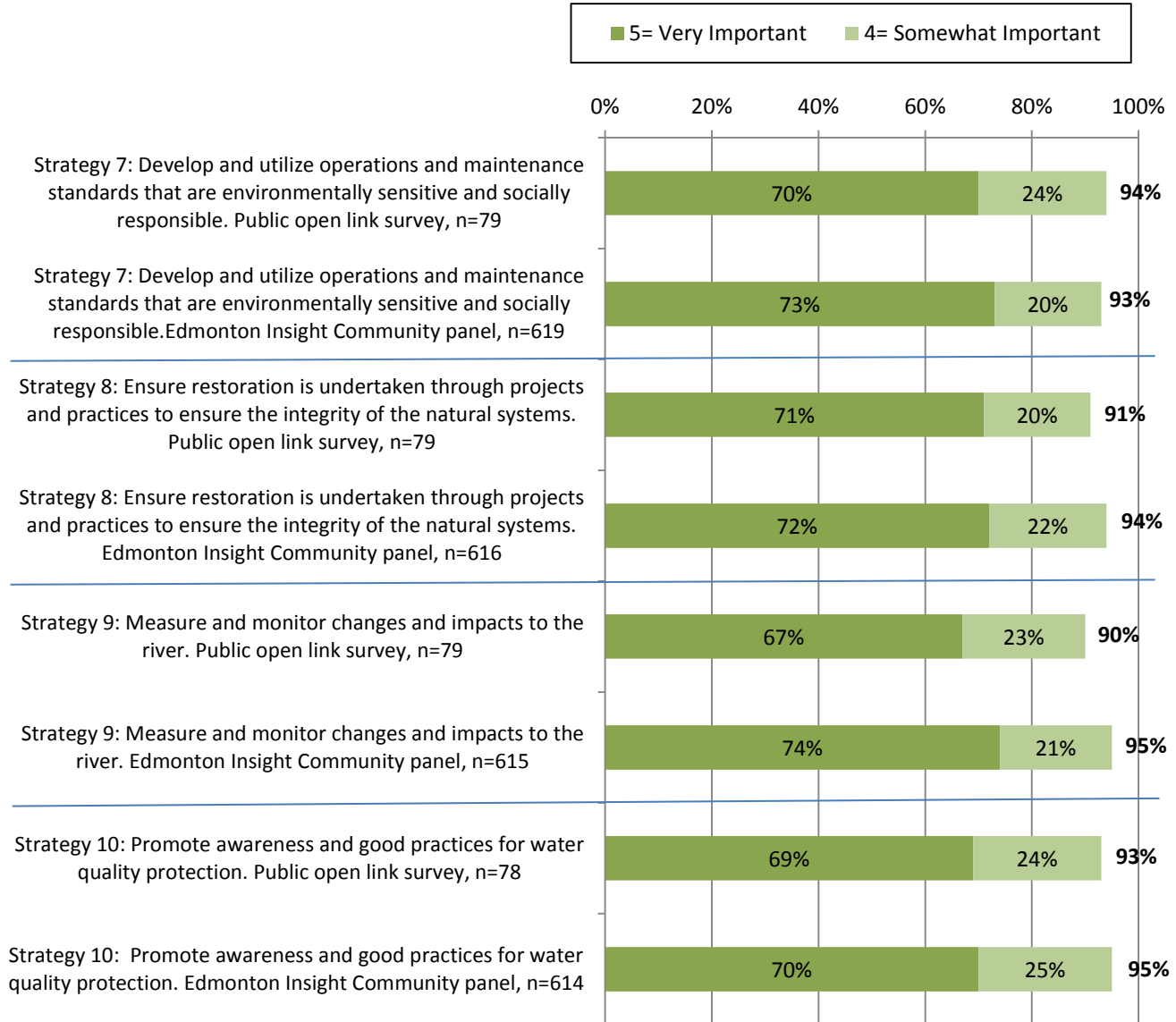
## Principle #2: Value and Protect the Unique Character and Environment in the River Valley

Most respondents (90% to 98%) said that the strategies that were developed to value and protect the unique character and environment in the river valley were important, with the majority rating those strategies as 'very important'.



**Principle #2. (cont'd)**

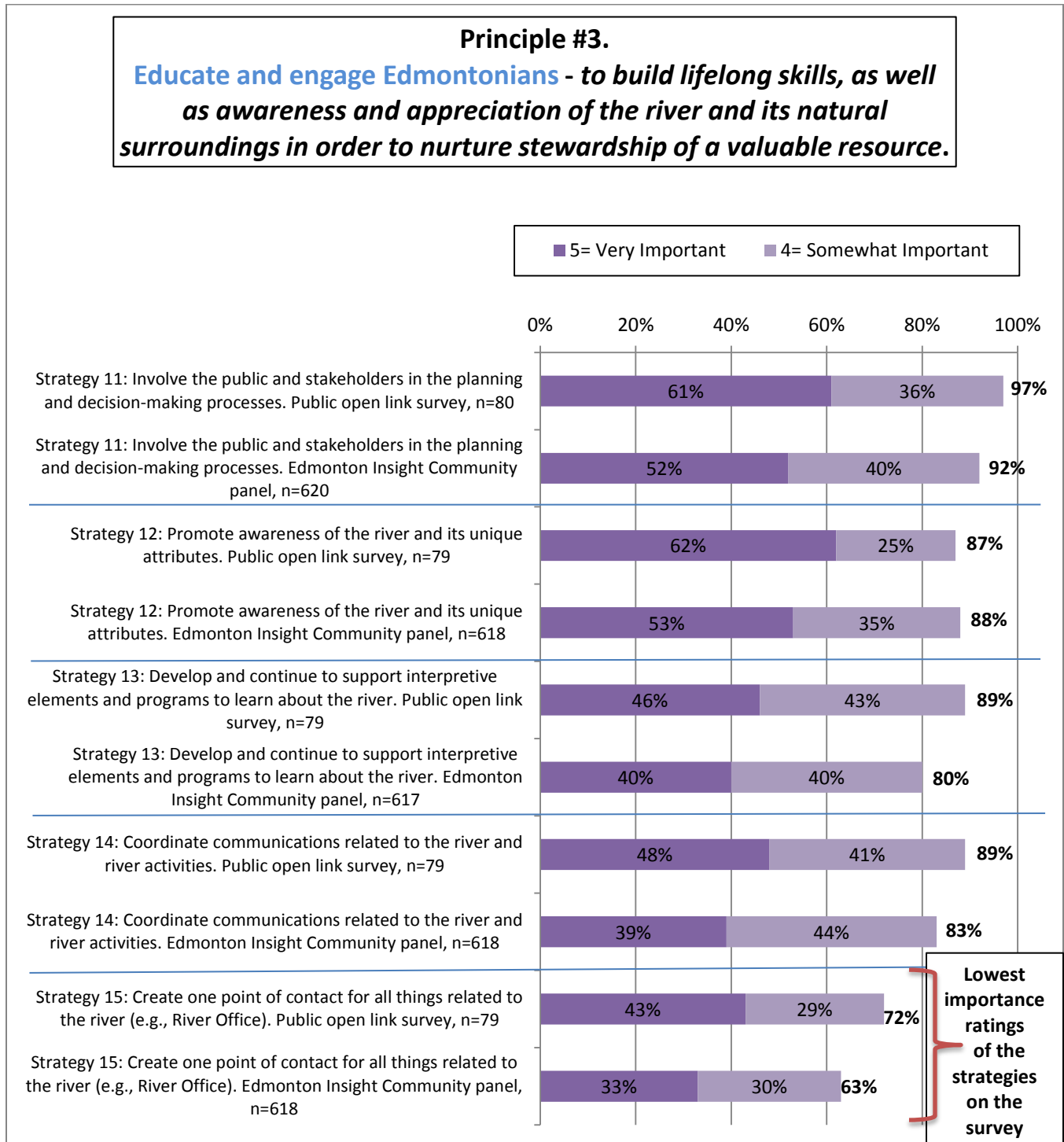
**Value and protect the unique character and environment in the river valley by stewarding, protecting, conserving and restoring the integrity of the river.**





### Principle #3. Educate and Engage Edmontonians

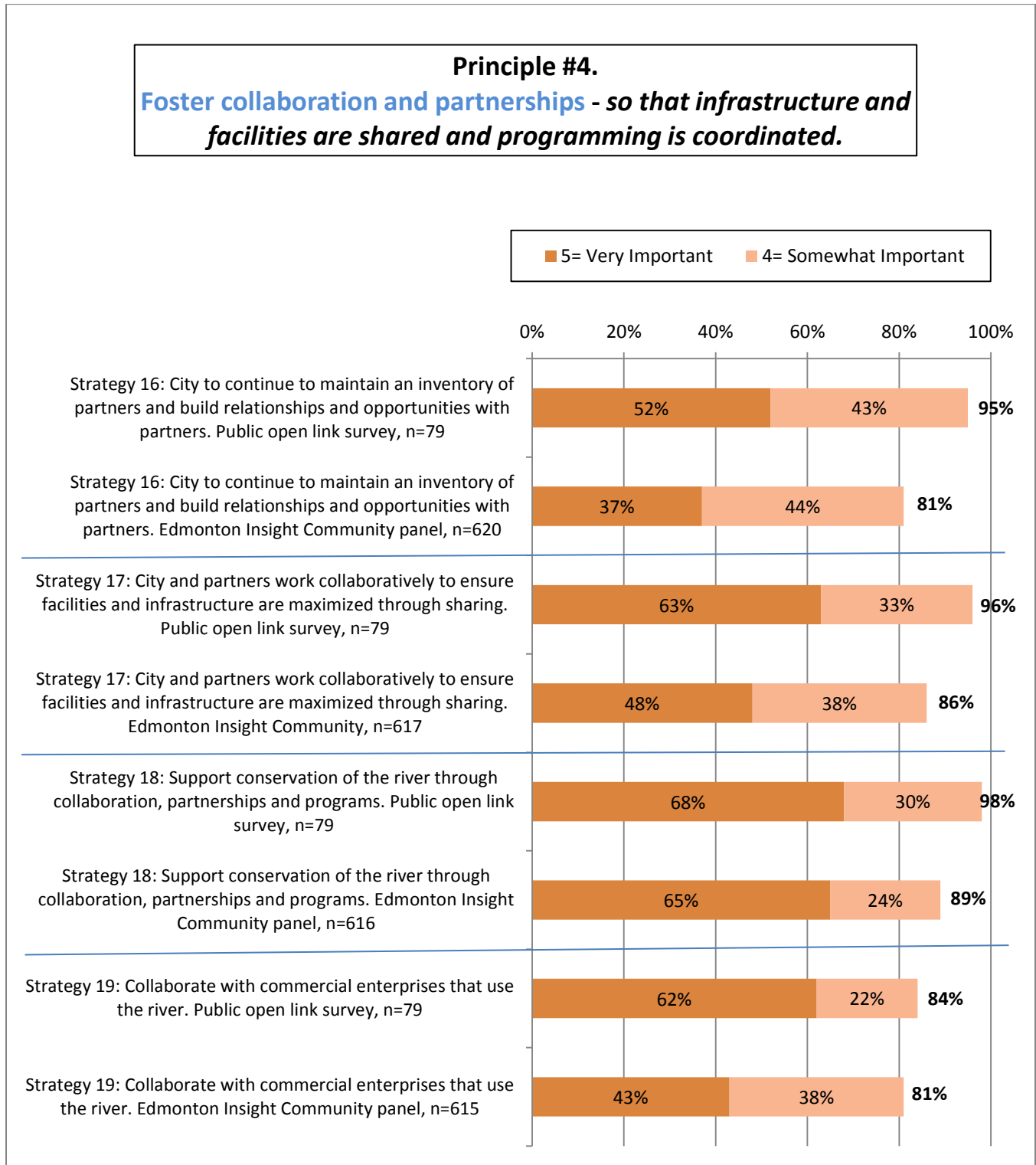
The strategies developed to educate and engage Edmontonians were rated by the majority of respondents to be important. From all of the strategies rated on the survey the lowest importance (63% to 72%) was given for creating one point of contact for all things related to the river (e.g., River Office).





#### Principle #4. Foster Collaboration and Partnerships

Between 81% and 98% of the respondents found the strategies for fostering collaboration and partnerships to be important.

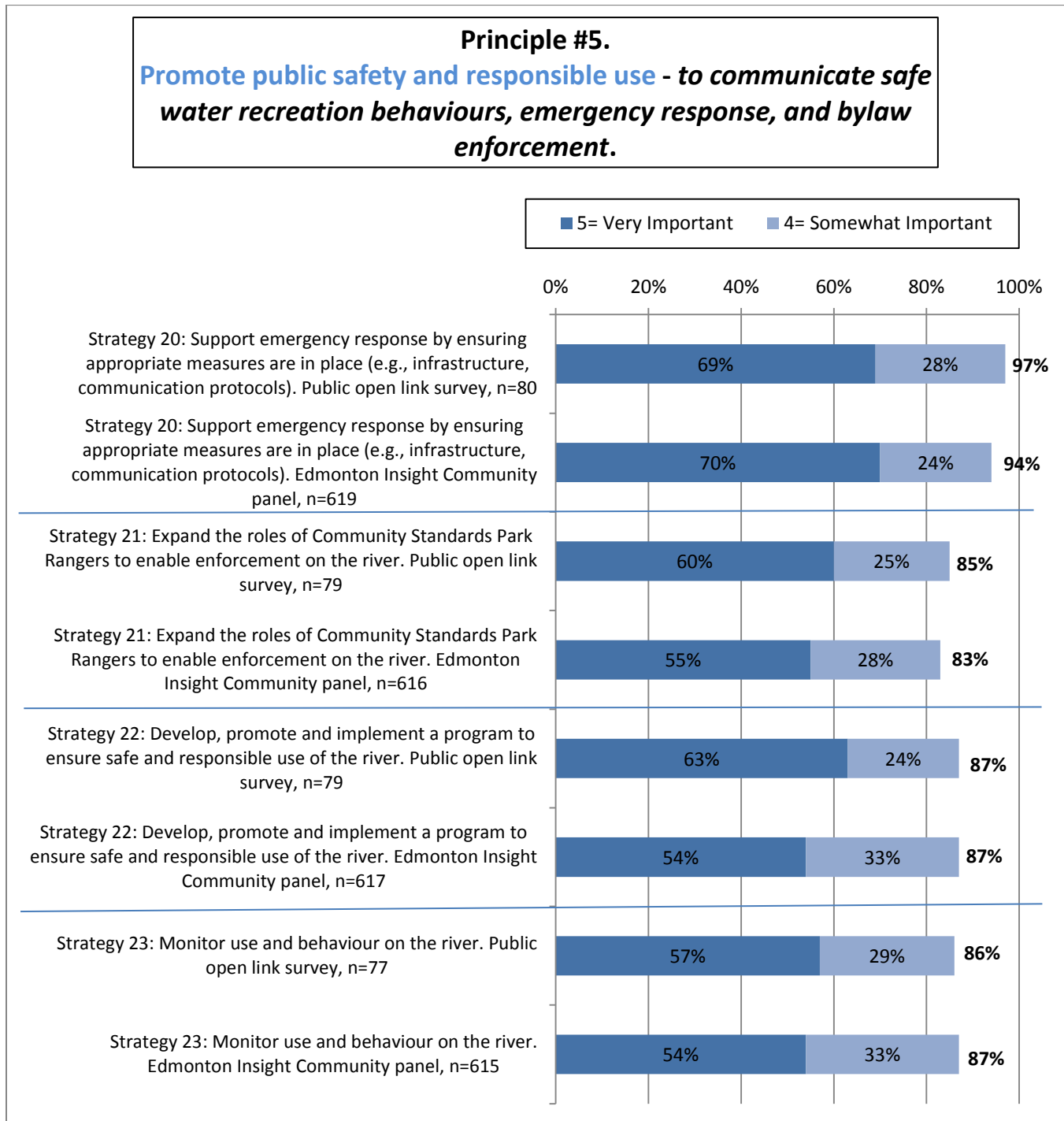






### Principle #5. Promote Public Safety and Responsible Use

Between 83% and 97% of the respondents rated the strategies for promoting public safety and responsible use to be important. The strategy of supporting emergency response by ensuring that appropriate measures are in place (e.g., infrastructure, communication protocols) was rated as the highest importance of these 4 strategies (importance ratings of 94% to 97%).

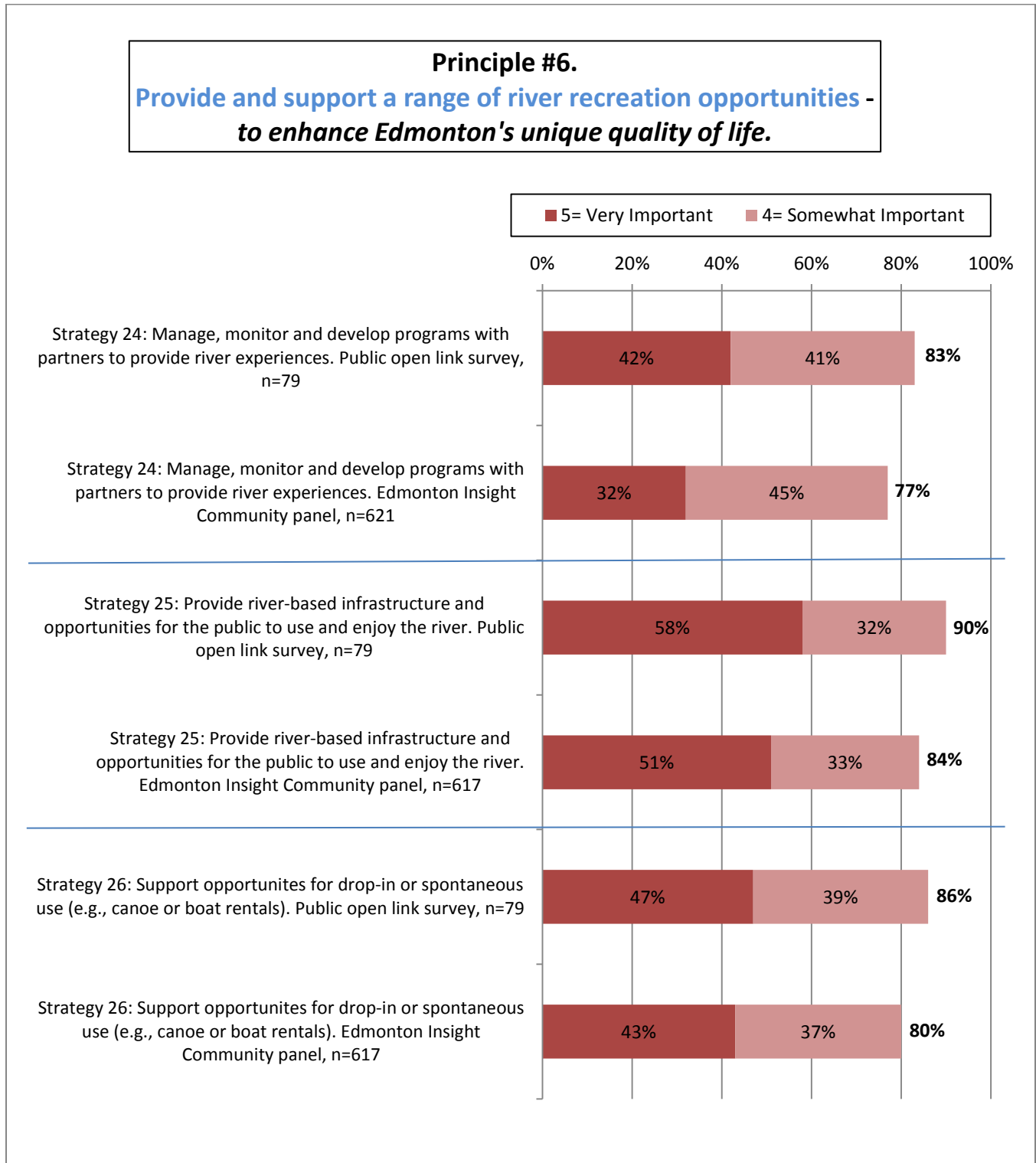






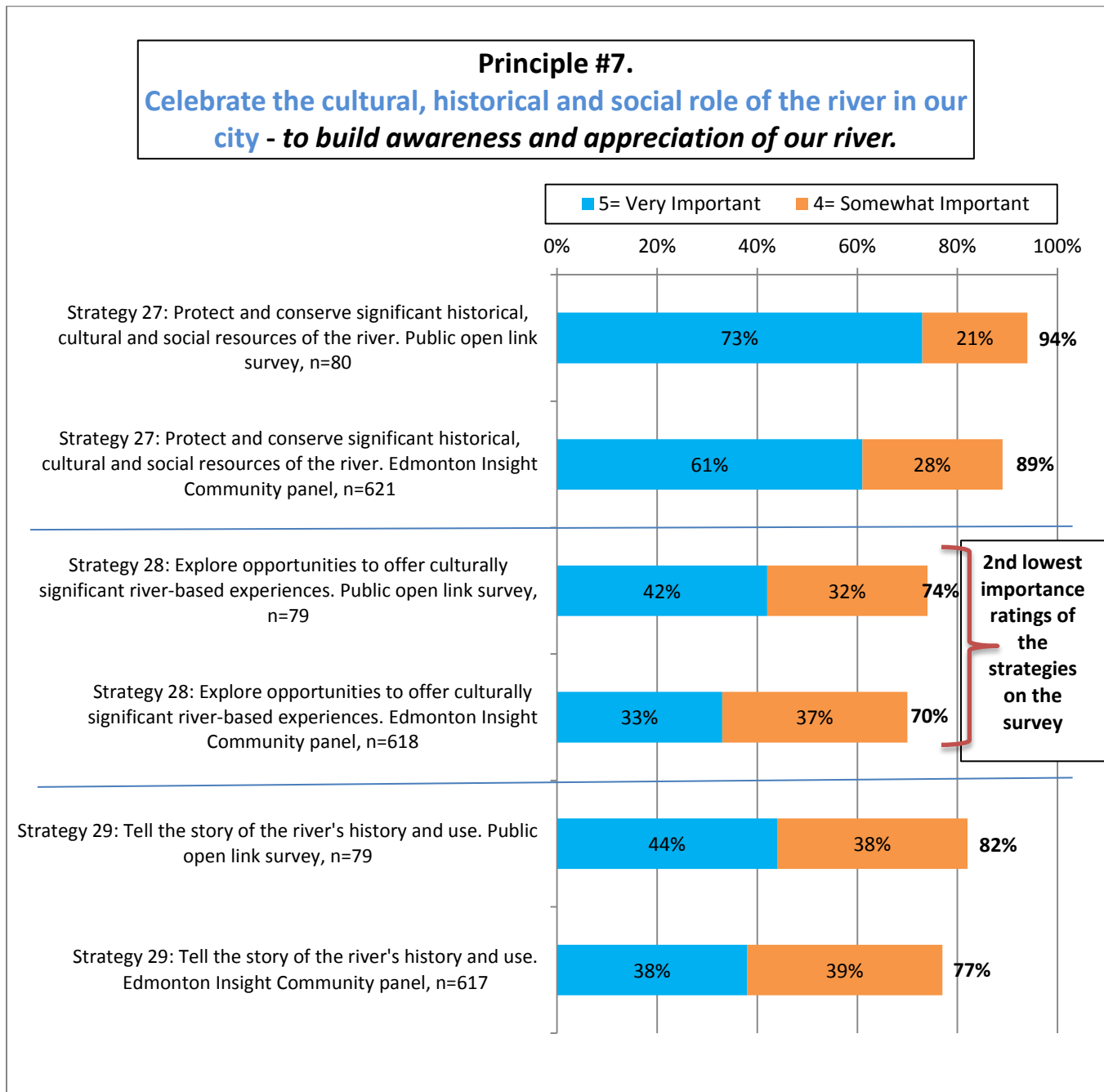
*Principle #6. Provide and Support a Range of River Recreation Opportunities*

Nearly 8 in 10 respondents or more (77% to 90%) rated the strategies for providing and supporting a range of river recreation opportunities to be important.



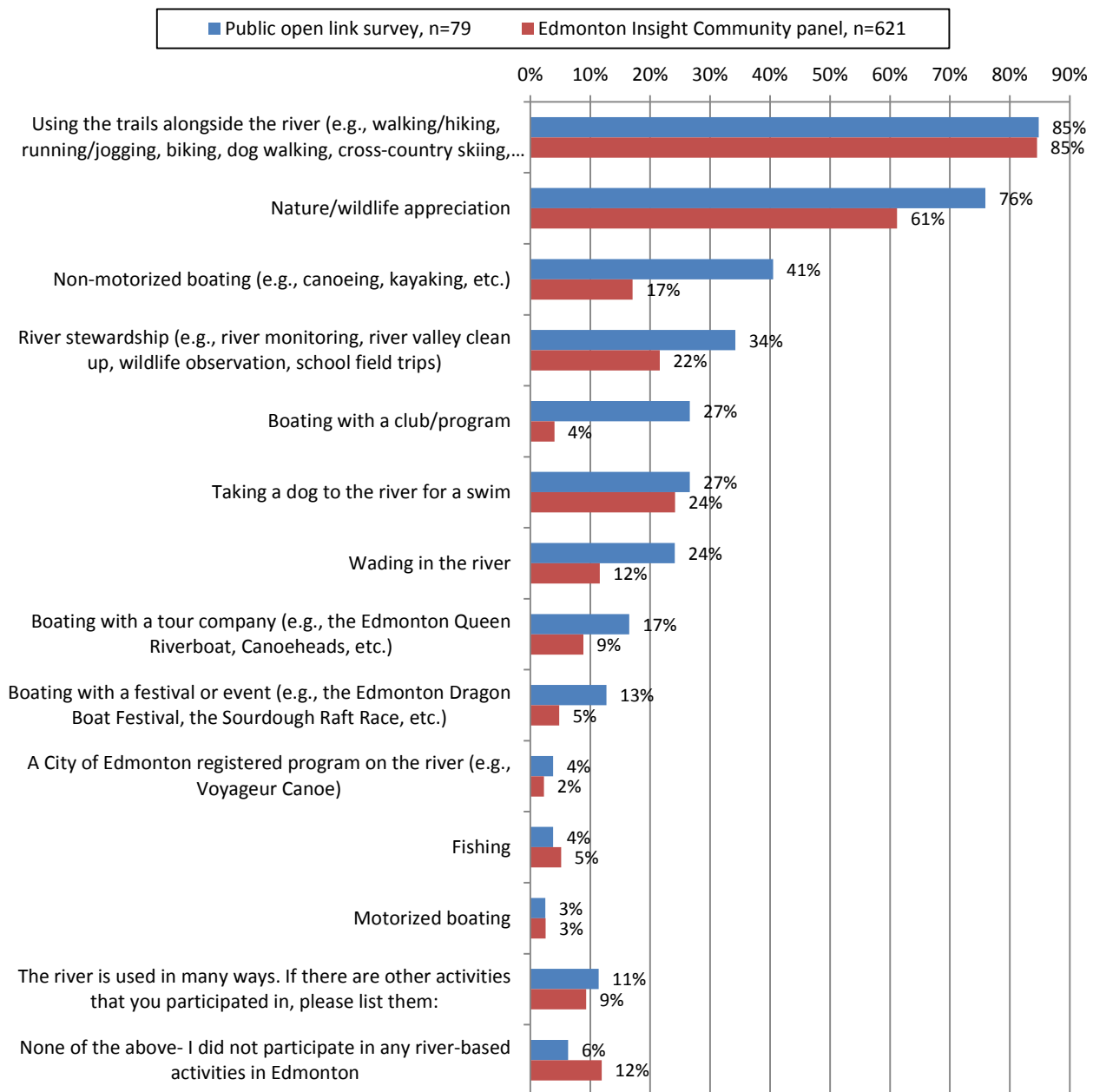
*Principle #7. Celebrate the Cultural, Historical and Social Role of the River in Our City*

The strategies developed to celebrate the cultural, historical and social role of the river in Edmonton were rated by the majority of respondents (70% to 94%) to be important. The 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest importance from all strategies rated on the survey was given for the strategy to explore opportunities to offer culturally significant river-based experiences (70% to 74%).



### Participation in River-Based Activities

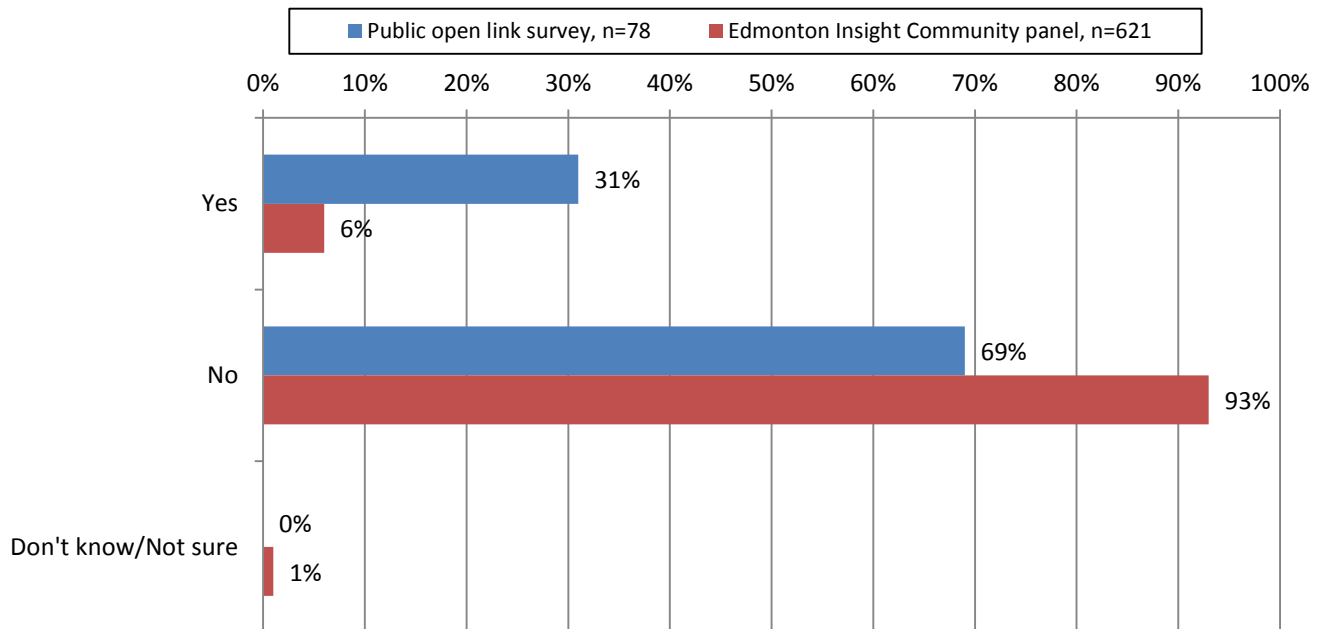
Respondents were asked for the types of river-based activities that they had participated in during the last year in Edmonton. The most frequently mentioned activity (85% for both the public open link survey and the Edmonton Insight Community panel) was for using the trails alongside the river, followed by nature/wildlife appreciation. For activities such as non-motorized boating, river stewardship, boating with a club/program, boating with a tour company or with a festival or event, there was higher participation levels from the public open link survey compared to the Edmonton Insight Community panel.



If the respondent answered that there are other activities that they participated in, they were asked to list them. These other activities are provided in the Appendices.

#### *Participation in a Club or Organization Providing Programs on the River*

The majority do not belong to a club or organization that uses the river for its programs (69% from the public open link survey, and 93% from the Edmonton Insight Community panel said they did not belong to a club or organization that uses the river for its programs).



#### *Gaps Identified*

Respondents were asked if there is anything missing from the strategies that were developed to support the principles. These are provided in the Appendices.

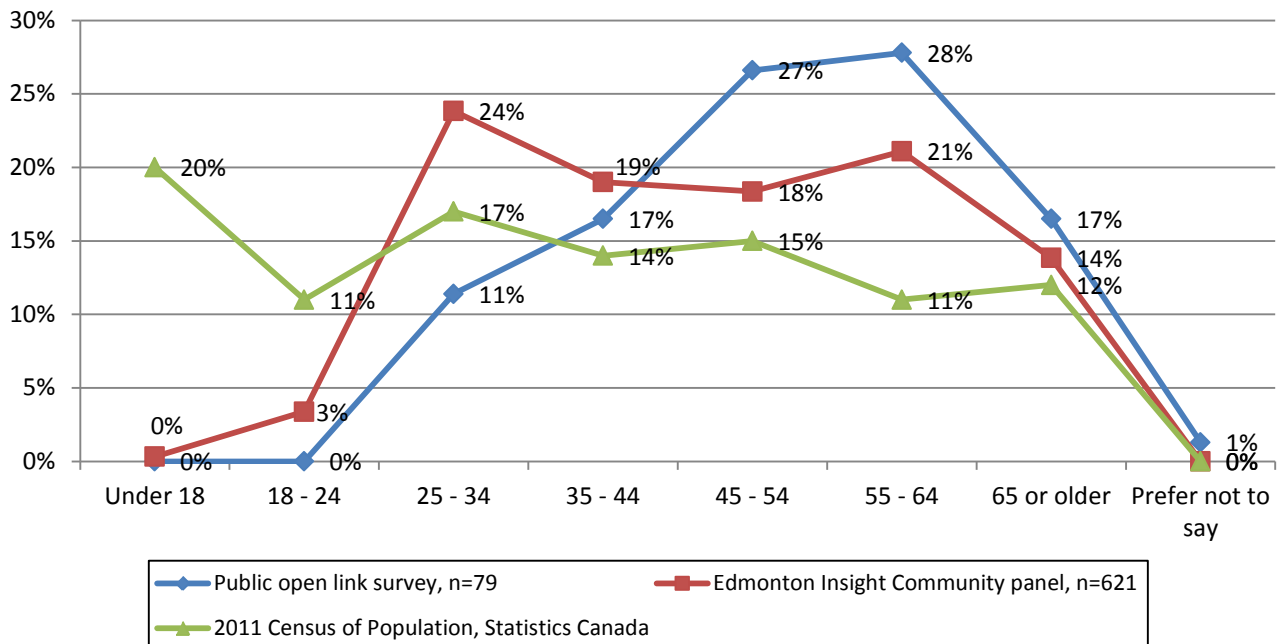
#### *Additional Comments or Suggestions*

Respondents were asked for any additional comments or suggestions. These are provided in the Appendices.

## Demographics

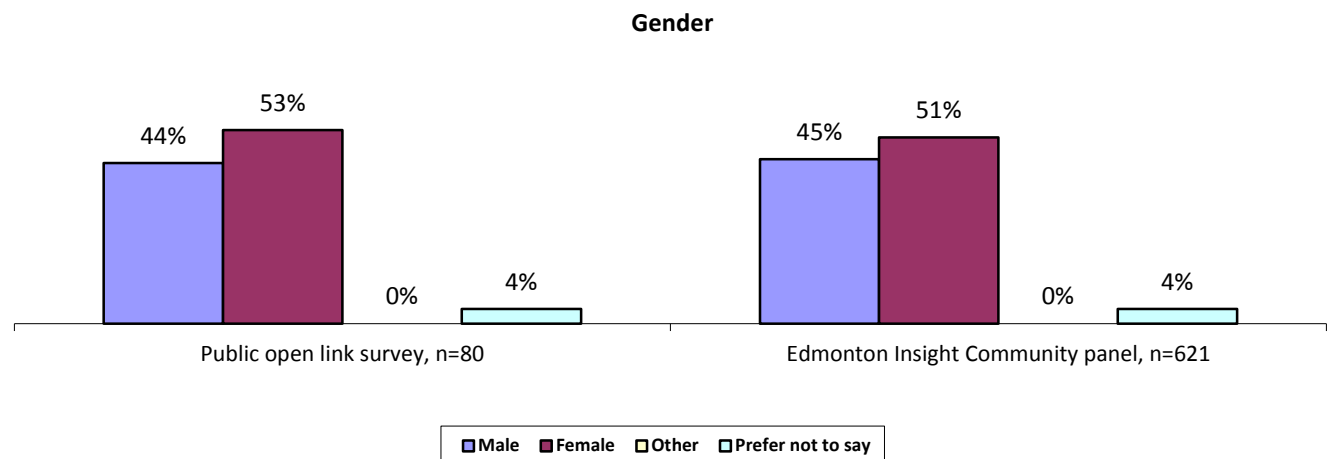
### Age Group

From the public open link survey, the largest number of respondents were from ages 45 to 54 (27%) and 55 to 64 (28%), whereas from the Edmonton Insight Community panel, the largest number of respondents were from the ages 25 to 34 (24%) and 35 to 44 (19%).



### Gender

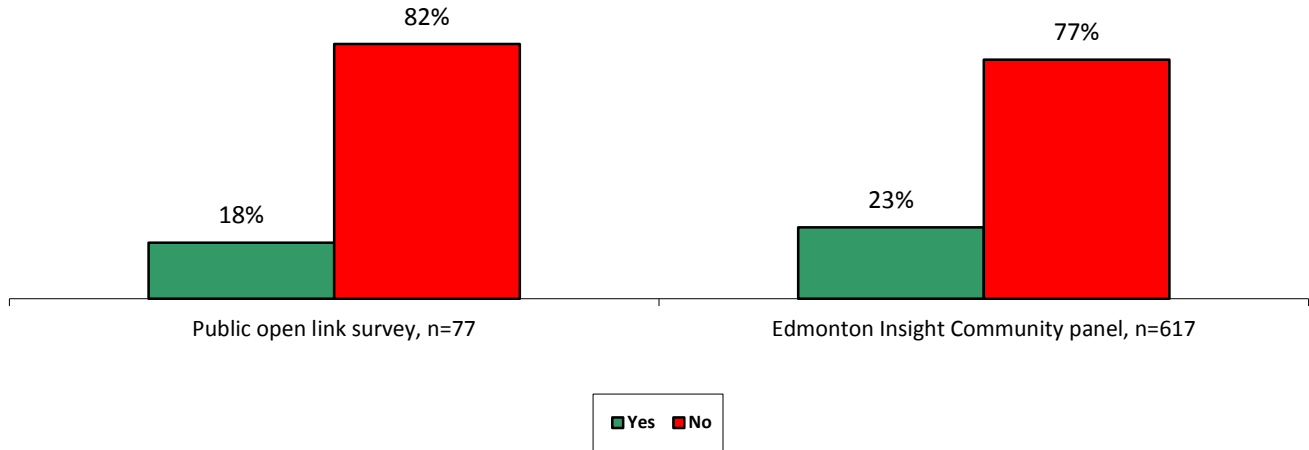
The gender breakdowns were similar from both the public open link survey and the Edmonton Insight Community panel survey.





## Children Under 18

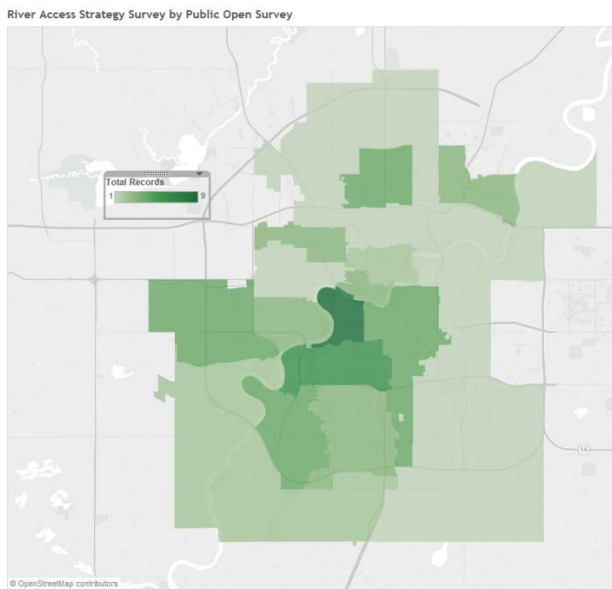
The majority of respondents do not have children under the age of 18 living in their household.



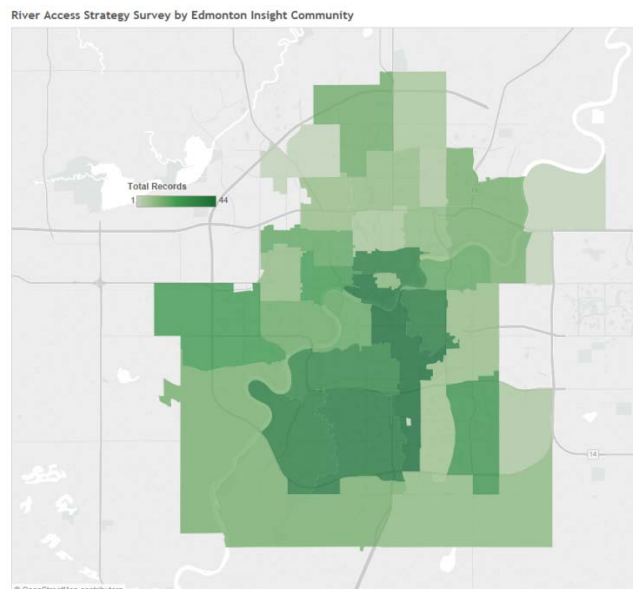
## Location

The FSA (Forward Sortation Area or the first three characters of the postal code) locations of the respondents were mapped.

### Public open link survey:

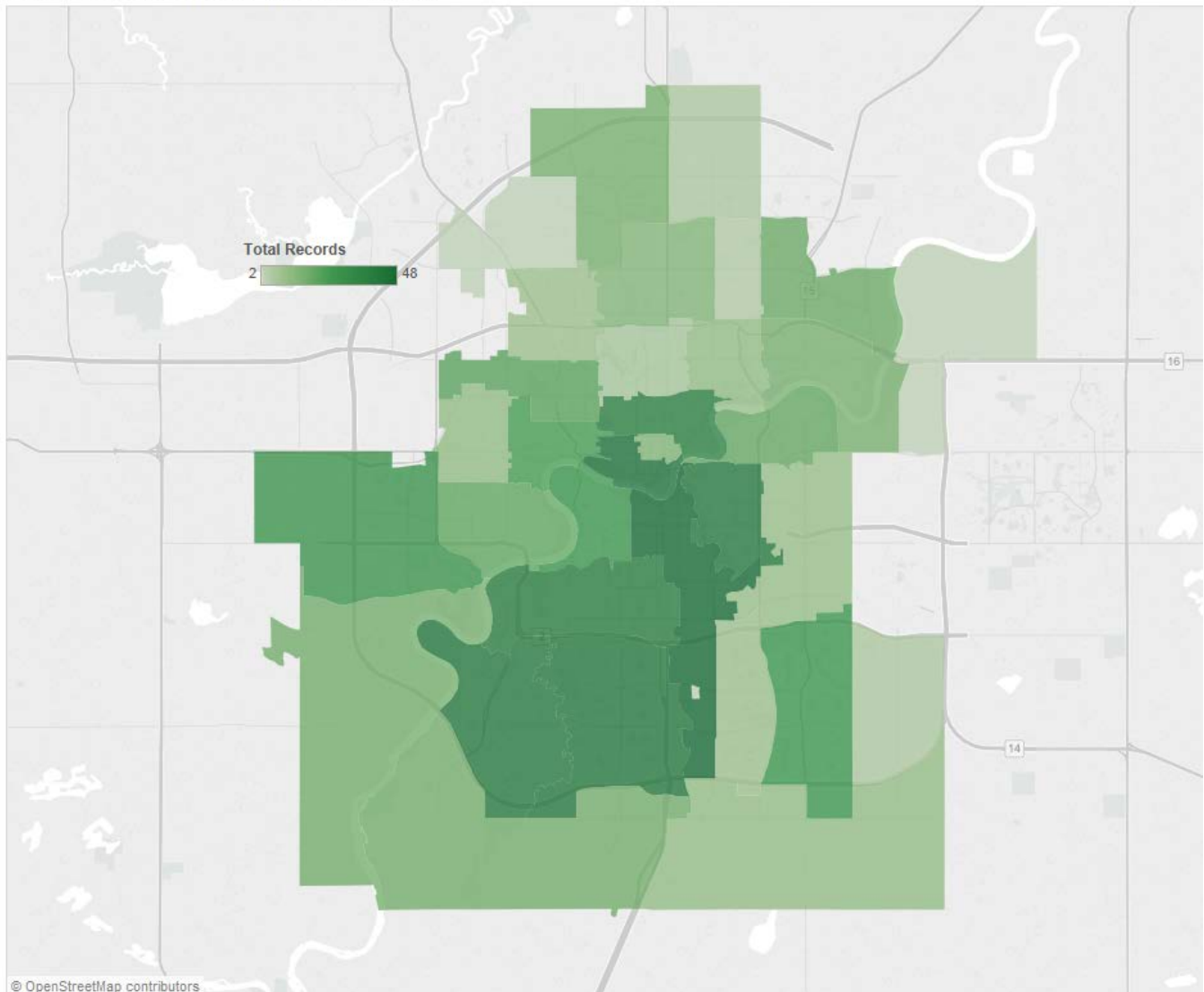


### Edmonton Insight Community panel:



The following map is of the combined data. The areas that are darkest green show the FSA areas that had the largest numbers of responses to the survey.

River Access Strategy Survey Combined Data





## Appendices

### Other River-Based Activity Participation

**Q. In the last year, please indicate the river-based activities, in Edmonton, that you participated in: [Check all that apply]**

**The river is used in many ways. If there are other activities that you participated in, please list them:**

#### Public open link survey:

Response		
drinking water, removal of storm water from streets in front of my house, Sanitary sewage disposal,		
recommended to visitors, e.g., walk across the High Level; went for picnics in parks alongside the river, e.g., Emily Murphey		
Whitemud horseback trail riding, trail and beach clean up - stacking debris hauled out of the river water for city to clean up but 311 never sends the truck in.		
Gold panning, nature hikes, education mentoring, story telling and historic tales of Edmonton's past.		
Haskin Canoe Voyageur Canoe day tours and overnight tours,		
River Watch program. Swimming in river. Paddle sport training.		
having picnics in riverside parks		
School and daycare outings (walks biking, picnics)		
History appreciation, rafting, geology appreciation, birding, berry-picking,		
	Valid Responses	9
	Total Responses	81

#### Edmonton Insight Community panel members:

River_activities - The river is used in many ways. If there are other activities that you participated in, please list them:
picnicing
Biking along trails
trying to appreciate and photograph the vista you are endangering.
id plants
Rollerblading

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painting and sketching views along the river and tributaries (such as Mill Creek and the Whitemud)
golfing, Remembrance Day service at Ainsworth Dyer Bridge - Rundle Park, Jane's Walk
Using trails to access Segway tours and to walk home from work.
Picnicing
folk fest, shakespeare in the park, heritage days, marathon, family celebrations as a child, I used the valley as "adventure-scape" with my son (now 30) while he grew up, I have used it as a cycling thru route, gosh so many things, but mostly now I run my dog. ...
Picnic lunch on the riverbank/riverside
photo opportunities (class)
rock tossing
hammocking in trees by the river
As a spectator for events
Panning
Looking at the river from bridges.
skipping rocks
Wildflower group work JJ
Drawing attention to the homeless in the river valley
The view of the river from my home.
Picnics
WALKING ON THE FOOT BRIDGE TAKING PHOTOS OF OUR FANTASTIC CITY SKYLINE, AND ENJOYING THE LOUISE MACKINNEY PARK
Appreciating the river while having a coffee at the cafe in Louise Mackinney park. Enjoying the fireworks from the river's embankment. Enjoying various festivals in riverside parks.
Picnicing and playground use in river valley parks.
sun bathe and drink beer
Swimming
Park BBQs at Mayfair
voyageur canoeing with friends
I overlook the river and enjoy the view immensely!
Golf
prayer and ceremony
Camping at Big Island
romantic nature dates, creek exploration, parks activities/recreation near the river, off trail walking, fitness regimens involving crossfit etc that utilize the natural environment
sitting and watching the river
Bicycle

## River Access Strategy Survey 2015

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photography & art
Photographing
Walk or Ride over bridges
photography
Being in the river valley is not the only opportunity to benefit from it. The natural beauty of the area impacts every place in the city than can view it, whether up close or from a distance.
picnicing, relief from summer heat in a home with no airconditioning
Nature photography
Enjoying the footbridges.
Commuting to school by bike
picking the occasional berry, herb or flower while walking
Meditate by the trails.
Bird watching, meditation, plant walks, appreciation of natural beauty
watching the flow of the water. Feeling the cool air in August. Listering to the quiet by the river.
Watching activities from my balcony
x country skiing
remote controlled boat
Photography
Picnic. A brought my wife their for a date
simply enjoying the presence of the river in one of the many parks along its shores.
Experiencing the river from our bridges
photography
mountain biking

58 responses

### Gaps Identified

**Q. Please let us know if you think there is anything missing from the strategies that were developed to support the above principles?**

#### Public open link survey:

Response
<p>Congrats on a great set of strategies that encompass a big picture of our river and river valley!</p> <p>As for anything missing, Strategies 1, 3 and 6 might include reference to a full range of infrastructure, education and opportunities that include simple signage, trail and stair access to low water, late season gravel bars. Currently, there may be too much reference to high cost boat ramps, docks, buildings and programs.</p>
<p>Converting the old 105 St Bridge to a landscaped walkway like <a href="http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/the-high-line">http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/the-high-line</a> instead of tearing it down?</p>
<p>There were a lot of questions about sharing and collaborating which somewhat concern me. I would hope the City maintains all responsibility for the river valley and the infrastructure. I would hate to see it all commercialized as that would detract from the natural beauty that people go to the river to enjoy. I don't need a hot dog or souvenir vendor at any park. I rather enjoy bringing the family down to a park and having a picnic that we cooked over the coals of a fire we built. If I had to pay to do such a thing I would not go.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educate public that river is clean and safe. Safe to swim in.</li> <li>2. Educate public that in spring summer fall when river is not frozen that it is safe to recreate in (preferably non-motorized watercraft) except when it is in flood. Educate when in flood times, have <a href="http://www.edmonton.ca">www.edmonton.ca</a> link to real time water flows levels on Alberta Environment website and explain what are average flow rates and safest times to be on river.</li> <li>3. The Mayor and city councillors and COE employees talking to media should stop bad mouthing the river to the public. I continually hear them say it is not safe to be in or near or on the river. That is a sad attitude. Is the city aware of the users of the river in Calgary, Red Deer, Rocky Mountain House and now Devon--it is a popular tourist destination.</li> </ol>
<p>Improve personal safety on river and in river valley areas from other people- not just natural elements</p>
<p>ensure First Nations are adequately consulted and accommodated and their interests and values are integrated into the elements of the programs and strategy</p> <p>conservation should be the primary consideration and only if conditions and thresholds can support it, then other uses and access to be maintained/considered/augmented</p>
<p>Promote development of specific areas of the riverside that allow for more integration of the the river and riverside into Edmontonians everyday life (ensure the other principles are also adhered to, ex. environmental stewardship, etc.). Example: it would be great to see the old Rosedale power-plant building and ground restored and retro-fitted into an area that supports arts, entertainment and nightlife through the creation of various multipurpose venues and commercial space for restaurants, coffee shops, pubs and possibly boutique shopping. It would be an excellent hub for programming and rental of light watercraft as well so Edmontonians could further engage with the river.</p>

The City needs to define better what actions it will take to accomplish the strategies outlined above. There is a critical need for improving the way the river can support the recreational values of Edmontonians. Edmonton citizens have identified that they would like more opportunity to be actively involved in paddling sport (Top 5 desired activity in Alberta). Canoeing & kayaking ranks ahead of hockey, racquet sports, baseball/softball, and other traditional organized sports in the number of people participating.

These are really great principles and capture the variety of needs for the river valley - environmental, social, cultural, historic. I think this is a good way forward. There is a delicate balance between promoting more access to the river, programs and experiences along the river and ensuring its ecological integrity is maintained. How will these principles be used to determine whether a project will go forward? To what degree will projects have to meet these principles? Some of the principles could be in conflict with one another. i.e. how much access is necessary (enough, or too much) and what type of access is encouraged/discouraged?

More access for paddling - canoes, kayak, dragon boats, tubing and general floating

Retain single track mnt bike trails and build more single track mnt bike trails

Swim locations in river

Development of river tours and transport connectivity between the existing and future river front leisure attractions and cultural sites.

River Trail development and maintenance has been neglected so where banks have fallen in during storms, no effort has been made to restore a new riverside trail, eg. at Belgravia land slide 4-5 years ago. Shared River Trails should be dual lane so bikes and adult tricycles can easily take one trail while the parallel trail has pedestrians with dogs, or horse back riders. Having these occasional dual lanes eg. there is one by the train at Fort Edmonton, allows everyone to remain safe, to cooperate and to share the beautiful river valley trails along the river.

i think you covered pretty much everything that is important for the users and citizens

Not enough details on Ensuring Public Access - I need to see in the strategy that public access means also being able to get to the river valley easily, easy free parking, no steps or hills or gravel paths. As a lot of our City tax payers are seniors, disabled etc we need to have easy access. Note the West end of the city has no easy access, our nearest is Laurier Park. Need large parking lot at Cameron Heights.

Pretty vague, open for interpretation by noisy special interest groups

I don't think so

There should be commercial uses in the river valley; e.g. coffee houses and other places to get drinks and snacks winter and summer. A pub would be nice but it would need close supervision to ensure no drunks. Also we need a way to sail up and down the river which does not rely on one's own abilities; i.e. a river boat v. canoe, kayak

THE RIVER IS AN ESSENTIAL UTILITY AND RESOURCE - DRINKING WATER AND STORM WATER DRAINAGE Indicate the impact of climate change upon the river and its implications for Edmontonians and Albertans. Anyone who has visited the glaciers over the years will recognize the significant decrease in size most noticeable in recent year. Having visited many of them in the last forty years, it is a startling change. The North Saskatchewan River is an essential utility for Edmonton, providing



drinking water and storm water removal, hydro power generation all of these especial summer drinking water supply will be challenging in my life time. Climate changes accelerate in impact. This needs to be part of the story. Every Access point need to indicate a message that highlights this essential value to all Edmontonians in addition to Quality of Life benefits. Cheers, Mike Hanna miketwhanna@gmail.com if you want to discuss further. Fort Edmonton needs to build this fact into their interpretive programs.

1. Development of Buiding, housing, roads in river valley green spaces greatly affects the environmental quality of the river valley, the shoreline ecosystem and the river water quality. Please stop developing so much in the river valley. I thought it was supposed to be kept green, undeveloped. Every year there is another housing development right against the shoreline. This development should be stop[ded. The true protection of the valley should occur, and the connection of the river valley from Devon to Fort Saskatchewan through [walking trails should be a priority and should be completed soon.

2. ENFORCE environmental protection of river shoreline ecosystem and river water quality. There is token environmental policies, ie ENVISO but environmental standards especially related to building and road construction is NOT ENFORCED with building and road construction companies/city employees who build in river valley. The City has the ENVISO standards, but I DO NOT SEE THESE STANDARDS AND PRACTICES being practised in the city or private companies.....there is all kinds of erosion occuring around the river valley/shoreline and stuff being allowed to enter the river and creeks in Edmonton, it is very shocking.

3. PUBLIC EDUCATION--river safety. The city of edmonton, its employees, its Mayor etc through the media are always talking in a fearful way about the river, like it is a very dangerous thing. It is not, especially if recreational use of the river is done wisely, and it can be if the city educates the public on safe use, instead of terrifying the public about the river. People will not even touch the water thinking they will get typhoid, or will not go near the river fearing it. If safety during recreational use is taught to the public through the media, it could become a very valuable resource and tourist destination. Education can centre around: need to wear lifejackets, need to not drink and drive boats on the river, need to not go on the ice in winter, need to not go on the river in spring flood etc but how and when to safely use the river. The river could become a source of health and fitness for Edmontonians and tourists. City staff should not be instilling a fear of the river for the public, when they talk about the river to the media.

Involve the public more in not using the river to dump garbage. Involve the public in river clean up more.

I see no oversights

That there isn't a strategy/choice for NO RIVER DEVELOPMENT.

	<b>Valid Responses</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>81</b>

## Edmonton Insight Community panel members:

Any_strategies_misssing
Please do not open up use of the river.
Sounds roght
Commercial development as an adjunct to natural environment
I do not see anything about cost, priorities, what is necessary to build more use of the river. I expect that is a very expensive undertaking and may not be a city priority when LRT, public safety and quality of life for new immigrants and homeless people are not sufficiently addressed. Protection and access seem to me to be priorities, but expansion may not be.
Important to keep in mind the vastness of the River Valley and how underused it currently is. There will be loud and persistent voices saying no development, leave it alone, etc. and these have to be resisted. The common good must prevail over the few and the loud.
I like the funicular idea for another way to access the river valley.
Attractiveness: You're not considering how attractive looking the valley is or could be. E.g., the 1970s interchange spaghetti is ugly and a huge barrier to access. Also the parking lots look hideous, especially at Kinsmen, McKinney and Hawrelak. Do any of your ideas consider increasing alternative forms of access to eliminate them?
The strategies and the whole concept of public access is premature. Very premature. RVA has gotten us off on wrong track and should be reviewed and revamped. 7188 should be reviewed understood and updated first. Current understanding of the environmental value and ecosystem goods and services is not yet well enough understood. This whole frame work seems to think the RiverValley can be all things to all people.
I am excited to see development and plans for the area, but I also don't want to see the area over built. One of the best parts about the river valley is that when you are inside, it doesn't feel like you are still in the city.
There are cement sewer drains pouring raw sewage into the River Valley, that really upsets me. It's disgusting when I go to the Government House Park and it stinks and the water is disgusting.
What is missing is some statement around how important to seek Federal funding, provincial funding. There have been announcements around the funding,, what about Focused Endowment funds to assist in the project. Solicit the public.. like the Light the bridge Campaign.. TO Fund mile points.. such as rest stop, canoo stop.. and Phone/ Bathroom facilities.
I think an understanding that public access doesn't have to mean wide paved low slope trails to the river that detract from the nature of the area. while some "universal" accessibility is important, those who use regularly and continue to use the river valley areas do so for the more natural state, which is driven by single track pathways.
I would like public access to the river to remain limited and spread out along the river.
Please ensure future development at river access sites include sufficient parking. The redevelopment of the Terwillegar Park access road and parking lot has created limited parking at the park, and results in a sizeable traffic jam while people wait for parking spots to clear. The old parking system (lot and roadside parking) was measurably better.
none



As part of public access, it would be great if Edmonton ensured there was public transit access to various sites along the river so folks can spend time there without driving.
There is no need to change anything about the river
I'm not sure how much the City should get involved in Environmental Protection Enforcement. Environment is provincial jurisdiction. Fisheries is Federal. Must have City role clearly understood and implemented. What about beavers? Are they to be considered a nuisance or to be protected? The destroy trees and cause flooding (i.e. the cause adverse effects in the environment). On the other hand they are natural inhabitants of the environment.
There is already very good access to the river valley. Important that the river valley NOT be commercially developed - the appeal is it's NATURAL state.
I'd love to see more ways for those who have mobility problems to access the river valley. I also wonder if safety in the river valley a concern. Is there a need for regular patrols (police or security on bikes or horseback) to ensure safety for the users; and to ensure the area is being properly used.
Lots of wildlife uses and depends on the river. Need to ensure people's use of river doesn't interfere with the other creatures, eg canoes and kayaks but no noisy engine boats except for rescue. Don't need sporting devices on the river. Noise carries throughout the river valley and will disturb 2 and 4 legged neighbours.
Who developed the strategies?? There should be room for commercial development, e.g. cafe or restaurant, if the river area is to serve all residents.
Looks good to me
The strategies seem to be all-encompassing; however, it's hard to see how they will be implemented.
How About "Encourage volunteerism to maintain and promote the use of the river"
The river valley is the world's largest natural urban protected landscape. It is very very valuable as a natural setting--already the paved trails impinge on this. I think the balance is decent, however, the natural setting is so important--it's such an astounding public (and free) space. So, I totally support stewardship, and am concerned about commercial development--we need to think about this, as the environmental impact of the river is extremely valuable to our air quality, and to our public health. More and more people are using the valley for walking, jogging, groups such as the November club, and cycling to and from work. It must be developed from a holistic perspective.
Keep development of commercial items to a minimum
I don't approve of the word "strategies," which suggest that the city has already made decisions and wants to get citizen approval for them. There needs to be more acknowledgement that the river is dangerous because of water temperature and flow speed, and the areas next to it dangerous because of erosion. Every year some people, often children, have to be rescued, whether from ice floes or currents, and sometimes they aren't. These "strategies" do not sufficiently deal with these issues. Also, the valley, large and forested as it is, means that people can easily abuse it, whether riding bikes fast in mixed-use areas or creating new trails for the sake of thrills, or secretly dumping the tires, cars, shopping carts, and other debris that are revealed in the May cleanup. Nothing is said about dealing with this problem.
Food Services in the River Valley. Being able to enjoy the view of the river while enjoying a nice light meal.

It is important that we do not "commercialise" our extensive river valley system. That said, we could be using the river valley more, and a tasteful commercial area on the river would be great -> a cafe, live music in summer, kids playground, market etc are suggestions
Love the idea of accessing to river more!! Love a one stop communications hub.
I think all has been covered well here.
none come to mind
I think one of the key features missing was a strategy around transportation to the areas that allow the river access. For example, how can we integrate a parking lot into an area where we really do not want cars? Bus, bicycle, etc. are not options that appeal to most Edmontonians, especially when you consider they may be bringing equipment (canoe, etc.) with them. How can we handle the people coming to these areas in terms of their vehicles? What sort of timeframe do we expect these people to be using the river access (do they need washrooms, eating facilities, number of each, etc.). We need to develop strategies that not only promote use, but perhaps promote use in specific areas. For example, if we have a part of the river that is easily accessible by vehicle (close to major routes) and where a large parking lot would not be damaging, perhaps it is used for a certain type of activities, such as canoeing. As opposed to an area that is dense in trees, paths and vegetation that might not be as suitable for parking vehicles.
Number 4 needs to say that partnerships are "responsible" partnerships that benefits the City and its citizens in a tangible way. We need to learn from the arena fiasco that citizens want facilities and recreation that is affordable and accessible to all, not just a few who can afford a high priced ticket. Any private partnership with the City must protect the public interest first and profit the private business second. Otherwise, its not a partnership.
I would like to see a strategy that protects and encourages quiet, low impact, no-wake activities on and beside the river. There is a risk that greater access, if it includes power boat use, will compromise the natural ecosystem further and push away current non-power uses (paddling, rowing, riverside walking, bird watching).
Make sure that if investments are to change the river valley, that it is done in a modern way, and not Edmonton way.
It wasn't clear to me what sorts of uses would be allowed in the river valley. All use of the valley should be included in the program and not just the actual use of the river. Development in the river valley needs to be of a sort that doesn't adversely affect the river or its natural purpose if you will. The effect on wildlife in the valley needs to be a consideration.
I don't want the river to be treated as a reserve for one group, it must be open to use for everyone. Safety needs to be balanced with risk. Part of the excitement of the river is the power of nature - that shouldn't be hidden or neutralized.
We enjoy all our river valley walkways in Edmonton (year round)! Be sure to keep them all accessible to the whole system!
Responsible and sustainable commercial development in the River Valley and on the river. The strategies seem very focused on preserving and protecting and appreciating, not as much on the 'how to make the river a part of residents' daily lives in the city'
I am not sure that it include protection to mitigate erosion of banks. They are certain trails or portions of trails that are in danger of falling and would leave the trail system incomplete for future use.

I am extremely concerned about the river valley and the river becoming a business, commercial area that eventually decreases the natural river ground, trees, natural plants. The river and river valley should be treated as park area is treated. There is no shortage of eateries, shops, stores in the downtown area. The river valley should not become another area of sidewalks and concrete. It should be able to be enjoyed for it's natural beauty by people who want/need to spend time away from "the city".

An excellent survey

No cost enjoyment of the river is missing. I don't want to have to pay to go on a boat. I just want somewhere to go with the kids to watch the river, sit in the trees, and toss a few rocks in the water preferably not under an underpass which seems to be the only option. River use throughout the whole city and not just concentrated in the downtown core would be nice. There isn't really any safe water access points that are either well-known or promoted outside of downtown. I don't think you actually could find out where to get to the river without just trial and error and google.

Development of new and creative uses of the river - i.e. swimming area or beach

MORE CAFE's WITH A VIEW OF THE RIVER.

In 2012 I saw a River Otter in our river we must protect and keep it in all its glory it is very special

Would like to see mention of restoring natural connections to the river e.g. Mill Creek resurfacing

These seem to cover the gamut, although I think that conservation of the river may conflict with increasing usage of the river.

I'm not clear if the 'river' includes the pathways and area next to the river. Development and maintenance of the trail system and bridges matters a lot more to me than use of the river itself.

I think there has to be a level of quality in the infacstures and facilities that are erected, not cheap clad buildings etc.. Also I think an art and sculpture component is important.

Protect the natural environment and leave it as-is. We don't need more development in the river valley.

River valley tours. I have moved downtown 6 years ago and only started exploring the trails. It seems like another secret world. It would be incredible to have a \$5 introduction tour I could take of a particular section of trail to really know what is available. I'm sure there would be no shortage of volunteers to lead such a tour as I've had several friends step up.

I think it is particularly important to emphasize river access. Right now, as a single woman, I don't use the trails by the river very often because they can feel unsafe when I'm alone. This means that I only view the river from afar, in a group, or in a more open access space like a park. The river access points should also be accessible to strollers, wheelchairs, etc.

We MUST prevent further building of residential or commercial buildings on our river banks.....they should not be able to hinder anyones view for at least 300 ft from the banks.

Please develop an "Edmonton North Saskatchewan River" ap so that when we are out and about, we have quick access to find out about what's at the river at the location where we are.

I feel like we are missing huge development opportunities in close to the river valley in order to prevent environmental disruption. I understand environmental sensitivities but when compared to the potential improvement and value of our city through development,

environment should lose out. I'm not concerned with disrupting a bird population or rodents or whatever happens to be the concern. Development and public opportunities takes precedent.
Limits on development and exploitation of the North Saskatchewan and adjacent parks - no boat rentals etc.
I'm not sure if this is considered a partnership but it would be nice if we could have some reliable vendors selling food and drinks along the route as is done in Calgary where this seems to work quite well.
Please ensure non commercialisation of the River Valley.
What is missing is another stakeholder: the animals. Does wildlife have the opportunity to comfortably and without fear go through what is essentially their "corridor" to go from one end of Edmonton to the other? Why are golf courses allowed to operate in the area? Not only do they remove sensitive habitat, they contaminate the area and the river with the herbicides/pesticides they use. Golf courses have no place in a river valley setting. As well, we have NOT left a wide enough corridor for animals through the river valley. There are many Edmontonians who would want wild animals to be considered and better represented by those involved in the decision-making process: wild animals need ample green space/habitat in the river valley area.
There doesn't seem to be much emphasis on uses of the river (boating, etc.) There is more emphasis on the story of the river than actually enjoying it.
Develop strategies that deal with the River in all of our seasons, so that there could potentially be as many winter uses/opportunities for River activities/interpretive program delivery as there are in summer. Coordinate with Winter Cities initiatives and programming.
Avoid monopoly provider of services. Encourage local investment / ownership of developments.
Ensure that any "partnerships" that are for-profit result in financial gain for the city. Utilize a portion of profit from river valley activities to maintain and enhance river valley amenities. Wherever possible, create apprenticeships and jobs for Edmontonians, and new opportunities for local, non-franchised Edmonton-based businesses [ie - open a second location of Kids in the Hall, rather than a river valley Boston Pizza]. Use Edmonton builders and materials, rather than outsourcing to other Canadian municipalities or foreign investments. When proposing a partnership, give first priority to Edmonton not-for-profit groups running programs that directly support Edmontonians in need [ie. Bissel Centre, Mustard Seed, and Kids in the Hall].
Build more facilities that are esthetically pleasing, high Leeds standards, and owned by the city but leased to private partners. These facilities should not take away from the natural experience we have, but enhance the experience by making us want to come more often and stay longer.
These are 'motherhood' statements, rather than principles to determine priorities and make decisions about trade-offs.
It is absolutely unclear to me what the intention of these strategies is in regard to development along the River, in the Valley, for "recreational" opportunities. The development of infrastructure like the buildings in Louise McKinney Park are a concern and I worry that there will be a tendency for development of the River Valley Parks towards a tourist based economy at the expense of some of the more natural areas - to the point that the natural areas disappear because of development along the river. The strategies appear to support that movement and I would like to see more significant protection of natural areas

in a way that would be more accessible to all citizens in the city over development of tourism oriented infrastructure
Monitor and report on water quality of river.
All of these strategies can be followed and maintained AND include licensed restaurants from quick delivery outlets to white linen service. Imagine biking in from the burbs to enjoy a glass or wine or beer or hard drink and watch the water go by for a while. Imagine having a business lunch and closing a deal again while watching the river.
Recognize the value of the river beyond Edmonton
Not much here on levels of commercial development. I found that to be disappointing. I am in favour of some development, but fear it getting out of hand.
Educating everyone as to the importance of the river and the effects of permanently disturbing the river's natural occurrence
I think everything has been well covered.
Complete research and incorporate findings on how the river is being successfully used/showcased in other cities (eg. Brisbane Australia has a very vibrant riverfront that has diverse opportunities for all ages).
Define more clearly what you mean by "partners" - are you talking about commercial "partnerships" or P3s? By "the river" are you including the banks and surrounding area, or just the river itself? Be clear about the area you are addressing.
We need 1. better access (trails, promenades, piers, pedestrian bridges) near – and with a clear view of – the river. 2. amenities that will draw people there (beyond the picnic-ers): pedestrian/cycling bridges for commuters, attractions (cafes, boat rentals, food & beverage, fitness parks)
We should never allow the river valley to be too commercial. Although 'too commercial' is not easy to define, we should always ask the citizens before allowing too much development in the river valley. It should be written in law so that now or in future generations the river valley will be protected.
Need to partner with upstream users, Municipal, Counties, MD's.
I would like it if there was a component of promoting natural species in the valley. Limiting the number of paved trails would also matter. I think walking on the dirt paths carved out by others feels much more relaxing than walking on a road through nature.
I have concerns about two questions and the wording to manufacture consent. When involving stakeholders and partners, i'm concerned that when is meant is that businesses will get more say than the residents and general public. This must not happen.
no
Re #4, the goal should not be to 'maximize' but to 'optimize'.
I didn't notice anything about limiting commercial use of the river and riverfront.
Clarity around whether these strategies are limited to the river and riversides, or to the broader river valley.
Market nature based ecotourism for small, limited number of operators in the river valley. Part of a tourism destination strategy
Ensure that Park Rangers and Peace Officers are available, especially on summer weekends to keep the peace between river users and to ensure that the area is being used safely and

in an environmentally-friendly manner.
This questionnaire assumes private business usage of/along the public river parks system. Please ask the question.
There are a number of points that need clarification: 1. The is not an opportunity for a respondent to reject the an item and/or to states its short-comings. 2. What does the term "stakeholders" embrace? My concern is that there will be a creeping commercialization of the river valley. Hence, what are the primary qualities of a "stakeholder"; how will they be able to shape what happens in the river valley; will they be identified specifically by name and residency (rooted in Edmonton or elsewhere?)? 3. What is a "Partner": what are the primary determinants of "partnership"? How will they be able to shape/determine what takes place in the river valley? 4. One Point of Contact" for all River related alerts, concerns, suggestions, information. YES! This is an essential "public information and awareness" communications requirement. Park users will go to ONE source and not be lost in a tangle of website, etc. addresses. 5. Collaborators": what is a "collaborator". Who/What is a partner/partnership? Are these individuals, business/corporate/community 'groups': will they be invited, simply declare their interest and input; in what kinds of decision making will they be players. With what consequent authority will they participate. What will be the limits of their influence/authority? 6. Define: please, clearly state what it meant by the phrase "Edmonton's unique quality of life." Wha tis this, and in what ways is the River Valley use related to the phrase? 7. Commercial ventures/enterprises (any and all): how many, how large (and number of sites [e.g., one company with more than one river valley site] -- permanent structures and architectural requirements; how will their presence and influence upon the 'natural' river valley setting be controlled/limited, pressures for their 'profitability' and consequent criteria for their being granted permission to be in the valley; limits on the time for their in the valley ... ? That's it. How are these 'written comments' h
The strategy seems to have a development bias. It was not possible to pick a clear option that sees our river valley maintained in a NATURAL state. Why does City Hall always think the best option is to tear it up so we can race noisy equipment and have buildings everywhere!
IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ALL ACTIVITIES BE CONTROLLED BY THE CITY. PRIVATE BUSINESSES SHOULD NOT HAVE ANY OWNERSHIP OR CONTROL OF ANY ASPECT OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.
Please minimize the commercialization of the river valley. I like the idea that more people can use it, but at what cost to its current condition. I don't want to see gaudy buildings and ramps, etc. that would so detract from the natural feeling.
Strategy number 2 can become the be all and end all of any program if left unchecked for example I think a weir to allow for a consistent water level all summer would be of benifit but strategy 2 may just result in saying no because a weir wasn't created by the glacier that created the valley so it's not natural.
Wildlife are owners of the river valley. There needs to be focus and measurement on ensuring human activities do not impact their stability. Commercial enterprise will.
Not sure if this is covered in #1 or #4 or #7, but there should be opportunities for non-athletes to enjoy the river. Walking paths are great, but there should be some "destinations" sporadically spaced where seniors or families with children or just regular people can walk or ride to and then sit and buy a drink or a snack. Right now there is nothing of that nature - at least downtown except for the Muttart, which at the time my mother and I stopped in on our hike, required that you pay admission before you could access their cafeteria. That may have changed as it was some years ago, but there should be some outdoor venues and/or food/ice cream/shaved ice stands/trucks and seating areas that allow people to stop and rest



and refresh themselves.
For principle #5, would suggest to have the warning and alert system to be used in the event of inclement weather such as heavy storm that may lead to disasters.
Sure make a plan, but have many checkpoints in the plan so that the plan can be adjusted and new priorities can be assigned. For example, de
These are not strategies, they are platitudes, or at best they are goals. A strategy would discuss how all these goals will be balanced or met.
No where do you talk about the cost associated with these initiatives and that is a concern. We already have a city council that is spending above its means and increasing taxes something like 18% over the next three years!
Not sure how broad these terms are...I'd like to see more opportunities for elderly and/or those who have mobility issues to use the trails or get closer to the river valley than viewpoints. This isn't just accessibility at sites, it means a way for immobile folks who do not have a lot of family or other supports, to go for "drives" through the valley on trails. Perhaps limited use of golf cart type "train" like at the Devonian Gardens.
Under #7 - there should be knowledge to the Aboriginal connections to the river and it's importance of the history to Aboriginal people and all Edmontonians
Ensure that wildlife that uses the river valley as a corridor through the city still have sufficient access to do so.
. Ensure River Access Strategy is integrated within and not in conflict with The Way We Move, The Way We Grow, The Way Ahead and all other City of Edmonton Strategies etc. . Ensure wildlife corridors restored, maintained and/or expanded. . Ensure aquatic habitats restored, maintained and/or expanded. . Ensure invasive, noxious, weedy and/or troubling/damaging species are controlled and eventually removed from River Valley. . Ensure Bylaws and Penalties reviews so river valley damaging activities are measured, monitored, and prevented with no additional cost to law-abiding citizens.
Keep the river valley as pristine and natural as possible. The fewer buildings and 'infrastructure' the better. I don't want the river and the river valley to be a big commercialized thing.
Sooner rather than later for spontaneous use of the river
eliminate the dumping of sewage and other contaminants into the river by upstream communities this will require action by the provincial authorities
The value of the river value is in its natural composition. We do not need to spend money on opening the river valley up, and we certainly should not allow commercial development in it. The river valley should be kept as natural and undisturbed as possible.
yes, the tributaries to the river should be included. Also, the City should be coordinating with St Albert concerning Sturgeon River because they are downstream and directly affected by what we do. How are you using the Province's riparian laws to the advantage of all Edmontonians?
Along with #2, limited motorized watercraft to maintain the quiet of the river. No jet skis, and slower speed limits except for emergency vehicles on the river. And enforcement.
Developing the river valley will destroy it. Just leave it alone and stop trying to live the dream of Stephen Mandell



Keep commercial operators away from the river as much as possible. The river valley belongs to all Edmontonians and our visitors, and must remain accessible to all, always. Private uses limit access.
I don't recall reading anything about barrier free accessibility. It's tough to recall all the strategies at this point in the survey.
Enforcement of City Bylaws and criminal laws on the banks not just on the river itself.
Very few will ever say "don't protect the river, or preserve quality." Development of river-side amenities (cafe's, bike rentals, water craft amenities, etc) will encourage much broader use of the river valley.
Leave it alone. Stop corporate polutuion
Need to find out the relationship between the river valley and LRT Construction & the increase of people at the planned Muttart LRT Station. What developments will the City undertake there?
Make sure there is parking. Have areas where people can buy food Washrooms monitored. Safety.
Current river access - is it consistent with these strategies and if not, how to bring into alignment(ie. the Wolf Willow trail to the pedestrian bridge is NOT accessible to anyone outside the neighbourhood because of the parking bans)
There is no mention of who these companies are or what their history /experience is; nor what or how much they will be contributing.
waterefowl, mammals & rodents require the riverine habitat. They should not be pushed out by human play. Also, the North Sask is a historical river. This should be celebrated!
It would be helpful for citizens to have regular updates on the development of pathways extending to Devon and Fort Saskatchewan. I believe this project was led by the River Valley Alliance.
Let police do the river patrol like they do in Calgary.
More detail on #4 - will there be a user fee for this - I think the river valley should be free to everyone - what do you mean by infrastructure and facilities?
fiscal responsibility
educate the public about the historic use of the river
Defining the role of provincial/federal govt agencies and other groups which may have competing interests
Not sure if easy access to amenities(such as restaurants, cafes, equipment rentals)near to the river(but not necessarily right on the river) has been stressed. For example, we walk along the river trails frequently, and it would be nice to easily find a place to buy a drink or a light lunch or rent equipment, as we go along. The only obvious place I know of to do so is in Louise McKinney Park (though I generally only use the park system from Mill Creek to Gold Bar, or from Riverdale to Groat Road). Just want to ensure that there is some focus on this.
Build paths that are user friendly, and have these paths maintained. Have more washrooms in the river valley. Have concessions and other services, to provide family outings and a place where one come come for supper, or snacks. etc.Have wine or beer available, for gatherings

Wildlife, although maybe covered at a deeper level under #2. Wildlife does give our river valley directly & indirectly some of the beauty & flavour we, as well as visitors have come to value.

Something that's missing from the principles is talking about inclusive use of the river valley. You touch on it in safety and responsible use, but I would like to see a specific sense of how we intend to cope with the river valley being used for shelter and the river being used for hygiene for homeless and at risk populations, and whether we can, in the principles, address the need to make the river a less popular destination for suicides. I don't think anything else is missing, but I think protecting the river is probably the most important principle. Using and accessing the river is a privilege, not a right, and we have a profound obligation to protect that space both for future generations and for folks downriver.

A survey of Edmonton citizens to determine the future use of the river and river valley from the bottom up should be a first. I get the impression from the above survey, that its use is determined from the top down.

Promote and maintain biodiversity by ensuring the the river valley functions as wildlife corridor through the city.

flood abatement initiatives, as needed access and appropriate amenities but "no" to too much commercial development

The goal should be to protect the river environment.....not necessarily create an expensive recreational, public playground.

Nothing is missing, but perhaps too many taxpayer resources are being devoted to oversight, education and fostering use of the area. People may end up stifled. Let people breath!

The principles identified are thoughtful and promise to bring continual watch for an environment tht is rich with history. I think that the basis of the strategies are sound. Bringing them to life will be a fluid and challenging effort, but very well worth it.

Edmonton's river valley is a unique and beautiful part of our city. I think it would be great to see some controlled commercial development, specifically restaurants and patios near the river, but in controlled way. There should also be better washroom access and more garbage cans along the river. But expanding development along the river can be tricky, as it has to be balanced against protecting the animals that live in the river valley and their habitat.

Throughout this survey I felt more than a little 'railroaded' by the questions. Each 'question' is worded in such as way as to appear important - as though the reader would be irresponsible to answer that such a principle is unimportant to them. A very leading and confusing survey.

Some of what we have is already so wonderful....wild like areas right within the city. Stop using herbicides and damaging insecticides like Dursban.

Work to enhance the environment around the river - looking at tying in parks from surrounding neighbourhoods, providing better pedestrian and cycle connectivity, etc. It would also be nice to see measures passed to ensure that the environment is better preserved - more garbage collection, and reduction in urban noises (that are preventable - noisy music, noisy muffles (>60dB), loud bikes(>60dB)). I recognize that City's make noise, and to an extant we need to celebrate the interface of City to nature, but we do not need the posturing noises (i.e. noisy mufflers) that are fully optional being added to the background hum.

It's important to be respectful to the history of the river and the people who have lived along it. Involving Indigenous people in these consultations/conversations/plans is EXTREMELY important. Also, no canal in Rosedale.



The river bank and river should be left as natural as possible. Wildlife should be considered and encouraged.

This is a madding (please excuse the language but it must be said) a bullshit survey. Simply the worst I have completed. There are too many variables in on question. Things I agree with and things I do not in the same question. Please scrap this survey and try again. There is nothing concrete in the survey - it is simply bureaucratic words that mean nothing and seem to want to start a whole new 'River Management Department' unneeded and ridiculous. There is no need for additional oversite there is enough. And waterways are a Federal responsibility are then not? I canoe the in the river - simple you rent a canoe, drive to the river, put it in, canoe where ever, and find a way back to the car. Simple, no cost to the city and it works just fine. If a business man want to open a restaurant close to the river the same regulations and departments that regulate current business openings can ensure safety and environmental compliance. This is a huge example of the bureaucrats wanting to make a huge issue/department out of a simple process where sufficient regulations already exist. Council please speak up for the Edmonton taxpayer.

I prefer that the City maximize public access without cost and minimize commercial enterprises that require the public to pay out of pocket in order to have access and use.

A lot of guided strategies hidden in words here. The implications are hidden in vague the words of application.

146 responses

### *Additional Comments and Suggestions*

**Please use the following space if you have any additional comments or suggestions.**

#### **Public open link survey:**

Response
We hear that money talks, and some budget, priorities and sources might be developed and listed in parallel with the stated strategies. Good luck and best wishes!
Converting the old 105 St Bridge to a landscaped walkway like <a href="http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/the-high-line">http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/the-high-line</a> instead of tearing it down?
Access to the river for beach and swimming if possible
L et's actually get going, we have been talking for ages!
My dogs are frequent visitors to the River, it is an important resource in summer to help them maintain a comfortable body temperature and keep them active. We need to maintain safe spaces for dogs to access the river bank where they will not have difficulty exiting the water, where it is shallow enough for small dogs to get wet and progresses to deep enough for larger water dogs to swim. The problem is that some of the swimming places where the dogs can swim safely have steep banks that are difficult for some of the owners to go down or climb back up and they become very slippery when it has rained or just when many wet dogs have soaked the ground. There should be some landscaping done to make these areas easier to reach for the people as well, be it staircases or just more gradual slopes or a paved path to the water that won't become slippery and a railing to protect against falls.
<p>1. The public needs MORE hand launch and boat launches in more locations in the city. Now there is only 2 in the city, Laurier and 50 Street for proper boat launch, even hand launches the few their are have been eroded and not repaired or are very steep and slippery mud. We lost Rafter's Landing to the Queen. We lost Whitemud Creek launch. Both Laurier and 50 Street have long line ups on the weekends, especially 50 Street. The motor boaters leave their huge vehicles and trailers in the way so no one even with a canoe or a kayak or a voyageur canoe from a club cannot get to the river.</p> <p>2. There should be a hand and a motor boat launch at the new bridge going up by Kinsmen sports centre. It is the only location in the city that the public can easily take a bus to to get to the river and it is very central. If there was a launch there, and if the city River Valley Programs and the various city paddling clubs could have these river accesses, they could offer programs there. If the City and these clubs could have a site to store canoes and kayaks and voyageur canoes in this area, there could be programs offered as free drop in to the public and public could walk there, bike there or get bus there. There really is nothing like this for the river now in the city which is sad. With the bridge</p> <p>3. With the bridge under construction by Kinsmen Sports Centre, it is a perfect opportunity to make a boat launch and hand launch at this site. The hand launch now planned for this site is not even wide enough for 2 people to carry one canoe down to the river. This site could offer so much more to the public. And being centrally located, would be accessible to so many more public by bus and by bike.</p>
Keep the development areas in a concentrated area, not every so many feet along the entire river. I.e.) boat rentals, boat tours, restaurants etc.
Make a facility rental space for large groups, weddings, conferences etc. that sits next or on the river to help showcase river valley to visitors. THIS is precisely what makes Edmonton unique from other

cities.

Leave private enterprise using the river as private enterprise- but with strict standards and enforcement.

Ceyana club access by Queen E park would be improved environmentally and also from an access and safety perspective if a graded slope opposite their clubhouse as opposed to an eroding cliff 200m away could be considered. Also consider permitting enhancing the facility e.g. outhouse, secure lease, improved storage

I am a canoeist and would like to see additional access points developed throughout the city, with parking (I can't portage all the way to the river from home).

I strongly support promoting the use of the river, but to enjoy it and appreciate it DOES NOT require a lot of "infrastructure." We need to encourage people to interact with the river in its natural state, with some infrastructure to allow people with mobility challenges to access it. Building significant infrastructure is costly, requires maintenance, and undermines our objectives of preserving a beautiful, natural environment.

Paddle Canada and Paddle Alberta encourage training to canoe on moving water. Be wary of encouraging drop in paddling programs (an example used in the survey) without appropriate supervision or instruction. This may be were partnerships with outfitters and local clubs could be beneficial.

I really don't want to see major commercial developments in the river valley. I think commercial developments should be confined to the communities already there and caution should be used in approving new commercial outlets like food vendors, cafes, bars, etc. The biggest and best feature of our river valley are its natural features and we need to fight hard to ensure that we can still go for a walk on the paths and be in natural surroundings.

My experience with other government jurisdictions, makes me extremely wary of giving the City authority too much latitude to regulate or control the use of the river. I do support good environmental standards, appropriate regulation of use and interpretive programs. But I am not prepared to give the City a carte blanche ticket that would restrict my Federal rights to use the river.

I felt that some of the questions pointed to perceived conflicts of interest. For example, preserving and protecting "river assets" on the one hand while developing and advertising them on the other. In some cases, the river and it's banks need to be preserved in their natural UNdeveloped state. These areas do not need to be made safe for or inviting to people. Block them off with a huge "Nature At Work" sign if necessary.

I have been an avid user of Edmonton's river valley for over 30 years, and in recent years have become dependent on a mobility scooter. I can use some of the paved paths in the river valley, and would like to see that any further river valley developments are accessible according to acceptable standards including slope and grade.

Our River and River Valley is the best part of this city. Living in Old Strathcona I visit it frequently. Existing users like the rowing club, river queen, PE Faculty teaching outdoor ed courses etc - are already responsible users. The main thing that worries me about providing more access/focus on the river - are the 'mental geniuses' of our fair that decide they too should use the river - w/o the proper equipment, training, experience. You could be in for A LOT of river rescues.

Things to promote use in winter as well

The river is a beautiful gem in our river valley and we need to look for opportunities to enhanced usage for all types of people by openly working with our river partners. By adding restrictions in any one area will only reduce and negatively impact usage, we have to use the mentoring model and educate the public on river usage, please move very cautiously when implementing changes.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide input.

Riverside areas need to be cleaned up better - have staff around to maintain the look and life by the river (Soo much garbage under the "Fairmont" stairs it smells and gross). It would be good to clear away some of the treed that is overgrown in that area as well.

Explore the viability of hovercraft vehicles as a year-round river mobility for transport shuttles, eco-tourism, ranger patrol as well as search and rescue applications.

More horse amenities with garbage cans spaced along the dual trail positions would be good - since it when being passed by trikes and dogs that horses may relieve themselves - a good spot for garbage containers and doggie bags too.

Since the City's facility at Whitemud Equine where the horses all pick up manure - it is nice to have a container to drop it into along the way. People really seem to enjoy seeing the horses along the trail.

The historic dump site along the river beach at Highlands Gold Club (an off leash dog park now called Dawson Park) does have hazardous metal and tires in the water that the City has been notified about and refuses to clean up. It's a disgrace - why worry about water quality when the City of Edmonton won't clean up its own dump. A couple of days with the right equipment (winches) and workers would have this job done in no time. The City keeps turning a blind eye to it so citizens try to pick it up but without a truck, it's hard to haul up the bank. This debris is polluting the river for all wildlife. Why doesn't the City care at all about this. If rubber is toxic to fish - shy does the City allow this dump to exist in the same 2 km stretch where they stacked rocks to establish a sturgeon nesting habitat! This really needs someone to take action. I've called 311 and told the Park Clean up crews but they only take note when a Councillor tells them to clean up - then they still don't tackle the old rubber tires in the river from the City's own dumping program - remember Baker's Folly? That Councillor had a road built along the riverside below Viewpoint in Cromdale (now part of the off leash area) and that road ends where the City's old dump is by the yellow gates (north side). When will someone in the City take responsibility and clean up this hazard - rusty metal to cut everyone and their dog on the beach and old broken bed frames and car parts from that period (1930's & 40"s).

Most of the City already has easy access to the River Valley. ie can park and easily walk (flat, wheelchair access and paved trails) The west end has never had this, our access from 170 and 178 Streets and Hamptons, Lewis Estates and Cameron Heights is parking in side streets outside other peoples homes and a long walk down steps or gravel slopes to get into the river valley. When will it be our turn in the West End to get our access points. Opportunity right now to have a large parking lot at the N Saskatchewan river and Hendy bridge at south of Cameron Heights.

More emphasis on private sector development of recreational and commercial amenities on the river and in the valley.

Explore opportunities for developing public beaches on the river.

Explore potential for creating skating paths and rinks on the river in winter.



Minimize development of inappropriate City-owned infrastructure in the valley such as the proposed Muttart storage building and rail siding adjacent to the Muttart LRT station.		
Explore opportunities for daylighting the Mill Creek from the mouth of the ravine to its original delta.		
clear signage of routes, access, trails etc. for visitors and occasional users		
great initiative		
Thank you		
Would love to see some river-side amenities developed in a couple of strategic locations for the public to be able to enjoy the river. What about a boardwalk that could be used year-round with some riverside farmers markets in the summertime (somewhere with adequate access and parking)? This would be a great feature for Edmontonians to enjoy and experience our river.		
Our river valley is our city's biggest civic asset. Lets continue to preserve and enhance its value.		
Keep the river valley natural. NO COMMERCIAL RIVER DEVELOPMENT. This amazing natural environment is ours only because our forefathers had the intelligence and insight NOT to clear-cut every tree they saw and replace them with concrete and shopping malls. They had the vision to see that this natural gem would become the envy of every city in Canada. BE BETTER city council, and recognize that we don't need a Starbucks every 50 yards.		
	Valid Responses	27
	Total Responses	81

### Edmonton Insight Community panel members:

Comments
Please do not open up use of the river.
The river is currently very wild and wonderful. Any infrastructure that is built should bear that in mind. I know that a plan-ahead-because-there-is-no-infrastructure kind of experience is not what everyone is after, BUT if we can maintain the feel of that while adding more infrastructure to accommodate a broader range of use, that would be great. Also, I read a vibe in the questions that concerns me. There is room here to allow any sort of "amenity" or commercial enterprise that the City deems fit. Certainly, you've got some language in there that says "well, as long as they're responsible". I like the idea of some commercial/City amenities, but it would have to be done VERY carefully. It's just like in my neighbourhood with the 109st rezoning. I'm fine with an organic grocery or cafe, but I am NOT fine with a bar. In that discussion, it was clear that either a community board to approve licenses had to be involved OR zoning rules had to be made much more specific. A similar move is warranted here.
I like the initiative. The river valley is a gem, and widely recognized as such in our city. It's a good thing to turn our minds to how we can enhance the river experience for all, while also being good custodians. Thank you for this.
I suggest that only limited amenities such as restaurants, cafes, etc. be developed along the river.
I do not have adequate information regarding current commercial use of the river (shared facilities, for example) to know about expansion or collaboration. Being a good steward of



the environment is not always consistent with money making enterprises. Expenses such as insurance and public education should be funded by paid for services - ideally with limited use of tax money.
I recommend seeking input from the City of Winnipeg on what they have done with the Forks area and other municipalities too (yes, even Cowtown) I'd love to see the Rosedale Power Plant become some sort of market. Parking must be part of the plan though as this is a car city and it's tough to get around without one.
This was one of the most leading surveys on the Edmonton Insight Community. The questions were trying to lead to the answers that the City Administration seemed to want. I would respect a mor balanced approach in future similar to the survey's that are usually put out by the Insight Community. If this becomes the norm, I will decline to participate.
Put the off-leash areas inside fences and out of the valley. The whole Valley stinks like dog feces, they're killing wild animals, and it's a hazard to humans as well. Off leash areas are incompatible with all other uses, and there are too many entitled or ignorant bozos abusing the boundaries.
You are doing a good job!
The North Saskatchewan River and its tributaries is Edmonton's greatest public resource. It is very important that this resource remain public and accessible. Encouraging Edmontonians to make healthy and responsible use of the river and adjoining lands will improve overall quality of life of our city's residents and will ensure preservation for future residents.
It would be nice to have a sand beach in Edmonton, at least one. Most of the people I know go outside Edmonton on days off and long weekends due to Edmonton not having a sand beach. It was suggested Louise McKinney Riverfront Park might be a good location.
USE of the River and the supporting trail system should be integral.. Up to this point it has been a trail system Pathways etc. It also relates to Pedestrian bridges over the river.. Create more of them. Increase improve the access points/ areas at the entrance to the Pedestrian bridges to handle better people / bike/ roller blades control.
River Access for groups should be limited as well. Often there are competing groups that do not like each other or are competitive opponents. The City should not be catering to these groups. Let them work that out, but it should not include creating more river infrastructure to cater to them.
Be particularly cautious with costs. Wonderful ideas tend to turn into expensive and unsustainable / useless white elephants.
none
If the city gets to involved it will get screwed up and cost taxpayers a lot of money... My confidence is the city administration is skeptical at best after two failed bridge projects and a downtown development plan that will make downtown a no go zone for years to come
Increased interaction by people means increased risks, both safety and environment. Public education and awareness will certainly be important. Especially precautions for higher rik times, such as high streamflows or thin ice. Maybe a green-yellow-red flag system backed up by public awareness/education programs.
Very much against commercial development of the river valley
Have you given any thought how people could safely use and access river during winter months?
The questions indicate that the City is looking at a larger budget than I imagined for this

project, and in my opinion it should be held off until the economy improves. Constantly going to the property tax payer for these special projects should not be the answer.

Try not to overbuild the new structure within the city, have more do-ers and less managers in the river department

I do fully support increasing the activities--but not at the expense of the character of the river valley. The history of this river is beautiful, profound, fascinating and ... profound. :) It is a centuries old gathering place--a place where tribes gathered, traded, shared culture and information with each other--so, this history should be valued--as a fundamental public space, this is just so unique--so, I believe the answer to the balance lies in that cultural history. ... Keep things wild, but there is so much opportunity for activity... and, I also believe that we need to find a way to honour / acknowledge the role the river valley has played in the lives of our cities' poor. There is a very long history of squatting--of the river providing home, which continues today. So, somehow we must find a way to acknowledge and with kindness, compassion, and love find a way to recognize that sanctuary is part of the river valley's role--always will be. I am not a social scientist, but there are many thoughtful souls who may be able to provide a kind of way that we can compassionately acknowledge perhaps bridge this. I don't know... something ... If you develop a river office I would LOVE to work there!! ;) I love the valley--it's been a place of peace for me, and definitely what keeps me in Edmonton. Much luck with this... how can I get involved?

Collaboration for environmental, recreational, access etc is very important however there must be a body that oversees and is prepared to take action. Over-collaboration and seeking opinion of users can lead to no action or delayed action and exacerbate existing issues and lead to no real progress over periods of time. Costs escalate this way as well. This is becoming an increasingly evident issue in multiple fields. We can't afford to make mistakes with our environmental assets through inaction either.

River as a source of water is more important than allowing tourist operations on it. I think it is more important to protect the water supply and the river itself than it is to have commercial operations operating on the river.

I'm not sure what "commercial" means in one of the questions. I agree with having some refreshment operations near the downtown part of the valley, and I would support the idea of river-safety educational opportunities at such easy access points as Laurier, Emily Murphy, Walterdale, Whitemud Creek, Hawrelak, and others further downstream that I don't know much about. These might be good sites to start boat ride businesses and allow boat owners (non-motor only) to launch their craft. But I do think that more visible patrols on the more isolated valley and ravine areas are necessary, as well as more visible access to the valley from neighborhoods to encourage people to go to the valley where they live. I've lived near Whitemud Ravine since 1968, and then there were lots of people on the trails. Now, hardly a soul, so it doesn't feel safe, and I don't need more than three fingers to count how often I've been there since the trail and bridges were flooded out around 1970. The number of attacks on lone joggers may be disproportionate to the number jogging in the valley, but they are enough to cause concern for personal safety, except in Hawrelak where there is open space and lots of people around. Because my nearest Valley park is Whitemud Ravine, I've hardly ever gone there since the trail and bridges were flooded out around 1970. The number of attacks on lone joggers may be disproportionate to the number jogging in the valley, but they are enough to make concern for personal safety, except in Hawrelak where there is open space and lots of people around. I should admit that municipal parks have not been much on my radar since family picnics in Mount Lebanon Park outside Pittsburgh when I was six or seven. For open space -- I have a big yard.

I feel that any access to the river valley should be respectful of the environment and minimize development. People do NOT need retail outlets and food/beverage/alcohol

purchases to enjoy nature.
Building a multi-million dollar funicular with a yearly maintenance price of \$500,000...which we all know will turn out to be much higher...would be a colossal waste of money. There are plenty of other ways to access the river valley without wasting that kind of money.
River valley as an environmentally protective zone
I don't know if this is missing but to get full use out of the river I believe dredging the river so things like the river queen can go up both ends of the river. Where the sand bars are it hinders boats, the type of boats and the full enjoyment of the river. If this was to be done I believe the use and the opportunities for its full use and enjoyment can be capitalized.
It would be great to see programs for people who are not familiar with water recreation. Especially for new arrivals to Edmonton and youth
Access and activities is the most important. Right now the river valley is mainly trails with significant brush. A boardwalk section for the River would be highly welcomed, along with retail, dining, and festivals that can make use of the larger boardwalk space. This does not mean removing existing trails with brush
Please -NO bars or pubs or other alcohol serving facilities!
Minimizing and restricting usage by motorized aquatic vehicles should be a priority from environmental, ecological, safety, and conservationist perspectives, all of which should be 'Very Important'.
Creating focus on the river is something that should have been invested in instead of a stupid arena for a billionaire with a bad hockey team. While I don't support expensive pie-in-the-sky initiatives like a funicular railway from downtown, mainly because I live on the southside and never come downtown for recreation or shopping, I do support investment in public infrastructure that would create a riverfront experience. We privately need more restaurants that take advantage of the river view - but they don't have to be at the river's edge. We only have comfortable river access with limited parking at a few spots now. Our river as a water feature is mostly hidden from view, even when you drive over it, as I do twice daily.
I think protection of the river ecosystem is of the utmost importance and that should be the first priority when considering development.
How about a no-wake zone on the river through the city! Let's also make sure that lighting along the river is minimal, fully shielded, and timer controlled so as to protect the natural environment and to support enjoyment of observing that environment (nocturnal animals and birds, the night sky). Please don't light up the river valley!
Parks Rangers do not have the capacity to respond to any local parks already, adding on water to their scope will only make it harder to enforce against misuse of parkland that isn't the "high profile" parkland within the city.
I prefer to have as much natural state as possible in the river valley.
I think that the best thing we can do for the river and the river valley is to NOT develop it and NOT build more facilities. These pollute the very character of the river valley that you are trying to celebrate. Keep it as close to natural as practical.
We should be seeing strong leadership in this development. While interest rates are low and labour is available work should be moving forward. If we fail to act soon then we could miss the opportunity to make this a shining jewel rather than just one more space.
All cities in North America are built on rivers! ( It should be a priority to showcase their natural connection to our livelihood!!)

Roll-back exclusive property owner access to the river / valley by expropriating land to ensure public access along 100% of the river bank. No one person or entity should have exclusive use or access to any part of the river or valley within the city of Edmonton. Any facility or impingement on the valley or bank of the river must be 100% free to access by the public the majority (50+1%) of the time in Summer (May-October) and in Winter (November-April)
I answered "don't know/not sure" when questions seemed to be little more than meaningless jargon. Plain English would be nice :)
Don't overdevelop the river area, there should still be plenty of natural area
Have a river day celebration.
All of these are great, but just be careful. We don't want to get too busy with commercial things, which will end up destroying the natural beauty
Principles 1 and 2 are somewhat antithetical. 2 is the most important, and so far several of the suggestions to satisfy 1 fly in the face of principle 2. Further promotion of access should be limited to only a few locales and further development of any commercial enterprises should be limited. Not everyone's desires need to be met closely adjacent to the river.
I think survey and questions are designed to validate increased commercial development of river- I like it pretty basic but at the same time I enjoyed a trip on the Edmonton Queen. Don't want jet boats or party rafts or restaurants/bars that impede access. Would like to see Park rangers more. Have nothing against paved trails to allow those with mobility issues easier access.
Provide enough control of these areas i.e. Ensure all people are safe from molesterts when using these areas
Ensuring public access isn't the same as providing the opportunity to actually enjoy or use the river. Right now you can take an old ratty road down to the river which is technically providing public access, but it isn't really an enjoyable experience to sit among broken concrete and mud. There has to be an enjoyment factor in there as well.
I think it is important that the river be accessible to the public, but I hope that the quietude and privacy of some of the trails will be retained.
As a dog owner I am always running into people who don't pick up after their dogs their should be a phone number responsible people can call with info on the offenders dog tag numbers could also be used for this
A definition of "partners" was not included,
Great job in establishing these 7 principles.
Not sure how we can be "socially responsible" with regard to a water body like a river. Might want to remove all references to that in this initiative. Too much "fluff" involved there.
I think this is very exciting. I commend all the work that has taken place so far. We are a river city but other than admiring it, we really don't know much about it. This initiative will help with that. Thank you! Another reason to be proud of my adopted home town. ;-)
We should have at least one cafe on the river.
Having access to the river valley from Government House Park has been transformative for my wife and I. She moved here from Vancouver, and I grew up in the northeast with good access to the river, which I lost when I moved downtown. We crave going for our walks, etc. Having access to meaningful vendors, be it hot dog stands, coffee shop or two, in an authentic manner in the river valley would add a lot of value. I like that the river valley is

not commercialized, but would like to see meaningful and relevant amenities. I can imagine it's a delicate balance between commercialization vs the city bearing the burden of running facilities. Last, but not least, I'm not sure if the picnic/bbq sites in river valley parks require bookings or not, and therefore I hesitate to use one. A "River Office" would be a fantastic amenity to answer these types of questions, or where required, manage such bookings.
Please remember that the big advantage of the river valley is that it's largely undeveloped. Let's not go the route of Eau Claire Market and turn it into a riverside mall.
My main concern is that the river not be overexploited. So Principle 6 is of some concern. Of course, anything that's done should be environmentally sensitive, but I think we could overdevelop.
Better definitions of environmentally sensitive parts of the River Valley and preventing public access where necessary.
I love our river valley. I have lived here all my life and I make good use of the river valley for walks, hiking, picnics, etc. and welcome any ideas that improve what we already have.
As well, could the City arrange an online presentation which would include an aerial view of the full river valley from "entrance to Edmonton" to "exit from Edmonton" so that we would all be better able to identify specific locations where decisions were positive and locations where decisions have a negative impact. The presentation would label the businesses shown (e.g. golf course, sports facility), the residence areas, etc. and other such information. We see the river valley only from specific perspectives; we need an "overall and up-close aerial view" to better and more fully express our feedback.
I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE NEW LRT LINE BRIDGE PLACED A LITTLE FURTHER AWAY FROM THE EXISTING WALKING BRIDGE. I WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE THIS WALKING BRIDGE GONE. EVERY TIME I AM IN THIS AREA I USE THIS WALKING BRIDGE, AND SEE SO MANY OTHER PEOPLE USING IT AS WELL. COULD WE NOT RETAIN THIS WALKING BRIDGE?
Don't study it forever. The river is our ocean front property and a key natural attribute of the City. Don't study this forever. develop an action plan and communicate same in the short term. This should have been done a generation ago.
It would be great to see Rosedale Powerplant building and area redeveloped as a destination ... The Forks in Winnipeg could be an inspiration for this. Ideally balance points of infrastructure, energy and excitement with retaining points of nature, calm, and quiet. Maybe for example, instead of large cement areas, they could be broken up with many cozy shaded treed areas, with benches. Concerts or larger events could be held at TELUS field nearby, which would keep noise and crowds concentrated to certain areas.
I think it's extremely important that we "use" the river but don't abuse it. We have to recognize what a gem we have in our midst and I would like to think that we can maintain a sense of wilderness and support wildlife while making it somewhat accessible to people. Improving water quality is important too.
Dead-set against the city spending any tax money for the proposed funicular and any tax dollars for the operation or maintenance of the funicular. I am finding that these feedback questions are very ambiguous and may be used in any way the sponsor wants to. Why are there no straight forward questions (ie. should the city be involved in the construction or operation of the proposed funicular....__Yes __No?)
When it comes to public access, I believe parts of the riverside should be leased and run by private business, resulting in a loss of public access. A cafe should be able to be built at waterside and then restrict access to patrons only. As another example, if the Rosedale

power plant were to be redeveloped into office space, a market space and restaurants, I don't think it is necessary for the City of Edmonton to share in that infrastructure. Let private business develop and manage the space. Traditionally there has been an overemphasis on some of the above principals to the detriment of others, resulting in a river that is little used by the majority of Edmontonians and tourist to our City. The City has been guided by principles 1,2,7 while development of the river and banks have been under emphasized, resulting in a white elephant ballpark that sits near the river without any supporting entertainment or dining opportunities in the area. We have very few people using the river itself as the facilities again are devoid of any supporting entertainment opportunities. Docks have been built along the river, with nothing but parkland in the immediate vicinity. People cannot make a day out of being by the river, resulting in not going at all.
Find a viable use for the Rosssdale Power Plant and work towards rehabilitating that site as a key point of interest in a River Interpretive Centre.
While it is too late to support the re-use of the old Walterdale bridge, I am curious about the effect of the river of removing the concrete pillars/pylons, and wonder if there is any value in leaving the concrete supports, as a historical reminder, a perch for nesting birds, as a way to save demolition dollars, and as a way to protect disturbance of the river eco-system.
When ensuring access to the river don't forget to protect the riparian area especially by limiting the number of access points. Strategy 2 is often overlooked in trying to implement strategy 1,4 and 6 these strategies often trump the value and protect strategy.
Looks great! Exciting!
I would prefer to have the river valley just maintained without a lot of buildings or shops in it. I realize there has to be washrooms and picnic grounds but keep it simple. Thank you
Water has a calming capability for mankind. The closer we get to the river and the more opportunities we have to do so, will have to have a city wide positive effect. It may even relax some of our horrible drivers! :)
Pursue National designation under Canadian Heritage Rivers program
Public access to the river already exists. Additional commercial development and activities would detract from the naturalness of the river valley.
Kind of a disappointing survey overall. Most of the questions were Mom and apple pie no brainers. Lots of questions about protection etc but no real questions about the kind of development that might take place. I have enjoyed being part of the Insight community for the better part of a year and am quite faithful. This is the weakest survey I have seen.
First and foremost the ecological and environmental aspects of the river valley must come before development and PROFIT. I feel that the city is the steward of our river valley system and as such MUST ensure the long term sustainability of the wonderful gift that we have. While I feel that we should make more and better use of the river and its valley as it wanders through our city, first priority must be on protection of the fauna, birds, and animals as they are extremely important to the long term sustainability of the system.
It is very important to minimize the disturbance to the river and it's ecosystem while developing this project.
I/we live about 1/2 mile from the River. We appreciate all it's seasonal changes. Any motor boat users should be closely monitored as the noise travels far on the river.
Please find a way to share the cost for maintaining the river as is, plus ways to improve the quality of access to the river with costs shared by all the businesses making money from this new venture. Example: if a dock needs to be constructed, then the businesses rather than



the citizens of Edmonton cover that cost plus maintenance and so on. This way the businesses will have a vested interest in protecting the dock and so on. The more ways a person can find out about the river the better because not everyone is computer savvy, not everyone works days or is retired or works in town, and so on. I grew up in Sarnia, Ontario and this initiative was never explored, so the St. Clair River is under-utilized which is sad. Thank you for undertaking this initiative.
My primary use of the river is for mountain biking. I've noticed the trails are more crowded, which is good! But there needs to be a bit more signage and perhaps an 'Edmonton mountain biker's etiquette' manifesto of sorts. Signs should indicate trail difficulty.
Drop the funicular idea. Stupid and wasteful. Small areas of commercial activity along the river should be allowed with some controls in place to ensure that development is controlled and limited. For a river city, we sure seem to be scared of integrating it into the lives of civilians that want more than just some walking and biking trails.
The integrity of the river and surrounding area needs to be protected as parkland. Commercializing that space is a bad idea. Also, have you included safety (particularly for women) as a consideration re: "ensure public access".
Although I am interested in the history of the river I think most people would be more interested in actually doing activities there and its esthetic appeal.
Strict rules on behavior and full enforcement to avoid the area to be taken over by drunks and party animals. We need to keep it to be our commons and no compromise. Private properties, where they exist should be bought and make it part of the commons for all to enjoy rather than just the elites.
Is it affordable. Why not look after what we have first. The current access is poor and not well maintained, why build more.
I'm worried that the river valley will slowly be urbanized. Looking at Louise McKinney Park, the promenade there is an example where there's not much left of the riparian habitat. Let's do our best to keep the river valley green.
above all, we must maintain the green spaces, the natural areas, the habitats that make our river beautiful. Development along its banks is not the way we should move forward.
I want money spent on the river to protect/repair the ecosystem. I would not want money spent on marketing, promotion, etc of the river. Build something great and let people spread the word. In terms of working collaboratively with businesses - I don't want business interest so be a loud voice at the table. I want them to have to meet a high environmental standard set by residents and the city rather than have them negotiate down to standards. If they need to negotiate, I would only support negotiating the time they have to become compliant, And any new businesses coming to "invest" in the river valley should have to meet the established standard. I do not want a sandy beach as part of this river - that isn't the type of water body we have.
Try to leave the river as natural as possible. Protect it and keep it wild. Don't spend a lot of money with artsy fancy interpretive or historical installations. Less is more.
I don't think any part of the river valley should be able to be privatized. Protected for environmental reasons, yes.
The principles themselves are flawed and focus on the wrong things. We should be looking at best uses including economic and transportation opportunities.
The river valley already is unique and we need to make sure that we don't over develop. I like the fact that there is a green space that is not developed in our city

Keep in mind that river flood on occasion. Floods are natural. Be mindful when building along the river.

I think preservation of this resource is more important than further development.

A bit difficult to fully understand some of the buzzwords and babblespeak in this survey. Survey participants likely did not attend planning school with the survey writers.

The problem with permits being issued incorrectly for infill housing illustrates the need for very careful oversight of commercial development along the river. Somethings it really does seem that one part of the City's administration doesn't know what another, related, part is doing.

While the principles are inclusive and important as they get applied from my perspective I think that there should be a balance towards unstructured independent activities in the river valley rather than a lot of public investment in programmed activities. This doesn't mean that there aren't amenities or appropriate opportunities for interpretative or learning experiences but the best benefit of the system should be individual enjoyment of a range of activities. I feel that the focus of development should support the individual to enjoy the space. That makes this cost effective for everyone and a unique attribute in busy urban and structured life.

Environmental protection should be paramount.

I love the structure behind all of this. "Great job" to whomever is leading this initiative and their team.

I am impressed with the fore thought that has gone into the statements of this survey--well thought through by the planners. While natural areas are needed I was also impressed with the private development of restaurants and public board walks along the river in Sydney and Melbourne Australia. Perhaps an examination of what they have done along the river in the Urban areas is worth the effort. Commercial attractions as well as park land style development will broaden the appeal and therefore the use of the river valley.

I would like to see more hand launch boat areas along the river, and I'd like them to be clearly marked.

When businesses provide services their priority is the business and not the service. When "not for profit" groups provide the same service their priority is the service and preservation and expansion of public use of the river valley systems is that service. I therefore suggest that use of for profit businesses be kept to a minimum and instead focus on promoting a system of NGA's to develop Edmonton river services.

I would hope that no one particular group ie: "Save the Footbridge" would be able to have more influence on these strategies than other groups or individuals would have.

I would put enforcement at a lower priority, first concentrating on ensuring vibrant use, responsible management, strong and simple development of natural access and use that centres around natural processes not industrialized recreation. Guide people, do not simply give them a river theme park to play in. Generate respect among core users and encourage self policing with supportive elements such as doggie bag stations, available water and toilets, camera monitoring with recording, education, partnerships, and enhanced monitoring through citizen engagement and parks personnel being physically present as well as pushing 311 as a source of both information/help and reporting. If certain problems present themselves, have a plan ready for enhanced enforcement but do not begin with such intrusive measures which do little to deter poor use and do much to deter responsible users who do not want to be confronted with such a presence as it detracts from the peaceful safe operational image.



Don't develop it beyond trails and natural settings. What do you think makes it so unique? Take a look at Calgary and Winnipeg. Their river valleys ... well they aren't.
the use of seadoos and high speed watercraft should be regulated as they can spoil it for un motorized boating
The ice fields park walkway is an example of how to ruin a pristine and beautiful piece of the world. All it's missing is flashing lights and a bawdy house! Don't do that to our river please!
In terms of culture, having a place for music or entertainment (either buskers or local acts) like a small amphitheater kind of place would be nice - somewhere close to downtown so that people could go there on a lunch hour and listen. If it is down in the river valley, having a means of getting office workers down there easily would be nice. In both Spokane and Missoula, Montana, the dads (mostly) in their office clothes (minus ties & jackets on hot days) would meet Mom & kids in the river valley park at lunch time. It seemed fantastic. Don't know if that is feasible here as the river is a bit far away.... A funicular would be neat.
These principles look great.
All the strategies seem to be making a lot of sense and I have no choice but to put them to "very important". I just couldn't see anything as nice to have but not necessarily important. Thanks
Sure make a plan, but have many checkpoints and phases in the plan so that the plan can be adjusted and new priorities can be assigned. For example, I don't see boat usage on the river increasing - I think it is dangerous with many rocks and other boat hazards. Not a lot should be put into infrastructure and rescue etc. if increased boat traffic on the river is not a good thing.
The river and its banks should be different things in different places. For instance, the stretch between Groat Road and the Convention Centre should have a mix of commercial activities. Boat / Canoe rentals, bike rentals, coffee shops, restaurants, a very accessible river side boardwalk, even a weir to increase the depth and slow the current. In other areas - along Terwillegar Park, between the Convention Centre and Capilano Bridge, for example - the river valley should be kept as natural as possible. This might mean the paths here are not as accessible. What is currently being done south of Terwillegar Park is a crime, clear cutting to allow construction of a flat paved path, where the existing paths should have been left as is. The goal of a flat, ribbon of asphalt from Devon to Fort Saskatchewan, without any commercial amenities, is a counter intuitive and counter productive "strategy."
Just because you build it does not mean they will come.
We enjoy a large and beautiful city. Much of the city space and resources are dedicated to it's citizens and commercial enterprise, and that's a good thing. The river valley is a special and unique experience in the city and it needs to be protected and respected. Citizens of Edmonton should be able to enjoy the natural environment as it is the closest to nature as many will ever get because many will not get a chance to go to the country or mountains. The biggest threat to the natural environment is to encroachment of commercial enterprise into the valley. You, the City of Edmonton, are responsible to and serve the citizens. Commercial enterprise are responsible to the owner or shareholders of the company. Many times the interests of the company are not in keeping with sustaining the natural environment.
I think that the two biggest factors that reduce the number of times I go into the river valley area are a lack of facilities like well maintained washrooms, and a lack of accessible access points. In the winter especially, the wooden stairs are often very icy, and regardless of season, do not have easy to hold hand rails. The only other access routes are often narrow sidewalks on roads with high grade with significant traffic in narrow lanes just a couple feet

away. It very often does not feel safe.
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Please make strategies specific, measurable, and periodically reviewed. Please clarify that the strategies will also apply upstream Mill, Whitemud, Blackmud, and other creeks to and eventually beyond any present man-made obstruction Please clarify that the strategies will also apply minimum 100m and eventually 200m above the rim and into the table lands. Please ensure that Park Ranger, Bylaw Officer, EPS, EMS, ETS or City of Edmonton personnel or allies/volunteers walk, bike, ski or wheel or remote-monitor every stretch of trail daily with sufficient resolution to reliably issue warnings, fines, arrests as applicable. There is no need for a "River Office". This strategy should re-calibrate and re-direct existing Council, Administration, Communications, Homeless, Management, Front Lines, EPS, EMS, ETS, Bylaws, Parks/Forestry/Horticulture, Planning, School Boards, Recreation, Utilities, Volunteer and other resources etc. There is no need to collaborate with any business in the river valleys, other than to help move businesses out of the bottlenecks and over-developed areas. There is a need to collaborate with Province of Alberta and Government of Canada to prevent, monitor, report, and prosecute any infraction of water or riparian area regulations. There is no need for more canoe or boat launches. We already have the Raft Race and the Edmonton Queen, with all the disruption and pollution they generate. Users pay, abusers pay more, please.
It is so important that if you are looking to create more activities and use of the river that there is a good enforcement process in place to address safe and responsible use of the river.
I am fully in favor of public access and infrastructure, but it must be environmentally sensitive and low-impact. Motorized boat traffic is not a desirable use for the river.
Non motorized traffic only on the river would be my STRONG preference. I live near the river and the motorboat and seadoo traffic is noisy and annoying. Not good for wildlife and water pollution either.
There is an overwhelming number of strategies and principles. Hopefully they can be prioritized with the feedback received.
zip line on or near the river
Please limit any development to areas that are already disturbed (Rosssdale, Cloverdale, around Kinsmen etc). It is vital that we protect our natural riparian environments, both to ensure stable biodiversity and protect the services such environments provide (flood mitigation, erosion control, sediment control etc).
24/7 public access to the whole river should be your number one priority. Commercial ventures and educational structures will not mean much if the public can only go directly to that operation. 24/7 matters because an owner that only allows public access during their hours of operation effectively ensures the public does not have access when the public is most likely to want access - evenings and weekends. The right of way could be fenced on either side for security but not gated. If the property is privately held, zoning restrictions or covenants must be put in place to ensure succeeding owners also have to keep river access for the public. There are already 3!!!! golf courses along the western end of the city along river. What kind of planning is that! The river is not the exclusive playground of the rich. I get the current development laws. They are outdated and were written at a time when Edmonton and its population were much smaller. If one wanted to go down to the river, the only restriction on where you went down to the river was how athletic you were. We had full access to the river and the tributaries. Whoever owns the land should not be holding it thinking what a nice private spot they have for their exclusive use. Anyone planning a

business should not be thinking they are guaranteed to make a tidy profit when the valley is commercialized. Every privately held piece of property has to include a public right of way to and along the river. No barriers at the river's edge marking property perpendicular to the river to stop passage along the river in front of the property as has happened along some of the lakes in our province. Public access TO the river is meaningless if the public cannot also travel ALONG the river. Plan for 50 years from now as if all the property from Devon to Fort Saskatchewan is occupied and Edmonton's population has again doubled as it has in the last 50 years. How will the public be able to access the river valley then?

I would like to see 'local' partnerships who have a vested interest in our community and the river. As well I think there are several opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs to take on something like cultural tours, dock stations, etc. while working within City guidelines and expectations.

Key partners should be First Nations

I would like the City if Edmonton ensure in the following points : 1. Deaf/Hard of hearing users can access information including emergency protocols. Visibility as well as written text are important in any case of emergencies. 2. Accessibility is available for people with disabilities including the access to public facilities as well as to commercial establishments (that is of the zoning include commercial businesses).

Living on a ravine I do worry about the need for better fire protection in the River Valley. There is much literature about the importance of removing dead and dying trees. However I understand that the City of Edmonton prefers a more 'natural solution'. This involves leaving the dead trees to eventually rot away. In the meantime it all becomes fuel for a damaging fire. This sounds like an economic solution to a problem while presenting it as an environmental solution.

City Bylaws and criminal laws against littering, graffiti, dumping, dogs off leash, illegal drinking and camping and reckless cyclists and ATV usage need to be enforced. Perhaps, an all year, full time, specialized, integrated River Valley unit is needed

The River Valley is a valuable & environmentally sensitive area. I hope whatever we decide to do is sustainable in every way.

Restoring the integrity of the river is most important.

The City must ensure that the river environment is first and foremost in the public domain and that commercial enterprises which seek to provide services, whether they be land-based or water-based, do not unduly restrict access to the riverside environment. That being said, when companies or organizations develop infrastructure that is not city owned, they must have the ability to protect their assets and restrict public access. An example of this is the rowing docks in Buena Vista Park where some members of the public feel that they have free access to the dock and the rowing storage areas.

Edmonton must re-balance its use of the river system, allowing a bit more development (no one wants over the top commercial development in the valley, but services and amenities are needed) as opposed to "keep it natural - no development".

The city has to take the river back from dog owners, squatters and extreme cyclists who now claim it as their own. To get people down there it has to be cleaned up and vendors, washrooms etc. in place.

It is more important to maintain spontaneous use and public access than to develop programs or support commercialization of the river. It is more important to maintain natural areas than to promote development of riverbank into park areas. If we create park land all along our river, it will never be naturalized again and we will never get it back. Reduction in

public access to the river may occur, but that okay as long as it is not because of increased commercialization or development (of housing, golf courses, etc).
Collaborate does not mean give in; please ensure highest standards are used for public's benefit. Water quality and quantity are important and, I believe, will be even more important in the coming years.
Ensure strategies and "use" includes all kinds - bikes, walking, dogs, etc.
The river valley is nice right now. I don't want to see over development because the city Green stamps businesses on the river like it does now with pawn shops and liquor stores. (The dept now that oks business licences should not be allowed to touch the river valley project in any form.) I worry about the river valleys future with these plans. Some appropriate non intrusive business would be ok...More MAINTAINED signed walking trails along the river - yes, boat rentals - yes, fishing piers - yes, Bike rentals - yes, even ice-cream/drink/hotdog venders - yes. Outside of that kind of thing - NO! Our valley should be keep building free, And ZERO tress should be cut for anything done. A River valley committee should be the caretakers and any big deals or building plan in the river valley should have to have PUBLIC APPROVAL first and always. Our River valley is the one and only gem we have and no one person, business, committee or politician should have total say on what gets done. Don't ruin our valley!
Bike routes into the river areas should be clearly marked and planned --for commuters as well as recreational riders. All road signage (car and bicycle) should celebrate the river. Do you realize the road signs don't indicate that a bridge is coming up, what the bridge's name is, or what the name of the (North Saskatchewan) river is? Appalling!
I hope the endeavour will not encourage the use of power boats on the river. While I realize that jurisdictional issues prevent the banning of power boats from the river, I hope the worthwhile initiatives described in this survey will not encourage the use of power boats. Bob
I really like the idea of one, central office for ALL things pertaining to the river. This would be supremely helpful for all communications and marketing.
No mention of any plan to limit ratio of commercial area to park and what kind of commercial areas?
Its time to move forward with this initiative. I lke the funicular/staircase taking people from downtown to the river valley.
I have many comments but to flip to page 1 and back then page 2 and back (and so on) would take me forever. Maybe it would have been better to ask for additional comments after each principle group. My overarching comment would be to define some of the words you are using. Some examples are 'river-side amenities' and 'environmental *something*' stability? (sorry this is what I mean by flipping through the pages, I can't remember the details as I am not involved in these concepts day to day), you also mentioned 'collaboration with commercial', that also needs to be defined what this city means by 'collaboration'. On the other hand I am happy there is at least a Previous button. I am glad you are doing this; my apartment overlooks the river and it's a huge space that is mostly wasted.
I believe putting the south lrt line in the proposed spot is against principles 2 and 7. Is will disrupt a natural area of the river where there is currently no type of vehicle traffic so it will have greater impact on the integrity of the river valley natural area then if it uses an existing vehicle crossing. It also is destroying a bridge that is part of the history of the river.
Our river valley was, throughout our recent history, protected from residential development and that philosophy should have continued. Very high-end condominium developments have been created, on minimum of a 50 year flood plain, that do nothing to enhance the "river

experience" for the vast majority of Edmontonians. Views of the river are being eliminated - example being the arrogant decision to build the addition to the Shaw Conference Centre in such a way as to eliminate river view for the average citizen in that area. "Art" such as the Talus Balls are corrupting the natural image of our river valley. Discussions to eliminate Telus Field and replace with more residential construction hurts to the core. Leave us a natural river valley that we all can enjoy and let residential and commercial construction go elsewhere.

I think it would be useful to provide water quality information to users (either real time on a regular basis), so they can make decisions about usages. Some may not want to undertake certain activities like wading if water quality levels are worse.

I think it is covered, but just want to underscore that the river and the valley parkland are what make Edmonton unique...the shared use of the land and the wildness in an urban setting are true treasures. Please do nothing to compromise that it belongs to the city and its citizens, not corporate or personal interests.

Commercial ventures in & out of the water will need to be vetted & monitored closely as well as continuously. NO "chain" businesses please!!!! Should be environmentally & socially responsible, serving the widest possible levels of income. Please, no elitism. The river valley should be accessible to all who wish to use. Special emphasis on FNMI culture & access is an absolute must. Thank you!

Ensure #1 includes diff types of access (being able to use the river but also ensuring everyone can physically access it (paved trails, accessible docks, washroom etc) #6 This will likely fall within the principles but communication about what you can do on the river, when it is safe, what to look for - water levels etc)

Please do not create an expensive bureaucracy to manage this that increases taxes and fees.

In spite of the consultation process, the wording of the whole survey appears to me to be a top down over regulated process. Beyond that, I am very upset that the level of residential and other development that has been allowed over the past generation.

The emphasis is stewardship. While public use may bring fun and the potential for city revenues, development of the river valley must ensure that the integrity of the natural environment is preserved.

I think there's been an oversight into the number of homeless people that actually live in the river valley due to a shortage of shelter space. I think the city has a responsibility to provide adequate housing for homeless so they don't feel they need to go down into the river valley for shelter. Also, once they're finished living the river valley there's tons of garbage and debris left behind. This is why the river valley clean up is so huge every year. The city should be looking at creating more sustainable shelter space near the river valley to remove the impact of homelessness in this area.

Section 4 - Foster collaboration and partnerships. With WHOM? Examples please. I shouldn't have to have done a previous survey or spend a great deal of time trying to find out such a simple principle when answering a question. If I knew even a little about who these purported partnerships were with maybe I could give you a meaningful response. Terrible job on this one!

I think it is also important to consider how best commercial activity in and around the river can best be pursued. Things like cafes and restaurants carefully placed, managed and scoped would bring new life to the river if done in conjunction with providing better access to the public

I would like to see rock protection along the river such as exists on the south shore in the vicinity of and downstream from MacNally school. Encouraging boats on the river before the

banks are protected from erosion by the boat's wake, I think, is unwise.
This survey was very one sided and I felt like you weren't really looking for feedback so much as a pat on the back.
We have a very unique land and water parkland that needs to be protected and promoted. Good to see that the City is giving proper priority to its preservation.
Principle 3 on education and engagement and principle 4 on collaboration and partnerships aren't really principles. They are ways or strategies for achieving the other principles. If these are removed there would be a more focused and manageable set of principles to work with.
Don't over build and try to make it some lame tourist attraction.
There is mentioned the concept of "casual" public use of the river through boat rentals, etc. I would be very nervous about that - every year, a number of people need rescuing from the river. The river is a power entity (especially in spring and after rains), that can rise unexpectedly. Casual, unplanned use is a very dangerous concept. I also worry about the encouragement of power use on the river. Power boats are noisy, and often present a major hazard to unpowered users. I've seen numerous near misses between power boats and the canoes, kayaks, and dragon boats on the river. The noise from the power boats as they go through the valley detracts from the natural beauty and are as bad as the noisy bikes or cars. If motorized uses are to be permitted, specific rules (speed, noise, pollution control), must be in place and actively enforced. The same should go for vehicles coming into proximity of the valley. We want to celebrate and preserve the natural beauty - hearing a car with an 80 or 100dB muffler detracts from that.
Please do not build anymore structures along the river. Maintain or renovate the current structures.
The survey does not distinguish river bank use (hiking, cycling, horse riding, etc) from use of the river itself (hiking, canoeing, rafting, paddle boarding, etc). Some commercial activities will have more appeal than others. I would want a nice balance between commercial and non-commercial endeavours.
Ensure that public access does not mean that every path be wide, paved and drivable. Let's keep this an animal corridor and maintain wilderness foremost!
Public access is very important to me. I've concerned about private entities (like private golf courses and clubs) attempting to restrict river access.
The trees are a huge part of our history and define us regionally 'boreal forest'. I support growth and development around the access and use of the river but not at the cost of our identity.
Roads are full of noisy bikes. Keep noisy boats of the river, I want a peaceful place to go without scavenger nests.
Having had the opportunity to take part in a Riverwatch trip while I worked in a local school, I feel that all parties wanting a say in River development should be obliged to take the same trip. It provides a unique view of the city and the area's original "highway". The wildlife sighted from the raft surprised me even though I knew that the river valley gives wildlife a needed corridor through the city. Keep it wild, but encourage viewing from a distance, like the middle of the North Saskatchewan.

172 responses