

National
Urban Park
Pre-feasibility
Phase

Edmonton

**What
We Heard
Report 2023**

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Introduction

Purpose

This What We Heard Report provides a summary of feedback received during the pre-feasibility phase of public engagement for the National Urban Park Initiative (September 2022-March 2023). The report summarizes key themes we heard through a series of in-person and virtual engagement activities with the general public, a stakeholder committee, and through Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) outreach and engagement with equity deserving communities. Participants were invited to provide feedback on their priorities, concerns and overall sentiments concerning a potential national urban park in the Edmonton area. This feedback will inform the perspectives and recommendations that Administration brings to City Council and project partners for decision making.

Project Overview

The City of Edmonton is working with Parks Canada, the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and the Government of Alberta (project partners on the partner committee) to explore creation of a national urban park in the Edmonton area. The National Urban Park Program is a new federal initiative that will see the creation of national urban parks in urban centres across Canada. Each national urban park will be unique, informed by local context, and created through local partnerships.

National urban parks provide an opportunity to contribute to biodiversity protection and climate change adaptation, create unique nature-based educational and recreational opportunities, and advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities. Benefits of a national urban park could include opportunities for ecological protection, habitat restoration, conservation research, amenities and parks programming. A national urban park also provides opportunities for Indigenous leadership, stewardship and advancing shared goals for reconciliation.

Unlike existing national parks administered by Parks Canada, national urban parks do not need to be owned and operated by the federal government. They can be managed under a range of flexible governance models that will be determined in collaboration with project partners. The proximity to major cities and flexible governance models makes national urban parks unique. Park governance options will be determined by the partner committee during the planning phase.

This partnership model, flexible governance and proximity to major cities makes national urban parks unique. Park governance options will be determined by the partner committee during the planning phase.

Parks Canada has identified three core program objectives for national urban parks:

1. Conserving Nature

Conservation, biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation
(conserve, restore and protect natural areas and open spaces)

2. Connecting People with Nature

Access to nature for people in an inclusive and welcoming environment
(ensure people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can access and enjoy the park)

3. Advancing Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

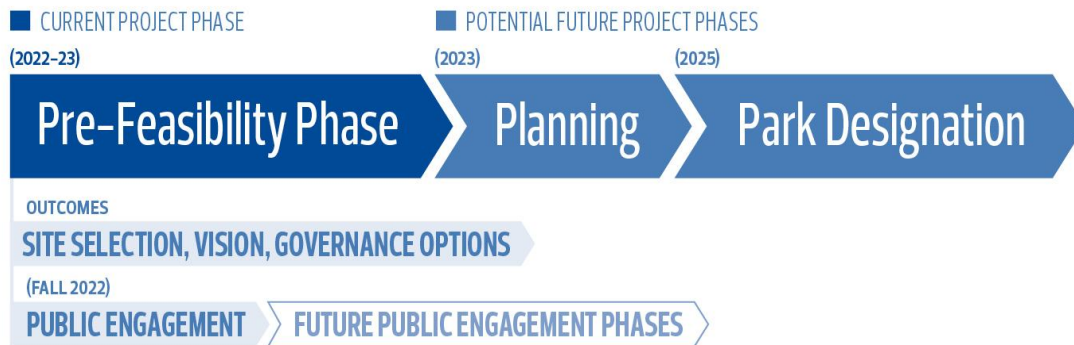
Achieving shared goals for protecting nature in a spirit of collaboration and reconciliation
(opportunities for Indigenous leadership, stewardship, voices and stories)



These core program objectives are important for all national urban park sites across Canada. However, there is also an opportunity to create a park that is unique to our city and region. Therefore, the City of Edmonton would like to understand what is most important to Edmontons in considering a national urban park in our City and region.

Timeline

The National Urban Park initiative is expected to be a multi-phase, multi-year project, with opportunities for public and stakeholder engagement at all stages. Currently, the project is at the end of the pre-feasibility phase.



During pre-feasibility, the partner committee explored initial interest and support for a national urban park in the Edmonton area. Goals of the National Urban Park Program pre-feasibility phase included:

- Co-developing an engagement approach with Indigenous partners
- Identifying the study area(s) for the national urban park
- Conducting site-specific studies
- Exploring initial considerations for vision, boundary, and governance
- Conducting initial public, stakeholder and diversity and equity focused engagement*

**Though broad public, stakeholder and equity focused engagement was not required by Parks Canada during the pre-feasibility phase, The City of Edmonton chose to conduct some early public and stakeholder engagement during this stage of the project.*

Much of the work outlined above is ongoing and will continue into the next phase of the project, the planning phase. To move into the next phase, the project requires support from the partner committee and agreement on a candidate site that aligns with program objectives to advance for further study. Before proceeding to the planning phase, City Council will review the pre-feasibility outcomes and recommendations from Administration and will decide whether City of Edmonton should continue as a partner in the project. A report to City Council is anticipated in summer 2023.

In the planning phase, additional public engagement and technical work will be completed to further evaluate the potential benefits and challenges of a candidate site(s) and to understand various public and stakeholder perspectives on what such a park could look like. Stakeholders and the public will have the opportunity to provide feedback in the planning

phase before any decisions are made to designate a national urban park in the Edmonton area.

For more information on the National Urban Park Initiative please visit:

[Edmonton.ca/nationalurbanpark](https://edmonton.ca/nationalurbanpark)

[Parks.canada.ca/pun-nup](https://parks.canada.ca/pun-nup)

Engagement Approach

Preliminary public and stakeholder engagement was conducted in the pre-feasibility phase to introduce the National Urban Park Initiative, share information on program goals, and identify the initial priorities, opportunities, concerns, and public sentiment toward a national urban park in the Edmonton area.

How decisions are made

Decisions about a national urban park in the Edmonton area are made collectively by a committee of project partners consisting of Parks Canada, The City of Edmonton, the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and the Government of Alberta. As one member of the partner committee, the City of Edmonton provides recommendations based on a number of factors including:

- Existing City plans and policies
- Technical analysis
- Interests expressed by Indigenous project partners
- Results from City-led public, stakeholder and GBA+ engagement
- Direction from City Council

Other project partners bring their own organizational and community perspectives, engagement data and analysis to inform their recommendations to the partner committee. Each organization has their own reporting structures and processes to validate the recommendations that are brought forth to the partner committee. Should the project advance beyond pre-feasibility, the City of Edmonton is committed to continuing to provide opportunities for the public and stakeholder groups to contribute to discussions and direction about a potential national urban park in the Edmonton region .

How public input will be used

Public Engagement is at the ADVISE level of the [City's Public Engagement spectrum](#) and was delivered in alignment with the City of Edmonton's [Public Engagement Framework](#). The ADVISE level means that the City provided opportunities for Edmontonians and community organizations to share feedback and perspectives to be considered in the exploration of establishing a national urban park in the Edmonton area.



The City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum

Feedback collected through pre-feasibility public, stakeholder and GBA+ engagement will be used to:









- Understand local priorities and concerns regarding a potential national urban park in the Edmonton area
- Evaluate the potential benefits, opportunities and challenges of establishing a national urban park in the Edmonton area
- Inform the perspective and recommendations that Administration brings to City Council and project partners for decision making

Engagement Overview

Engagement for the pre-feasibility phase of this project occurred between September 2022 and March 2023 and included opportunities for Edmontonians and community organizations to provide input. The following section provides details on how and who the project team engaged to gather input during this phase of the project.

Who we engaged

The following opportunities were provided for Edmontonians, community partners and organizations to learn more about the project and provide feedback:

	Engagement Opportunity	Audience	Format, Date and Location	Participation
	Engaged Edmonton page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General public Interest groups 	Online	3,000 visitors 76 ideas tool responses
	Pop-ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General public 	In-person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Edmonton Mall September 10, 2022 Londonderry Mall September 17, 2022 	~60 participants
	Online Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General public Interest groups Organizations that serve equity deserving communities or that bring a diverse perspective Edmonton Insight Community 	Online September 26, 2022 to October 10, 2022	3,918 responses 487 responses from 177 stakeholder organizations (self-identified)
	Stakeholder Committee Workshops	Stakeholder Committee*	Online April 2022 - March 2023	17 representatives including 15 representing local organizations and 2 academics
	Stakeholder Committee Workbook	Stakeholder Committee*	Online submission September - October 2022	13 completed workbooks
	GBA+ Stakeholder pre-engagement survey	Organizations that serve equity deserving communities or that bring a diverse perspective	Online September 2022	9 responses
	GBA+ Stakeholder conversations	Organizations and individuals from equity deserving communities or that bring a diverse perspective	Online and in-person events March 2023	39 participants from 3 organizations
	GBA+ Learn and Share Booklets	Individuals from equity deserving communities identified through GBA+ analysis	Online submission March 2023	3 completed booklets

*A list of Stakeholder Committee members can be found in **Appendix A**

How we engaged

To ensure we heard from as many diverse voices and perspectives as possible, a variety of engagement tactics were used to invite participants to engage with us about the national urban park project. Each of the opportunities are outlined below:

General Public

Public engagement opportunities ran from September 26 to October 10, 2022 and included two in-person pop-ups, an online survey, and an Engaged Edmonton page with the ideas tool. Engage Edmonton is the City of Edmonton's official online public engagement space and hosts a series of engagement activities through tools, such as the Ideas tool, which allows participants to suggest or vote on ideas. Members of the general public and stakeholder organizations were invited to share their perspectives on priorities for project partners to consider in selecting a candidate site, including what would make a national urban park a welcoming and inclusive space. Many respondents shared their concerns about a potential national urban park, as well as what would make them excited for a national urban park in the Edmonton area.

Stakeholder Committee

A stakeholder committee was convened early in the pre-feasibility phase to provide input and expertise to the City of Edmonton in the exploration of a potential national urban park. Committee members represented a range of interests and organizations, including conservation, recreation, accessibility, tourism, and academia. A full list of these groups can be found in Appendix A. The National Urban Park Stakeholder Committee met seven times between April 2022 to March 2023. Committee members were invited to share their expertise on topics such as conservation, accessibility, recreation, inclusion, visitor experience, natural heritage and cultural landscapes. Feedback was collected through facilitated discussions and online engagement activities, email submissions, stakeholder workbooks and small group visioning exercises.

GBA+ approach

The project team conducted a gender based plus analysis (GBA+) and identified communities potentially impacted by a national urban park, but who are often underrepresented in traditional engagement approaches and would therefore benefit from a more targeted engagement strategy. Pre-engagement outreach included an online survey to approximately 70 organizations that work with the following communities: seniors, children/youth, people experiencing houselessness, low-income, 2SLGBTQI+, multicultural/newcomer, urban Indigenous people, post-secondary students, and heritage/arts organizations. Organizations were informed of the project, and invited to provide insights into engagement opportunities

with their communities. Information gathered was used to inform GBA+ engagement strategies for the project.





During pre-feasibility engagement, 20 organizations serving targeted demographics were contacted and invited to provide feedback from an organizational perspective or engage directly with individual community members. Three organizations (42 participants) chose to participate, and the format of engagement was targeted to the needs of the organization and community members. Feedback was gathered using a combination of approaches such as small group (in-person) conversations, virtual workshops, and written workbook submissions.

Indigenous Engagement

The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta are members of the partner committee and play a leadership role for the initiative. Both organizations are undertaking direct engagement with their citizens and member nations to inform decisions made by all partners. This engagement is not yet complete. Parks Canada will explore further opportunities to strengthen relationships with, and gather feedback from all Indigenous Nations and communities that are interested and impacted. The City of Edmonton is committed to supporting Parks Canada and Indigenous partners in these engagement efforts.

How we communicated and shared engagement opportunities

To ensure we heard from as many diverse voices and perspectives as possible, a variety of communication tactics were used to inform Edmontonians about the national urban park project and engagement opportunities:

	Format	Description	Audience
	Project Website	https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/national-urban-park	Public
	Social Media	Posts and videos on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook	Public
	Video	Video introducing the project was shared on project website, YouTube, social media	Public
	Email	Emails to stakeholder groups	Stakeholder Committee GBA+ Organizations



Advertising (road signs, LRT ads, video etc)

Temporary road signs, social media platforms, digital billboards

Public

What We Heard

Key Themes

During pre-feasibility engagement with the public, stakeholder committee and GBA+ stakeholders, a diversity of perspectives, priorities, interests and concerns were shared with the project team regarding a national urban park. While there was overall excitement about possibilities for what a national urban park could offer, many participants noted it was difficult to provide feedback on a national urban park without knowing where the park may be located and how it would be governed; this information was not yet known and therefore unavailable during pre-feasibility engagement. A detailed breakdown of what we heard from each audience is provided in the next section, “Key Themes by Audience.” However, the following key themes emerged consistently across all engagement opportunities and audiences.

Preservation of nature

Many comments identified environmental protection and/or restoration as a critical component of the initiative. Opportunities to contribute to conservation goals and provide opportunities for people to experience nature and green spaces was a priority in many of the responses.

Removing barriers

Removing barriers to accessing nature was identified as a priority in many of the responses. This included addressing physical, economic and social barriers that may prevent people from visiting a national urban park and/or City park spaces in general. This included providing free park access, universal design for accessible amenities, and creating a safe and welcoming space for all.

Transportation and mobility

The ability to travel to a national urban park using multiple modes of transportation was highlighted as an important need. Participants identified a desire for a location that was accessible by a combination of public transit, active modes of transportation (e.g., walking, cycling) and personal vehicles. Access via public transit and active transportation was a higher priority in equity focused (GBA+) engagement, whereas access via personal vehicles was a higher priority in broader public engagement.

Diverse opportunities for nature based activities

A diverse array of active and passive outdoor activities were suggested as important experiences to include in a national urban park. This included year-round (including winter) access and amenities for all ages, cultures, and abilities to experience nature; outdoor recreation; and educational and cultural opportunities. This included land-based learning, Indigenous history/cultural education, programming, and recreation amenities such as trails to suit a wide variety of activities, interests and abilities.

North Saskatchewan River Valley

Though pre-feasibility engagement did not focus on a particular location or site options for a national urban park, many of the engagement comments highlighted the local and regional significance of the North Saskatchewan River Valley for residents and visitors to Edmonton. While the majority of comments regarding the River Valley had a positive sentiment, concerns with impacts of increased usage, safety, and potential displacement of unhoused Edmontonians inhabiting the River Valley were articulated across the various engagement audiences.

Local control

Maintaining local governance and influence over Edmonton's existing municipal parks system, particularly the River Valley, was a common priority/concern expressed during engagement. Many respondents also noted that there was a need for additional information on the tangible benefits of a national park designation and potential impacts to citizens, stakeholders, and park users.

Key Themes by Audience

General Public

Engagement with the general public was conducted between September and October and included an online survey, Engaged Edmonton page, and pop-up events. The online survey was shared with the Edmonton Insight Community and an open link was included on the Engaged Edmonton page. Stakeholder organizations were also invited to complete the survey and share with their membership. Therefore, survey results represent submissions received from the general public, as well as individuals representing self-identified stakeholder organizations.

- **3,918 responses** to the online survey
 - Includes **487 responses** from **177 stakeholder organizations** (self-identified)
- **76 responses** to the Ideas Tool on the Engaged Edmonton page

- **Approximately 60 participants** engaged at the pop-ups at two shopping mall locations

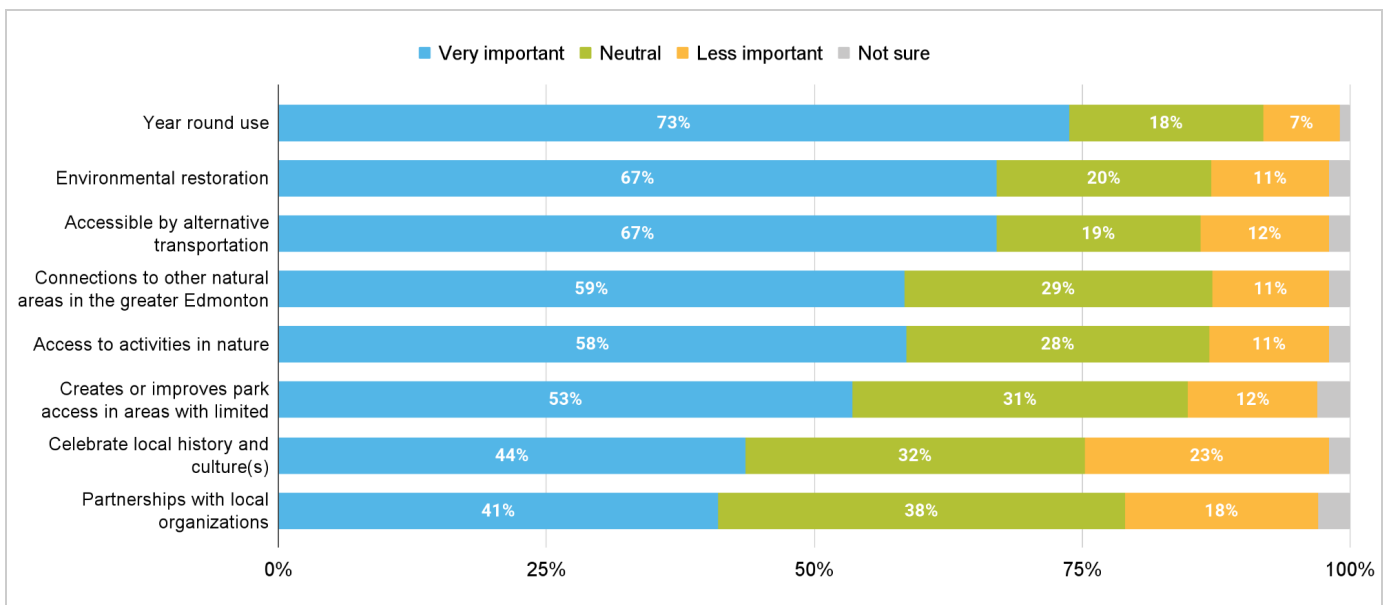
Through the Engaged Edmonton page, online survey and pop-up events, we asked participants what was most important to consider, what concerns they had, and what was most exciting about the potential for establishing a national urban park in the Edmonton area. The following section details a selection of key themes and results that emerged from public engagement opportunities:

Priorities

Ranked Priorities

We asked survey participants what they thought was most important to consider in choosing an appropriate site for a national urban park in the Edmonton area.

3,918 responses



When provided with the elements listed above, survey participants identified opportunities for year-round use, environmental restoration and accessibility by alternative transportation options (i.e., transit, active transportation) as the most important considerations for an Edmonton area national urban park.

Missing priorities

Survey participants were asked if there was anything else that is important for an Edmonton area national urban park.

1,343 responses

Fees and Access

- Maintain free access to the River Valley and ensure that recreational opportunities in a national urban park are accessible to all users
- Ensure accessibility for those with different mobility needs

Federal government involvement

- Maintain City control of the parks system (e.g., River Valley parks)

Mountain biking and single track trails

- Importance of maintaining mountain biking opportunities and ensuring access to single track trails in the future

Nature

- Preserving nature and protection from degradation

Trails

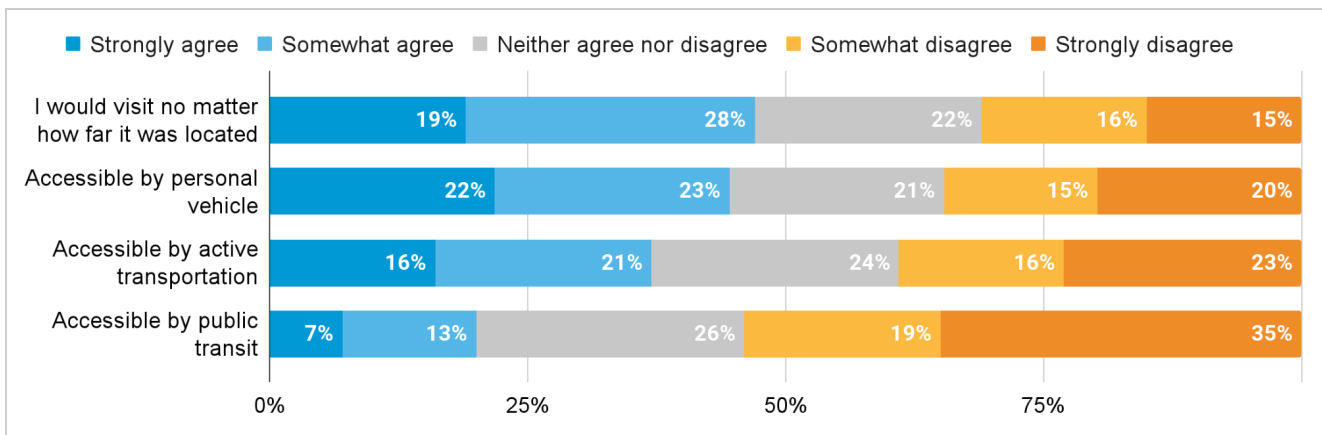
- Importance of Edmonton’s trail system (e.g., in the River Valley) as a valuable resource for recreational purposes

Access and Inclusion

Mobility

We asked survey participants how location and access through different modes of travel would affect their ability and interest in visiting a site for a national urban park.

3,918 responses



47% (agree or somewhat agree) of survey participants indicated that they would visit a national urban park regardless of how far was located from their home. 45% of respondents indicated they would only visit the park if it was accessible by personal vehicle (e.g., car), 37%

indicated they would only visit if it was accessible by active modes of transportation and 20% indicated visiting only if it was accessible by public transit.

Welcoming and Inclusive Spaces

We shared some of the considerations that are important for creating accessible and welcoming parks and open spaces. We asked survey participants to share what else should be considered to help people feel welcome in a national urban park.

3,918 responses

Trails

- Continued access to trails and nature would make the space welcoming
- Suggestions include elements such as signage, family friendly paths, pet friendly trails, and good lighting on trails to help make the space welcoming

Cost of Entry

- Maintaining free access to the park and/or considerations for low-income families or marginalized groups

Safety and Security

- Increased safety measures such as security monitoring, parks/police staff and increased lighting were common themes among responses
- A subset of responses identified concerns about safety, with some indicating that they may not feel safe if there are encampments or open drug use in the park (e.g., in the River Valley)

Dogs

- Dogs being allowed in the space would add to some people's enjoyment of the area
- Others wanted clear rules about where dogs were allowed on-leash and off-leash or not at all

Community

- Areas to gather with friends and family
- Opportunities for small scale commercial businesses, such as places that sell food and drink
- Opportunities to celebrate local art and culture
- Accessible to people with different mobility needs
- Public amenities, such as washrooms, garbage receptacles and areas for play and recreation

Nature and preservation

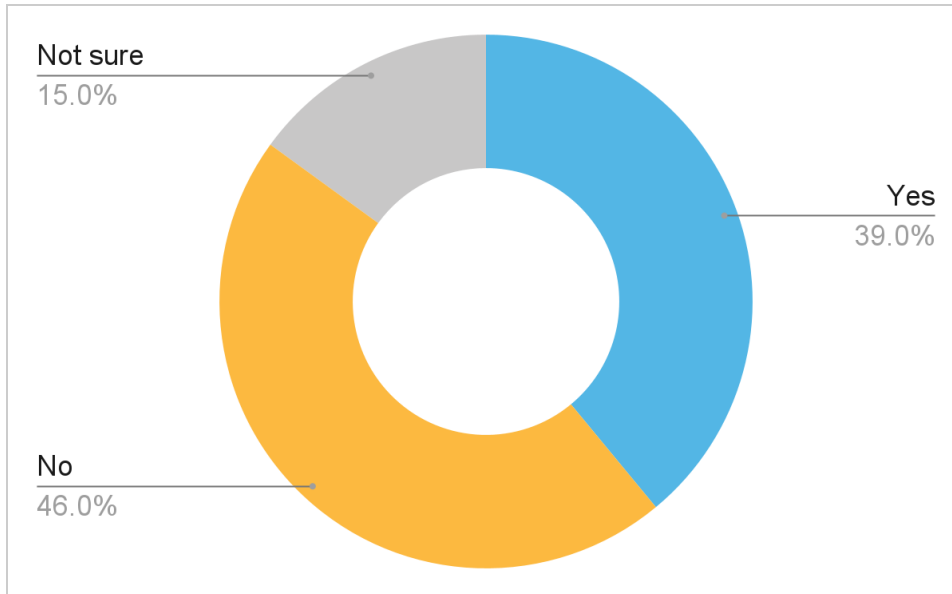
- Preservation of nature and habitat, and limited development

Challenges and Concerns

Concerns

We asked survey participants if they had any concerns about the creation of a national urban park in the Edmonton area.

3,918 responses



Participant feedback from the online survey, Engaged Edmonton page, and pop-up events indicated that participants were most concerned about:

Governance

- Apprehension regarding federal government involvement in Edmonton's park spaces (e.g., the River Valley) and the balance of control between the City of Edmonton, project partners and Parks Canada

Funding

- Concerns about the unknown costs for taxpayers and the balance of costs between the City of Edmonton and the federal government for initial investment and ongoing operational expenses

Access

- Concern that a national urban park designation would increase barriers to access park spaces (e.g., the River Valley) such as through the introduction of user fees or restricted access to mountain bike trails

Nature

- Concern that a national urban park designation may result in increased usage, development or changes that may cause user conflicts and degradation to nature

Additional Ideas

We asked participants of the online survey, Engaged Edmonton page, and pop-up events what excited them the most about the prospect of a national urban park in the Edmonton area and if they had any additional ideas or suggestions. Additional ideas shared by participants included:

Nature

- The importance of preserving the natural environment (e.g., in the River Valley)
- An opportunity to include programming to help immerse visitors in nature

Trails

- The importance of ensuring trails are maintained and accessible for recreation such as walking, hiking and biking
- An opportunity to add interpretive elements to the trail system

History and Culture

- An opportunity to celebrate local histories (e.g., related to the North Saskatchewan River Valley)

Park Location

While no site options were presented for pre-feasibility engagement, the following feedback was received regarding potential locations for a national urban park:

- Many respondents noted that it was difficult to comment on challenges or the project overall without knowing the location of the park.
- Some comments suggested that the park should be located in or along the River Valley in a central area accessible to all Edmontonians.
- Finding an appropriate location in terms of accessibility, safety and preservation of nature was a common theme during engagement.
- Displacement of, and interface with, individuals experiencing houselessness was a concern expressed regarding the inclusion of the River Valley as a potential candidate site.

Stakeholder Committee

The National Urban Park Stakeholder Committee (see Appendix A) met seven times between April 2022 to March 2023. Feedback was collected through facilitated discussions and online engagement activities, email submissions, stakeholder workbooks and small group visioning exercises.

We asked stakeholders to identify priorities, concerns, and overall sentiments about a national urban park in the Edmonton area. Committee members were invited to provide advice and knowledge on topics such as conservation, accessibility, inclusion, visitor experience, natural heritage and cultural landscapes and to identify any initial areas of interest for consideration in a national urban park.

The following section details the key themes that emerged from stakeholder committee engagement:

Importance of long-term, regional scale planning

- A national urban park should be developed using long-term, regional scale planning and inter-municipal collaboration towards a shared vision
- Enhance landscape conservation at a regional scale by partnering with other local governments to meet biodiversity and climate change targets
- Create/improve ecological connectivity, remove/mitigate existing pinch points and improve wildlife connectivity by securing lands with ecological significance
- Develop recreation and trail connectivity across the region
- Support for a long term, phased approach for designating a national urban park within and beyond Edmonton's borders

High degree of interest in the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System

- The River Valley and Ravine System is the defining natural element within the Edmonton region, a connector with significant need for conservation and opportunities for education and storytelling
- The River Valley offers a variety of opportunities to meet the national urban park (NUP) program goals
- Increase conservation and improved management at a scale that will matter to residents and the regional ecosystem
- Protect ecologically sensitive areas, biodiversity, and unique geology, hydrology, and landforms
- Promote tourism and the identity of the River Valley and Ravine System as a special place in Canada and the region

- Consider how to mitigate impacts and potential displacement of unhoused people who already live in/use the River Valley and Ravine System
- Desire to maintain local governance of the River Valley and minimize additional layers of approval and governance that will impact citizens
- Need to further explore and understand the potential investments, governance options and impacts for a NUP in the River Valley and Ravine System

Importance of removing barriers for access and supporting inclusion

- Park should reduce barriers for all ages and abilities to access nature (e.g., address physical, financial, social/cultural, psychological, language barriers)
- Ensure accessibility throughout the park (not just to the entrance) and options for different experiences
- Improve access to nature while minimizing development and disturbance of natural areas
- Ensure the national urban park is accessible by multiple modes of transportation (i.e., transit, walking, wheeling, etc.)
- River Valley locations may have additional accessibility challenges that should be mitigated (e.g., slope, stairs, wayfinding, safety, education)
- Park should be accessible, enjoyable and include opportunities for year-round access and programming
- A full range of needs should be considered to ensure inclusivity and accessibility of the park (i.e., physical, sensory, behavioural, social, cognitive) and people living with disabilities should be consulted when designing and developing programs for the park space
- Facilitate greater access and foster experiences through smart digital technology

Desire for a wide variety of nature-based, recreational and educational opportunities for all abilities and interests

- Include a range of options for visitor experience (e.g., frontcountry and backcountry experiences, different trail types, day use and overnight experiences, spaces for independent enjoyment and areas for gathering, active and passive uses)
- Existing recreational uses should remain intact (e.g., mountain biking in the River Valley)
- Opportunities to learn about local nature, diverse heritage/histories and cultural landscapes
- Important to incorporate Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, leadership and cultural education
- Interest in exploring local partnerships for programming, management and maintenance of a NUP

Diversity and Equity Focused Organizations

As a part of a Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) approach, the project team conducted diversity and equity focused engagement with community organizations to hear a variety of perspectives on what a national urban park could look like in the Edmonton Region. Feedback was provided through small group workshops, 1:1 conversations and/or written submissions. A workbook was provided to those who were unable to attend a workshop or wished to provide additional feedback. Between February and March, 2023, 20 organizations were invited to engage with the City on the national urban park. Three organizations connected the project team with their community members to participate in engagement workshops. This included E4C, The Edmonton Heritage Council and Skills Society. A total of 39 participants attended workshops. Organizations that were unable to attend the workshops were invited to submit a written submission in the form of a workbook. Three workbooks were submitted. One additional input of written material was also received.

Participants were asked about:

- what is most important to consider in choosing a location for a national urban park
- what would help them to feel welcome in a national urban park
- what ideas or concerns they have about the project

The following section details the key themes that emerged from diversity and equity focused engagement.

Access and accessibility

- Accessible by transit and DATS
- Accessible by active transportation (walking, biking, paddling, skiing, etc.)
- Free access to the park and limited commercial activities (affordability)
- Vehicle access/parking is important for some, but should be limited and distanced from natural areas
- Infrastructure for diverse needs; wheelchair accessible amenities and pathways
- Access to water features and/or accessible by water
- Year-round access and amenities
- Remove barriers for literacy and language
- Accessible wayfinding signage

Activities, amenities, services

- Activities/spaces for varying interests, ages and abilities (active/passive recreation, children, dogs with owners, overnight accommodation, etc.)

- Basic comfort amenities for accessibility (washrooms, accessible trails, wayfinding signage, areas for rest and gathering)
- Land-based education and harvesting opportunities (e.g., berry picking, herbal medicines)
- Spaces for rest, shelter and gathering and cooking outdoors (year round)
- Washrooms that are accessible, family friendly, gender neutral
- Waste management is important

Multiculturalism

- Inclusion of multicultural histories, cultural education/interpretation and sites of significance as interpreted by Indigenous people
- Inclusion of French, English, Indigenous languages (signage)
- Art that reflects diverse community
- Incorporating food from different cultures
- Opportunities to practice cultural ceremony
- Programming/displays that celebrate reconciliation
- Intercultural spaces of welcome and learning focused on nature
- Opportunities for Indigenous leadership, ownership, ceremony, education

Nature

- Environmental protection/conservation and access to natural spaces protected from development
- Connections to the North Saskatchewan River Valley
- Limited development - natural and peaceful area
- High standards for conservation (protect landscape, watershed, geology, plants and wildlife)
- Important to find a balance between protecting nature and giving humans access
- Investments in restoration and reforestation

Safety and security

- Safety and security (e.g., lighting, security staff, cameras, policies/procedures)
- Restrictions and enforcement for drug and alcohol use, limited areas for smoking and cannabis
- Wildlife management (e.g., habituated coyotes)
- Easy access for emergency vehicles
- Need to consider encampments in the River Valley and ensure people are not displaced

What happens next?

Feedback collected through public, stakeholder and GBA+ engagement is being used in the following ways:

- To help Administration understand local priorities and concerns regarding a potential national urban park in the Edmonton area
- To evaluate the potential benefits, opportunities and challenges of designating a national urban park in the Edmonton area
- To inform the perspective and recommendations that Administration brings forward to City Council and project partners for decision making

Parks Canada will decide when the pre-feasibility phase is complete and planning is ready to begin, based on the progress of pre-feasibility activities. Should the project proceed to the planning phase, additional public engagement and technical work will be completed to further evaluate a candidate site(s) and to understand potential impacts to the public and stakeholders. A report to City Council is anticipated in summer 2023.

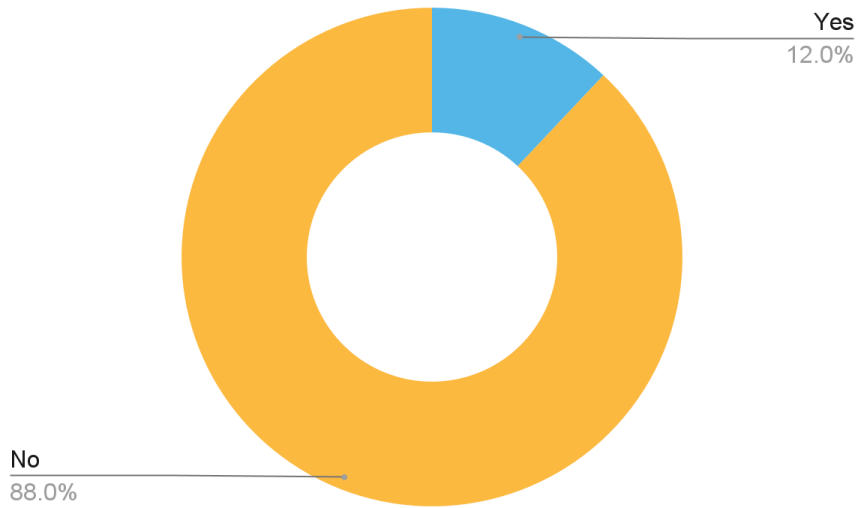
If you are interested in engaging with the City of Edmonton on the National Urban Park Initiative in future project phases, please visit edmonton.ca/nationalurbanpark to learn more about the project and to [sign up](#) for project updates.

For more information on the federal National Urban Park Program, visit [Parks.canada.ca/pun-nup](https://parks.canada.ca/pun-nup). To learn more about Parks Canada's national urban parks policy, visit <https://parks.canada.ca/pun-nup/politique-policy>.

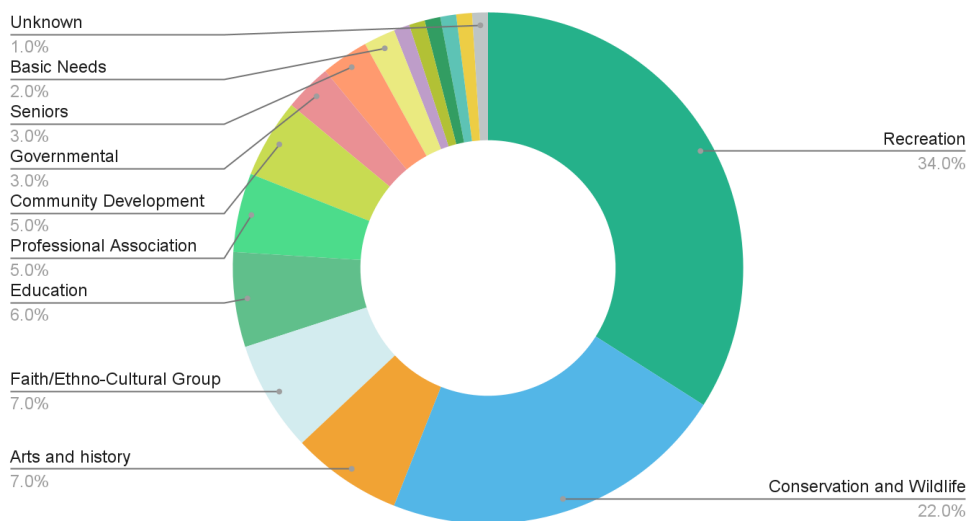
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General Public Demographic data

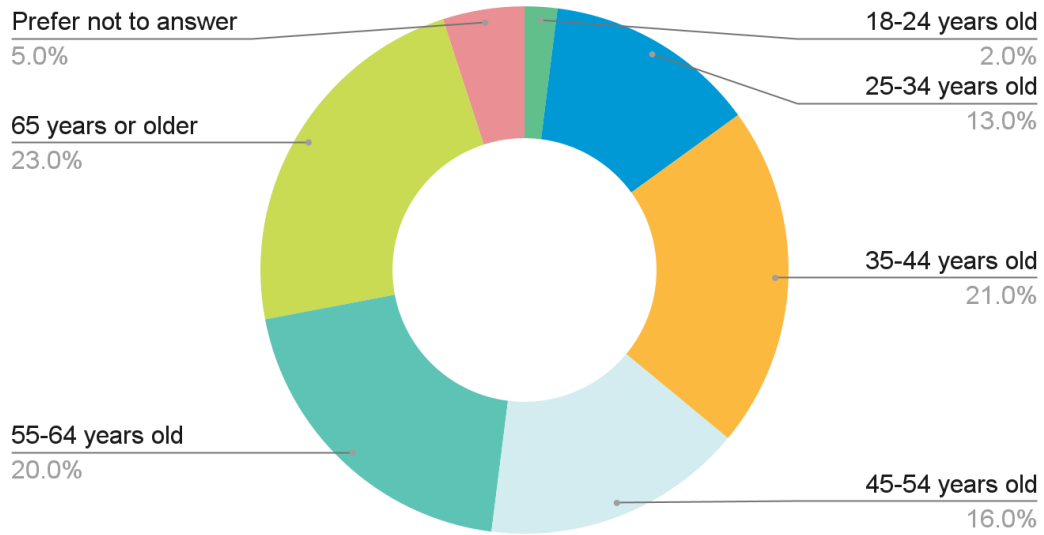
Organizational Representation



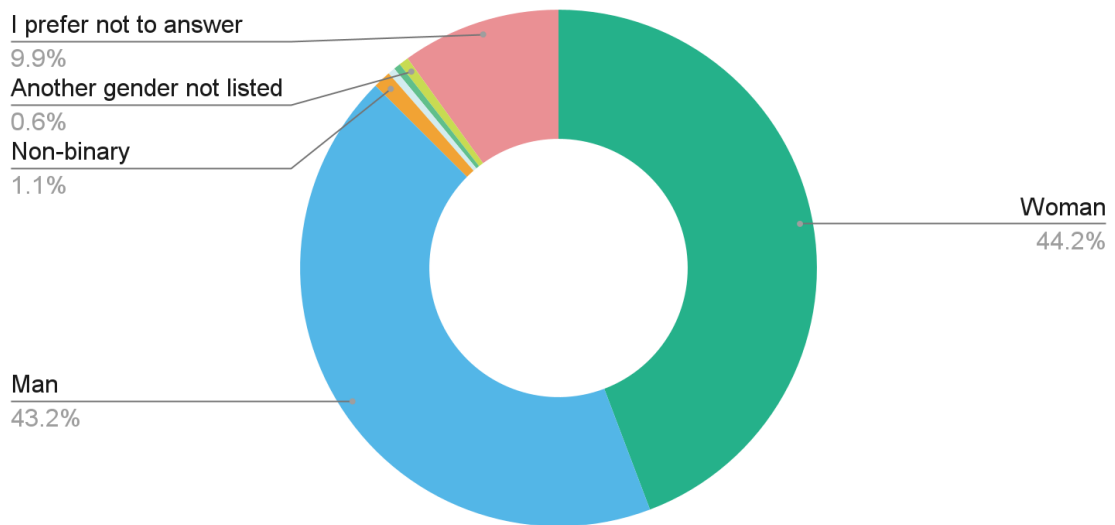
12% survey participants indicated that they were associated with an organization. Of those respondents, the highest representation (34%) identified as members of Edmonton Mountain Bike Alliance (EMBA). The breakdown of organization type is detailed in the chart below.



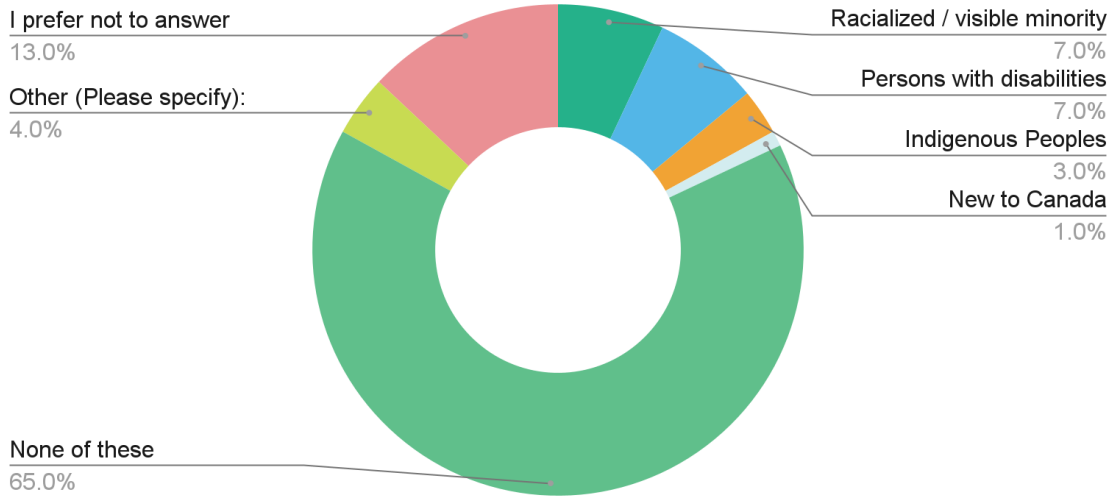
Age



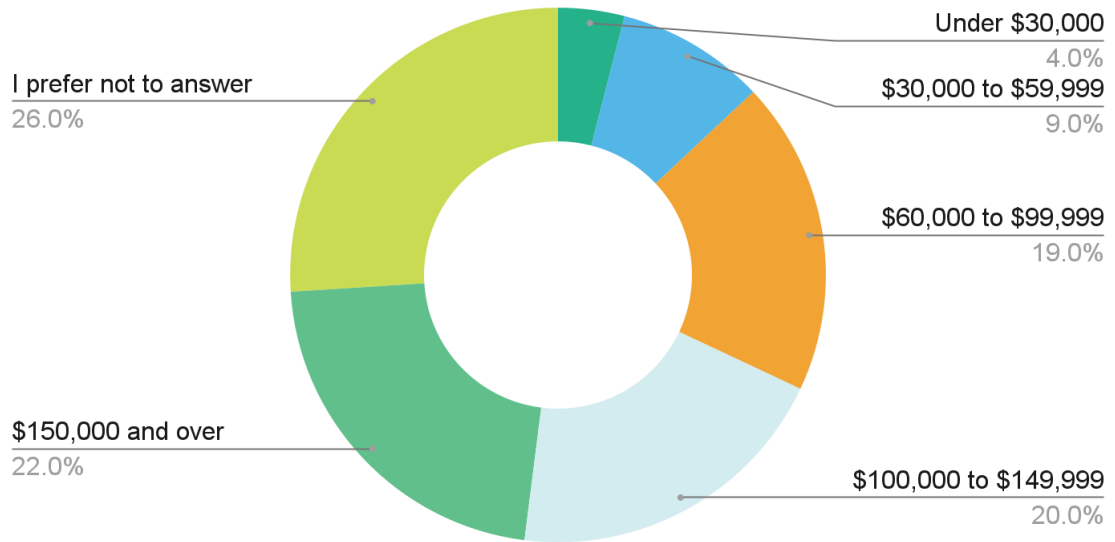
Gender Identity



Communities



Income



National Urban Park Stakeholder Committee Representatives:

- Academics specializing in parks and protected areas, heritage, tourism and recreation (2)
- Alberta Recreation and Parks Association
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Northern Alberta
- Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
- Edmonton Mountain Bike Alliance
- Edmonton River Valley Conservation Coalition
- Energy Transition Climate Resilience Committee
- EPCOR
- Explore Edmonton
- Inclusion Alberta
- North Saskatchewan Heritage River Initiative
- North Saskatchewan River Valley Conservation Society
- River Valley Alliance
- Sierra Club Canada Foundation, Prairie Chapter
- The Steadward Centre for Personal & Physical Achievement
- YMCA of Northern Alberta