

PARTICIPANT SURVEY COMPILATION

- 133 attended the Open House
- 55 participants handed in survey forms at the Open House
- 10 comments received by email after the Open House (these comments included under Question 7 or 8 below)

1. How did you hear about the Fort Edmonton Footbridge and Trails Open House? (some respondents indicated more than one method)

Portable Signs	25
Edmonton Journal	12
Edmonton Examiner	0
Edmonton Sun	0
Invitation (sent to Open House 1 attendees)	14
Word of Mouth	Through friends, ski club, biking group (2), wife, contacts, club announcement
Other	River Valley Alliance notice
Comments	Need to have Open House announcement under Parks Planning on your website. Keep website up-to-date.

2. The information presented was useful and informative.

1	2	3	4	5	No response
Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree	
0	2	4	21	24	4

3. The information was easy to understand.

1	2	3	4	5	No response
Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree	
0	2	5	25	21	2

4. The project representatives were helpful, friendly and accessible.

1 Strongly Disagree	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Strongly Agree	No response
0	3	2	16	31	3

5. I was able to find satisfactory answers to my questions.

1 Strongly Disagree	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Strongly Agree	No response
3	4	9	14	21	4

Comments -

There was no attempt to address concerns; this process is a complete sham.
 Accessibility issues a concern.

6. Which neighbourhood or community do you live in?

Aspen Gardens	2	Patricia Heights	5
Brander Gardens (Whitemud Road)	1	Parkdale	1
Brookside	2	Parkview	1
Country Club	3	Ramsay Heights (Riverbend)	1
Crestwood	1	Rhatigan Ridge (Riverbend)	1
Ermineskin	1	Rio Terrace	2
Garneau	1	Riverbend	1
Hawkstone	2	Valleyview	1
Laurier	2	Wedgewood Ravine	1
Magrath	1	Westridge / Wolf Willow	10
Mayfield	1	Wolf Willow Ridge	2
Oleskiw	10	No Response	2

7. After reviewing the information for the recommended FOOTBRIDGE, I have the following comments: (comments listed verbatim, by subject)

Bridge Design (21 comments)

I like the design, beautiful bridge design, excellent design, improvement over “basic” approach (6)

Bridge is attractive (3)

I like the circular platforms and benches and I’m glad the bridge is straight. Shade over the benches would be great – but must be vandal-proof – if that is possible.

Striking structure – an asset to Edmonton

Great design – super location as it allows for excellent long-term trail flow for the city. At grade trails and bridges are required.

Tower structure very “oil-derrick-isque”(sic) – was this intended? It is good.

Placement seems to be in the right place- rather than the others in the original plans. Design looks great and the viewpoints / decks are a wonderful addition. The planned architectural enhancements at the entrances would be a great addition.

Rest spots provide a safe spot for kids to stop and watch the view

Viewing decks could be scaled back – hikers, bikers, walkers etc. can view from the railings along the bridge. Bridge could be designed very similar to existing pedestrian bridges thereby saving funds required for more pedestrian bridges further upstream on the North Saskatchewan River.

Footbridge and design are very good. Proposed viewpoint should include a space with raised or lowered handrail to allow an unobstructed wheelchair view.

Make sure there is lots of clearance between bridge deck and high water to clear the Edmonton Queen under all conditions

As an Edmonton tax payer I am concerned with the escalating cost of the bridge construction.

Would like to see designated bike path (marked) on the bridge

I like the location and if it is the soundest, from a technical and environmental standpoint, I am more than happy that it is a bit further from Fort Edmonton.

Positive – General (20 comments) (most refer to entire project not just the bridge)

Great plan! So glad it has progresses so quickly. (2)

I love it, we need it, the sooner the better, wonderful, do it soon, get it going, at long last – please proceed!! (7)

Bravo! Yahoo! I can't wait. It has been 22 years that I have waited for this – finally access to our beautiful river valley. Excellent work – kudos to all involved! (2)

Get it done! It will be great to finally have a footbridge in west end. (3)

Let's get started! I support this project, pleased it is going forward (2).

Looks great - start at Patricia Ravine first thing in spring 2008

Sounds great!! Really opens up the possibilities for a great walk!

Whole-heartedly in support of this project – the sooner it can be completed the better, for all.

The Ribbon of Green / River Valley Alliance is a valuable and key component to enjoying the valley for ALL Edmontonians.

Good work!

Excellent work – bringing Edmonton into the 21st Century – our parks will be a legacy and showpiece for our city.

In favour of the footbridge

I am VERY excited about this project. Currently west-end residents have no easy access to the city trail system or Fort Edmonton and Whitemud area – need to drive to for access.

I love the project and the proposal as a whole but accessibility is still a problem

Project appears to be well thought out – comprehensive, with thorough analysis and documentation.

I am very happy to see that the bridge will likely go ahead. The location will benefit the southwest as currently it is difficult to get to the river valley trail system.

Really like the proposed plan

This is a good first step – we need to get on with this

Think it's a great idea, however concerned that the trails will be too close to my backyard.

Future Planning (3 comments)

All three of the next bridges should also be started as soon as possible.

I look forward to the proposals for Terwillegar Park

Go full speed ahead to acquire the Centennial Valley land and advance planning for a trail and footbridge connecting with Terwillegar Park.

Location (2 comments)

Bridge location is too close to Quesnell Bridge

Pleased to see the bridge is placed where the experts (engineers) said it should be built

Parking (2 comments) (see also; parking under #8 below)

Spending \$20 million and not planning in advance for the parking impact, on both sides of the bridge, is inadequate. Taking a wait and see, then deal with the issue is poor planning and is not acceptable. At least alternatives need to be presented in advance and should have been done prior to this presentation.

Why is the bridge designed to handle such large traffic loads if there isn't going to be a lot of traffic through the west-side feeder neighbourhoods? Something doesn't add up here. There will clearly be lots of traffic through the residential neighbourhoods with no plans for parking and narrow, improperly designed access points running right next to houses.

8. After reviewing the information for the recommended TRAILS, I have the following comments: (comments listed verbatim, by subject)

Stairs (27 comments) (see also Accessibility; above)

Stairs are not the greatest for cyclists; avoid stairs so can be used by all bikers (2).

Please develop asphalt trails instead of stairs, wherever possible

Stairs are unacceptable. Bike ramps on the edge of stairs are of no help to wheelchairs and strollers and 60-year-old bikers

Great concept to extend trails – will enjoy them as long as the stairs are eliminated. Please, please, please try to get access to the bridge, from the new development on the west-side of the river ramped in addition to, or instead of, the stair access. This is so important for people with disabilities, decreased mobility, families who use wagons and bike trailers, and cyclists in general.

I have a son in a wheelchair – so stairs are problematic

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I'm a 69 year old recreational cyclist. I would certainly prefer to see more graded slopes rather than stairs which I would have to push my bike up or hold on to it on the way down. I could probably do it now, but will I be able to by the time these trails get finished? I think this would also apply to parents with young children whether they are in strollers or on bikes. Keep up the good work of planning for a walking/biking population!

There should be switchbacks, S-turns in the bank of the river that has new development on it to bring bicycling up the incline.

Being a cyclist I'm very much in favour of bike friendly routes up & down hills; not ramps to push your bike on. Hope this is taken into consideration when building new routes.

I am a senior with the Seniors Alpine Ski Club. I am concerned about the number of stairs planned. It is difficult to use stairs because of knees that don't work as well as they used to.

Keep working towards getting access from the "farm" (being developed beside the Country Club Golf Course) along the gravel road so that the trail will be more accessible (i.e. fewer stairs)

The river bank on the Wolf Ridge side is fairly steep, but I think that it is most important that the trail be constructed **without any stairs**, which are a "pain", both literally and figuratively, for pedestrians with baby strollers and joggers and, of course, for cyclists. It would be preferable to have a few switchbacks than to have stairs - even if this is a more expensive alternative. If the City is going to build the footbridge, let's do it properly!

I would prefer that the planned trails be bike friendly. As a senior, it is difficult to push my bike up long staircases.

Stair access only on west-side of the river is totally inadequate for strollers, bikes, elderly and handicapped. This must be fixed.

Use of stairs, as part of the trail system, puts limits on accessibility – wheelchairs, strollers, bikes, people who have difficulty navigating stairs

Boards on a staircase for pushing bikes up and bringing them down are unacceptable. They are never wide enough to stop the pedals catching on the rail supports and the back wheel just does not ride on it if you slant the bike to miss the supports when you come down. Try the stairs at Gretzky Bridge on the north side. If it is a steep incline, the bike can get away from you and also it tempts the kids to slide down them on whatever they can get their hands on. Staircases are ugly! You can see them all the time as they stick out. They do not follow the true slant of hill. But I hope that the people that do not like the asphalt trails remain healthy and young and are able to use the staircases if they are built.

All trails should have ramps / switchbacks so usable by all.

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I would like to re-iterate the importance of having the trails accessible for strollers, wheelchairs, etc. (i.e. – not just stairs)

If the project goes ahead my next concern is with the number of staircases that are planned. Why not construct snaking paths so people with strollers, wheelchairs and bicyclist can easier traverse the hill and have access to the new bridge.

My concern in the proposed west end plan is the number and the length of the stairs. I find pushing up my bicycle or slowing it down, on the boards on the edge of the stairs a challenge. I hold my bike at an angle and sometimes it slips off the board. So as an older user of the park system I would appreciate trails that have fewer stairs and shorter length of stairs even if there are upgrades. (e.g. mill creak ravine with up-hill/ down-hill slopes or the switch backs near the Convention Centre or Quesnell Bridge) rather than stairs. I do hope some of the proposed recreation plan can be re-designed in part to accommodate the concerns of person like myself.

The large staircase seems excessive – is it?

All accesses from the north-side of the river have stairways – harder for bikes, strollers and wheelchairs

Would like to see wheelchair access – stairs are a problem for wheelchairs and bikes

Stairs are not aesthetically pleasing – the stairs from Whitemud Creek up to Grandview come to mind.

I am one of the Senior Alpine Ski Club members who bike your trails throughout the summer. I am grateful to our city forefathers who had the foresight to preserve the river valley for recreational use and for present city policy to extend the trail system. My experience has been that users in various categories (on foot, and on wheels) are considerate of each other and that shared use works. My experience has also been that users on wheels make up to 50% of users except perhaps in the downtown area. So I am dismayed by the proposal for trails north of the proposed foot bridge to include STAIRS. This will eliminate almost all but the youthful from wheeled travel on the north side - i.e. most mature cyclists, all wheelchair users, all young mothers pushing their children in carriers, all on cross-country training skis. Even most seniors on foot will be deterred. I realize that natural conditions leave few alternatives. I think the best course is for the City to pursue deals with local developers and with the Golf and Country Club for less steep access west of the current proposals. The Golf Course in particular should be pursued aggressively; they are faced with very large increases in tax assessments which make their viability questionable. They may well look to relocating and might be convinced to make some concessions to the City.

West-side of bridge, up to top of river valley bank requires using stairs. This conflicts with City policy to have all trails accessible to disabled. \$20 million and it won't be usable for the baby boomer generation.

Huge grading issues on west-side – needs to be done with at least one graded path – no stairs.

Access / Accessibility (17 comments) (see also; Stairs)

All trails should be multi-use trails and be accessible to all. (2)

Like the access from south through Wolf (Willow) Ridge.

It is important to have access to / from all communities from the valley.

Looking forward to local access

Access next to the Jewish Community Center would be very useful – I use that route during dry periods. Making the trails more obvious would reduce trespassing through the JCC Grounds.

Need more and better access points. The proposed access points are not designed to handle the traffic they will receive.

Sidewalks for pedestrians should be added to one side of Whitemud Road to provide access to the trail system.

Not sure I like the access to Wolf Willow Ridge subdivision – concerned about ner-do-wells.

The land around the Jewish Community Center MUST HAVE top of bank trail with easy, obvious, public access.

The river valley is a jewel that should be accessible by all.

I don't live in the area of the river valley and neither do most of the residents of this city and/or the tourists etc. This project isn't being built for the chosen few who can afford to live in the adjacent residential areas. Everyone and anyone needs ready and easy access to both the bridge and trails – so please make it happen on both sides of the river and at more than one point of access.

Make a plan for better access and if you have one, clarify it better.

Bicycle accessibility a must

Accessibility continues to be an issue – an access without stairs should be mandatory for all bridge access points.

Wheelchair access east of proposed bridge, to Fort Edmonton Park is adequate. However, west of new bridge is problematic with several staircases. One paved trail, with switchbacks, preferably up Patricia Ravine to existing multi-use paved trail, would allow at least a minimum access to Westridge, Oleskiw, etc.

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In an area with multiple ravines access without stairs should extend in both directions; find a way to get a trail up one of the ravines.

Parking (12) - (see also; parking in #7 above)

I cycle / hike most of the existing trails on a regular basis and rarely find cars parked at community access points (i.e. – in Riverbend, Capital Hill, Valleyview)

Still very concerned about parking congestion near the Westridge & Wolf Willow trail heads. These are the only access points for all of West Edmonton, south of the Whitemud Drive (over 100,000 Edmontonians)

The parking issue on the west side of the bridge has not been adequately addresses.

I believe the parking issue is overstated. People will not drive to the wet-end to access this bridge – it will be used by west-end residents.

Let's get the parking issue sorted out –have Council get the negotiating done with D.K. to build lots of parking at the west side of the bridge on the old golf course flats as well as starting to build the trails south to Terwillegar.

I don't want to have to worry about getting a ticket or feel guilty for parking in front of someone's house

As per concerns about parking - I believe the current reactive approach makes most sense. There appears to be an opportunity for parking on the west end of Whitemud Road.

Do not underestimate parking – Wolf Willow Crescent is one-way in and one-way out – people regularly get lost – very few actual parking spots.

Need restricted parking in Westridge and Wolf Willow.

Wolf Willow Ridge is hard to find and there is parking if one walks a little

I do not worry about excess traffic – that is likely more problematic in areas such as Belgravia and Saskatchewan Drive.

The parking will NOT be an issue; I do not want timed parking.

General / Other (11 comments)

Thanks for your hard work (2) – I really appreciate all that has been done to provide a plan to groom the trails and keep them clean, thanks for allowing us input on this project

Looks great! - hope the project proceeds quickly – traffic parking should not be a major issue as these are walking / biking trails that neighbours would primarily use.

Continue as planned.

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It will enhance the valley trail system

I was recently in Vancouver and enjoyed a very long walk from Yaletown to Stanley Park along the paved Seawalk. They have the trail divided into two lanes with a painted line down the middle, one side for pedestrians, walkers and joggers and the other side for cyclists, skate-boarders, roller-blade's, etc. Wouldn't it be nice to have something like that in our city trails?

The trails, as proposed, meet my approval

I am concerned about the re-development of the Jewish Center and trail access

Get Council to ask Rona Ambrose to fund the trail to Devon – as federal government had funded other city center developments and parks (i.e. Ottawa, Forks – Winnipeg, Quebec City)

Planning / Future Planning (7)

Let's make sure City Council prevents Wolf Willow Ridge from becoming a "gated community" preventing several access points to the river valley and the new trails to Terwillegar

Consider this bridge and trails in context of access to Terwillegar Park – the river valley isn't the only park in town

Access to Terwillegar Park, in future, would be great!

We need more trails in the southwest – I keep going to trail presentations but the trails never happen (Terwillegar Park area and around Henday bridge for example)

Continue trails through all of the Wolf Willow farm lands on the valley bottom

The river valley for some is their private area – this opening up of the valley is good for the whole city. I hope the negotiations go well for obtaining the lower land.

I look forward to the south expansion of the trail system on the west-side. As planned, the west-side is the end / start of the trail and I believe that parking could be an issue until more access points are on the west side. Acquisition of the floodplain and gravel road would be beneficial for access and expanding south. Keep going!!

Trail Surface (5 comments)

The back bone of the river trail system should be all-weather; granular is better than unimproved but still not optimal; and to appeal to all users, multiple trail types must be provided; all-weather, granular, and unimproved.

All paved, if possible (3)

Must be firm asphalt or hard packed clay / gravel as chips are loose, uncertain and dangerous

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Hard surface would be more welcome (2)

Granular trails are okay for bikes but not so for strollers, wheelchairs, motorized scooters.

Safety / Traffic Concerns (3 comments)

Concerned about Westridge Trail impacting safety in the neighbourhood.

There has been an irresponsible approach to dealing with vehicular traffic to and from the west side of the bridge. It is dangerous and it was not developed to handle flow through vehicular traffic in Wolf Willow Ridge. I strongly oppose the contemplated flow of traffic through Wolf Willow Ridge. I would like to see the statistics or design parameters of the roadway in Wolf Willow Ridge and compare the design of this roadway to what is being contemplated. It is an obvious change in traffic flow when this residential enclave was developed. Safer, easier, and more appropriate vehicular access egress must be found.

I heard a lot of hostility from residents and a lawyer in Oleskiw, Westridge, and Patricia Heights who were concerned with lack of parking and increased traffic through their area (not in my backyard?). (Perhaps these vocal groups did not represent a majority opinion for those districts; I hope not). Those areas should be asked to come up with a plan for a scaled back trail that would be acceptable to each. The presentation did not give cost break-downs bridge versus trails that would give an idea of possible savings by coming up to the west.

Natural Areas (2 comments)

Would like to see the trail system left as natural as possible.

Leave trails as natural as possible – do not overdevelop the area. I like the natural trails and the overgrown areas.