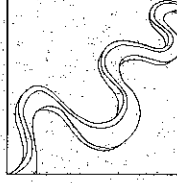


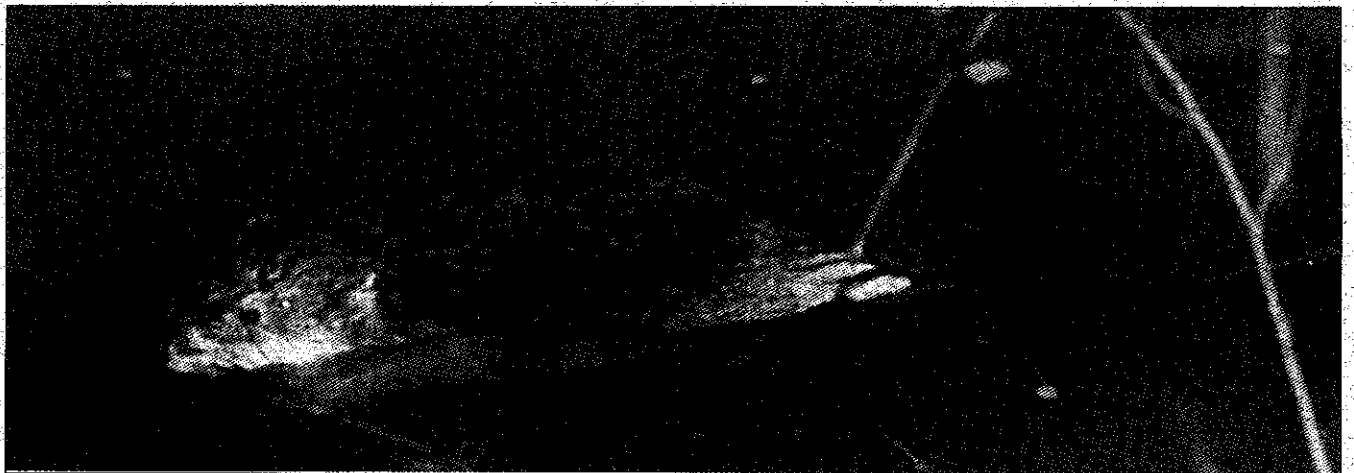
CHAPTER III



Planning and Management Policies

IN 1907 Frederick Todd envisioned a river valley that would provide the citizens of Edmonton with opportunities to enjoy and appreciate the natural aesthetic qualities of the area for generations to come. Since that time the human pressure exerted on the river valley has challenged the custodians of the area with the problem of balancing the need to preserve the environmental integrity inherent in the river valley with the need to provide citizens with an opportunity for meaningful recreation. It is clear the valley cannot be all things to all people.

In 1990 the citizens of Edmonton continued to build on Todd's vision with an expression of their own vision. That vision and its basic principles are recommended to provide the long term direction for the valley's use and care.



A. PUBLICLY SUPPORTED VISION STATEMENT

*The North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System is a **ribbon of green** running through the City of Edmonton. The natural features, wildlife, vegetation, and cultural heritage of Edmonton will be conserved for present and future generations by management of these resources to prevent exploitation, destruction or neglect. Trails, paths and parks will tie Edmonton together providing a change from urban living and an opportunity for recreation in the tranquility of nature.*

Basic Principles:

1. Conservation

The major portion of the river valley will remain in a natural state. Certain areas of habitat will be highly protected to ensure existence of native vegetation and wildlife communities and to limit the intrusion of humans.

2. Recreation

Recreation activities must be compatible with conservation of existing natural areas and must require the valley's natural setting.

3. Development

New or expanded facilities will be those which enhance recreation opportunities, are compatible with conservation and will be located in areas which are already disturbed or where environmental impact will be low.

4. Trails

Trails will provide continuous access through the valley. Trail width, surface and location will be selected to minimize impact on the environment.

5. Education

Programs will increase awareness of natural and human history; encourage an environmentally responsible attitude toward the valley and promote respect for other valley users.

B. PROGRAM STATEMENT

Following the hierarchical direction set down by the Vision Statement, the public on October 15 and 16, 1990, reviewed and amended the Conceptual Program Statement for the river valley system:

1.0 DISABLED

To take an 'integrated' approach to planning to promote accessibility for everyone regardless of age or mobility without major alterations to site or without altering the intent of the experience.

- *design to include widest cross-section of the public.*
 - consider ramps instead of steps.
 - strategic location of amenities.
 - emphasize barrier free design rather than developing separate trails.
- *provide less mobile persons with full range of options.*
 - opportunity for equal choice.
 - disabled, seniors and children.
- *design modifications*
 - the extent of physical accessibility will be based on the degree to which modifications at the particular site or facility are required.

2.0 MAJOR EMPHASIS

With the exception of identified park nodes, to restrict development to maximum of an integrated trail system, which would make the river valley accessible to the public yet protect the natural landscape and wildlife habitat areas.

- *a linear park system linked through a series of paths, trails and open space.*
 - major emphasis on continuous trail development.
 - trails not necessarily on both sides of the river.
 - trails interconnected by pedestrian bridges.
 - frequent access to main trails and parks from adjacent neighbourhoods.
 - provide parking lots at major access points.
 - encourage accessibility by good bus service.
 - emphasis on river valley being used by whole city.

- *a natural park environment*
 - reforestation of denuded areas.
 - identify and preserve 'special areas'.
 - restrict some areas.
 - block off and restore unnecessary footpaths.
- *a stewardship of protection . . . balancing open space conservation and recreation development.*
 - priority # 1 - conservation.
 - priority # 2 - recreation.
 - recreation limited to 'tranquil' activities.
- *network other areas and facilities to the valley, but don't develop more facilities in valley.*
 - linkages to trail system/urban park systems of adjacent municipalities (regional trail system).
 - linkages to other parks/recreational facilities.

3.0 PARK DEVELOPMENT

3.1 To complete program statements for the future development of five major parks:

- *Hermitage Park*
 - a nature oriented outdoor recreation park which creates a natural preserve area and an opportunity for pond life appreciation, bird watching, wildlife observation, hiking, fishing, introduction to flatwater canoeing, snowshoeing, social skating and picnicking.
- *Buena Vista Park*
 - a pedestrian oriented nature park designed for informal recreational use and picnicking.
- *Terwillegar Park*
 - a water-based, nature oriented park which creates a natural preserve area and re-establishes a viable ecology by utilizing existing and restored resources. Designed for pond life appreciation, bird watching, wildlife observation, hiking, fishing, boat launching, introduction to flatwater canoeing, snowshoeing, social skating and picnicking. Potential for relocation of the John Janzen Nature Centre.
- *Big Island*
 - a water-based, nature oriented park situated on land subject to frequent flooding. Access will

be limited to bicycles, pedestrians and boats. Designed for pond life appreciation, bird watching, wildlife observation, hiking, fishing, boat launching, picnicking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

- *Twin Brooks Park*

- a normal district level park designed to meet the needs of communities adjacent to Blackmud/Whitemud Ravine. Design program will be developed between Department and adjacent communities. Significant opportunity exists to link Twin Brooks Park to the Whitemud Ravine Nature Reserve.

3.2 To implement existing plans for Whitemud Creek and Jackie Parker Recreation Area/Upper Mill Creek.

3.3 To investigate the potential for development of conceptual program statements for Horsehills, Clover Bar, and remaining ravine lands.

4.0 TOURISM

To work with the Edmonton Tourism Committee to identify projects which would enhance Edmonton's tourism marketing position.

- projects must be consistent with 'Vision'.
- shared responsibility for planning, developing, financing and operating.
- completion of project at Ft. Edmonton, Zoo, Muttart Conservatory.
- riverboat operation.
- radial railway (streetcar) between Ft. Edmonton and Buena Vista.

5.0 EXISTING FACILITIES

To limit the geographic size of existing major facilities located in the valley to current boundaries as defined by existing master plans.

- Fort Edmonton, Valley Zoo, Kinsmen Sport Centre, Muttart Conservatory, Whitemud Equine Centre, ski hills, campgrounds, golf courses and other leased facilities.

6.0 LAND ACQUISITION

To limit cost of parkland acquisition.

- identify lands essential to trail development.
- negotiate long term easement agreements in preference to acquisition.

7.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

7.1 To develop a Resource Management Plan to ensure the long term objectives of the Vision and Principles are realized.

- co-ordinate and integrate management functions.

7.2 To work with the Province and other City departments to complete river water quality studies and identify initiatives leading to improved water quality.

7.3 To work with other government and City departments to identify areas of special environmental significance or sensitivity within the river valley and ravine system.

8.0 OTHER ACCESS ISSUES

To study access potential of:

- *Transportation/Utility corridor lands, with special attention to river and ravine crossings.*
- *residential areas of north Edmonton.*

C. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The publicly supported Vision Statement is the underlying motivation for governing the future management of the river valley. Recognizing the demands placed on the river valley's natural resources, it is important to be aware of the difficulties facing the City in attempting to fulfill this vision. The river valley is identified by both natural and urban characteristics. Those associated with the natural aspects have wildlife, vegetation, biophysical, historical, archaeological and cultural origins while those associated with the urban aspects of the river valley relate to access and linkage of trails and the relationship of these to pedestrians, bicyclists, horseback riders, skiers, vehicles, parking and transit. The Resource Management Plan will describe the characteristics of these two factors through the use of management zones and will provide a framework from which decisions concerning urban and natural system interaction can be made. The Resource Management Plan will contain the guiding principles and the foundation for resolving conflict related to both use and conservation of the river valley.

2. MANAGEMENT ZONES

The river valley and its associated ravines is a complex collection of ecosystems that range from areas virtually undisturbed and natural to areas that have been extensively altered or developed. These areas represent varying degrees of sensitivity towards accommodating and sustaining recreation. In order to highlight the opportunities and constraints of each of these areas the river valley will be described in terms of Management Zones. The zones have been initially defined as **Preservation Zone, Conservation Zone and Extensive Use Zone** based on a preliminary visual analysis of the river valley. It may be necessary to further define the zones or add new zones as more detailed information becomes available. A brief description of the zones follows:

- **Preservation** is defined as a process used to restrict an area for the protection of natural resources. The **Preservation Zone** is characterized by mini-

imum disturbance, leaving native vegetation and wildlife habitat intact. Management practises will include no development, no routine maintenance, periodic garbage cleanup, restricted wildlife control (only when ecological balance is threatened), only emergency safety and security services. Human intrusion will not be encouraged. This zone could include areas which are very steep and/or unstable and areas of unique characteristics such as sensitive or unusual habitats, geological features or cultural remains. Examples of activities which may be included are: canoeing/kayaking, walking, jogging, nature study observation, photography.

- **Conservation** is defined as a process used to manage the interaction of natural resources and people so as to prevent exploitation, destruction or neglect. The **Conservation Zone** is characterized by some human disturbance; considerable native vegetation and wildlife habitat remain intact. Management practises will include development limited to trails, routine garbage pick up and trail edge maintenance, limited wildlife control, some habitat restoration and some safety and security services. Recreation will be limited to trail based activities. Examples of activities which may be included are: snowshoeing, X-country skiing, canoeing/kayaking; orienteering, photography, rowing, fishing, bicycling, walking, jogging, nature study observation, horseback riding.
- **Extensive Use Zones** are characterized by substantial facility development and high accessibility to people, i.e., major parks and facilities. Management practises will include high levels of daily maintenance and full safety and security services. This area has a wide range of recreational activities. Preservation and Conservation principles will apply where it is deemed necessary or possible. Recreation could include high activity areas such as facility operation, programs, interpretive displays and information centers.

3. MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The five management functions identified as essential to effectively integrate utilization with preservation:

- Recreational, Educational, Interpretive and Visitor Services.
- Development Policies and Practices.
- Maintenance Policies and Practices.

- Safety and Security Services.
- Administration.

For the Resource Management Plan to operate effectively these major functions must be integrated where decisions concerning the river valley are made. This will require a collective effort on the part of all interested publics, non-profit organizations, private organizations, City of Edmonton departments and other agencies or levels of government.

Recreational, Educational, Interpretive and Visitor Services

Recreational, educational, interpretive and visitor services will be provided to develop awareness of and responsibility for river valley historical, archaeological, cultural, wildlife and vegetative resources.

Development Policies and Practices

Proposed recreation land uses will be reviewed to ensure that if development is deemed necessary or desirable it will be compatible with the preservation and conservation goals of the river valley and will be accomplished in a way that minimizes the environmental impact.

Maintenance Policies and Practices

Maintenance will be provided to defined levels of service compatible with the goals of preservation, conservation, safety and cost. Forest management principles will be implemented where possible to improve the quality of river valley forests for its principal uses i.e., forest recreation, environmental education and wildlife habitat.

Safety and Security Services

The public, volunteer organizations, Parks and Recreation, the Police and Fire Departments will work together to ensure the safety and security of all river valley users.

Administration

This document is a long range plan which will provide consistent overall guidelines for the variety of activities and functions carried on in the river valley. It will act as a guide and framework for decision making. In order to effectively carry out this mandate it will be necessary to develop a mechanism which can serve as a vehicle for bringing interested groups and individuals together to discuss issues relevant to the river valley.

4. MATRIX

The following diagram represents the components of the Resource Management Plan and signifies the interaction of these components (zones and the management functions). The intersecting points reflect the level of importance attached to each interaction. Level of importance is defined as high, medium

and low and is further defined in the following manner.

- High - suggests a high level of service.
- ◐ Medium - suggests a moderate level of service.
- Low - suggests minimum or non existent service.

Management Framework Management Zone	RECREATION INTERPRETIVE VISITOR	DEVELOPMENT	SAFETY SECURITY	MAINTENANCE			
				AGRICULTURE	TURF MAINTENANCE	PARK SERVICING	CLEAN UP
PRESERVATION							
CONSERVATION	●		◐				◐
EXTENSIVE USE	●	◐	●	●	●	●	●

Figure 5