

William Hawrelak Park

Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study

RECOMMENDATION

That Executive Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That the William Hawrelak Park - Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study, as outlined in Attachments 1 and 2 of the March 23, 2022, Integrated Infrastructure Services report IIS00670, be approved.
2. That the location of William Hawrelak Park as outlined in Attachment 2 of the March 23, 2022, Integrated Infrastructure Services report IIS00670 be deemed essential and approved, pursuant to the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan, Bylaw 7188.

Report Purpose

Council decision required

Council is asked to approve the William Hawrelak Park Rehabilitation Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study in accordance with the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan, Bylaw 7188 (Managing the Corporation).

Executive Summary

- This report requests City Council's approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Attachment 1) and the Site Location Study (Attachment 2) for the William Hawrelak Park Rehabilitation (the Project).
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) identifies positive residual impacts resulting from the project and careful mitigation design and implementation to address the impacts from the construction phase. The project does not require additional modifications to proceed responsibly with respect to environmental impacts.
- The Site Location Study (SLS) shows that the project location is essential in the river valley to maintain or improve the park's ecological value and to respect its river valley setting.
- Approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) demonstrates the City's commitment to environmental project reviews, environmental permitting and environmentally sound

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design. This work ensures that the City's environmental stewardship outcome is met during the construction of this project.

REPORT

William Hawrelak Park located in the central Edmonton river valley is situated between Groat Road to the east and the North Saskatchewan River to the west within the boundaries of Bylaw 7188, North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan (Figure 2, Appendix A of Attachment 1). Small portions of the park are located within the City's Flood Protection Overlay.

William Hawrelak Park opened in 1967 and is one of Edmonton's largest feature parks providing value to residents and visitors throughout Edmonton and the greater metro region.

Prior to the park opening, the area served as a gravel pit in the 1950s. At over 50 years old much of the infrastructure within the park needs replacement or repair. The rehabilitation of William Hawrelak Park includes the lifecycle replacement of utilities, transportation, open space and facility infrastructure to better support the site's existing varied and intensive uses.

The preliminary design of the project was completed in the fall of 2021. Detailed design is underway and construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2023.

In accordance with section 3.5.3 of Bylaw 7188, the Project is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study that outlines current conditions in the project area, evaluates potential risks and identifies adverse impacts that must be eliminated, minimized, or mitigated through design, landscaping and construction measures.

The Environmental Impact Assessment has shown that with the appropriate mitigation measures applied and the required environmental permitting completed, the impacts related to the project's construction phase can be mitigated such that adverse residual impacts are largely reduced. As design advances and construction disturbance areas are better defined in key sensitive areas, additional mitigation design and implementation for the work proposed will be completed.

As summarized in the Environmental Impact Assessment, some of the potential impacts and mitigations include:

- River Bank/Slope Stability
 - Outfall work on the riverbank will require additional geotechnical investigation to support slope stability measures and careful consideration for site access to address impacts to vegetation, fish and wildlife.
- Redistribution of contaminated soils
 - All ground disturbance work in the park will require a construction management plan to ensure the contaminated soil risk management recommendations are met. Excavated soils will be tested to confirm their suitability for reuse.
- Lake bottom dredging
 - Lake dredging plan will include measures to prevent accidental releases from equipment and an emergency response plan.

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- Wildlife during construction:
 - Work crews will be instructed not to disturb wildlife. The contractor's Environmental Construction Operation plan will include worker/wildlife encounter protocols.
- Disturbance to historic resources
 - Approvals related to archaeological resources will be secured before construction and monitored during construction.
 - The palaeontological monitoring program for all works in the area will be implemented.

The Environmental Impact Assessment also highlights the positive residual impact on the environment that will result from the project:

- Hawrelak Lake
 - Ecological improvements to Hawrelak Lake through the removal of lake sediments and the addition of landscaping on the lake shorelines and islands.
- Vegetation
 - Removal of existing invasive plant species.
- Park Lighting
 - Application of the City's new Light Efficiency Community Guidelines resulting in improved lighting conditions for wildlife.

Environmental mitigation strategies will form part of the contractual requirements for the construction of the Project. Many of the mitigation strategies outlined in the Environmental Impact Assessment align with existing City policies and bylaws, such as Enviso ISO 14001, City Policy C456C - Corporate Tree Management Policy and Bylaw 18825 - Public Tree Bylaw. Federal and provincial permitting pertaining to the North Saskatchewan bed and shore and instream works will be confirmed as detailed design is advanced and construction methodologies confirmed. In addition, the contractor will be required to develop and maintain an Environmental Construction Operations plan for the duration of the work and to implement additional mitigation strategies outlined in the assessment that are not part of current City policies. Some of the mitigation measures include;

- Cleaning equipment before moving into the Project area to help reduce the potential transfer and spread of weed species.
- All turf areas affected by construction will be reclaimed to meet or exceed pre-disturbance conditions.
- Level of weed control is required until desired vegetation becomes established.
- Disposal of all existing material as required by environmental policies.
- Immediately stabilizing banks disturbed by any activity associated with the Project to prevent erosion and/or sedimentation, preferably through revegetation with native species suitable for the site.

The Site Location Study identifies that the Project location in the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) is essential as it is intended to improve and showcase the public river valley park. The Project proposed scopes of work have been identified to maintain or improve park ecological values and respect its river valley setting. There are no project

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components that introduce new park uses; therefore, the proposed rehabilitation is consistent with City bylaws, plans and policies. As this is a river valley park renewal project, no alternative locations were examined.

Budget/Financial Implications

During the Fall 2021 Supplemental Capital Budget Adjustment, Council approved \$6.8 million in funding within capital profile 21-32-9101 William Hawrelak Park Rehabilitation to complete the detailed design of the project. Approving the recommendations in this report will have no impact on the current approved budget and will support the completion of the detailed design portion of the project. Administration will provide an updated estimate for the build stage of the project for Council's consideration in the 2023 - 2026 Capital Budget.

Legal Implications

Bylaw 7188 requires that City Council approve the William Hawrelak Park Rehabilitation Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study and that the project's location be deemed essential in the River Valley before the proposed development can proceed to construction.

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

Public engagement was completed in 2018 to support the development of the rehabilitation plan that guides the renewal of William Hawrelak Park. Feedback from various audiences provided an understanding of how the park was functioning and the priorities for improvement. Overall, respondents are proud of William Hawrelak Park, passionate that the green space is not compromised and the park's main features remain the same. Administration continues to work with various festival and event operator organizations whose events will be impacted by the park closure.

In 2021 additional engagement was completed to support the design phase of the Project specific to pathways. The feedback received and technical requirements and City policies were used to develop a final pathway design.

GBA+

GBA+ analysis is an ongoing aspect of the project that influences the planning and design. In summary, the Project has included a four lens approach that considers cultural celebrations, world class recreation, honours history and ecological enrichment. All four lenses contribute to working towards equality by;

- removing barriers and inspiring more opportunities
- integrating a diversity of uses and accommodating a diverse demographic
- ensuring opportunities are available to everyone

The rehabilitation project has identified two key areas to remove barriers and address equity:

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- **Accessibility for People with Disabilities:** The Project targeted improving accessibility, examples include a connected and accessible pathway system throughout the park, gender-neutral washrooms to accommodate care providers and family supports. Changes to the Amphitheatre include pathways resloped, additional accessible seating, installation of an auditory listening loop and improved lighting. The park completed an accessibility audit and has been designed to meet the City of Edmonton Access Design Guide, which included engaging an Accessibility Consultant.
- **Safety:** The Project improves safety, including separating vehicles and active mobility traffic around the park's perimeter and improved lighting throughout the park. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles were applied to the park renewal design to enhance safety measures.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Element	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score (with current mitigations)	Current Mitigations	Potential Future Mitigations
If the recommendation is not approved						
Infrastructure renewal cannot proceed without Environmental Approvals	Aging infrastructure will fail, leading to park closure	4 - Likely	4 - worst case	16 - high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure environmental approvals for the complete project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage the environmental approval process to only address critical infrastructure elements of the project in less environmentally sensitive areas

ATTACHMENTS

1. William Hawrelak Park Renewal - Environmental Impact Assessment Pursuant to Bylaw 7188 - Final Report
2. Site Location Study Pursuant to Bylaw 7188 for William Hawrelak Park Renewal - Final Report