



Appendix A  
Engagement Summary Report







## Engagement Overview

Edmontonians are passionate about Mill Creek Ravine, and this engagement process acknowledges the value of including local knowledge and community values in the concept development of the daylighted creek. During this phase of the project, the aim was to gather input that developed the project vision and ultimately guided the creation of three creek concepts. Feedback was gathered on what Edmontonians value about Mill Creek and what concerns and key input they had for the project vision.

In addition to engaging the public, multiple meetings were held with City staff and government officials to identify concerns and opportunities for collaboration between various departments and City projects.

### Communications

A variety of communication methods were used to inform the community about opportunities to learn about and share thoughts on the Mill Creek Daylighting project. Media advertisements, road signs, and community newsletters are some of the methods that were used to promote engagement opportunities.

### Participation

Participation was broken into two categories: project visioning and concept feedback. Two visioning sessions engaged community stakeholder groups and the public, and feedback was incorporated into concept development. A final public open house was held to gather feedback on the three restoration concepts. In addition to open house workshops, a website was available that provided information on the project, timelines, open houses, other ongoing studies on Mill Creek, and nearby projects.

#### Community Stakeholder Group Visioning Workshop (October 25, 2016)

A visioning workshop was held from 5 - 7 pm that included a brief presentation to inform participants on the vision, background, opportunities and constraints, objectives, and timeline for the project. The presentation also included examples of what other municipalities have done to daylight streams, and concluded with a question and answer period. Following the presentation, four focus group discussions were held where participants were able to discuss ecology, recreation and water in the context of the project.

#### Public Visioning Open House (November 16, 2016)

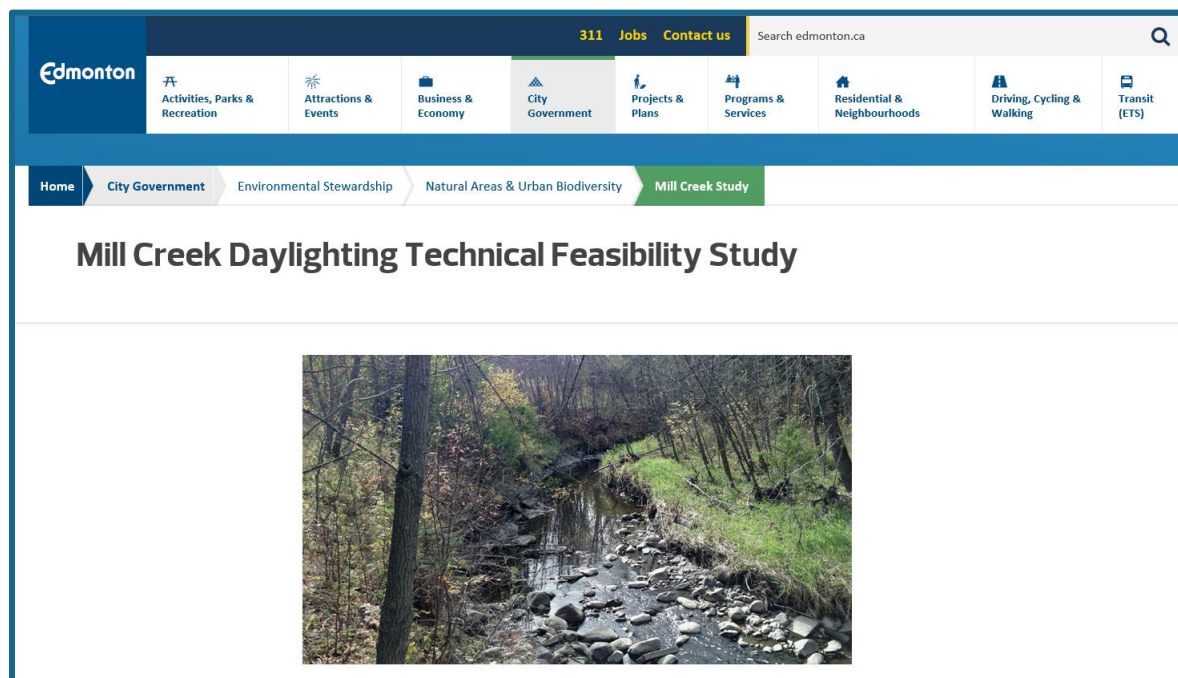
A drop-in open house session was held from 4 – 8:30 pm that provided the opportunity to learn about the project, to ask questions and discuss the project with team members and to provide input. Large maps were provided on which people could draw, write or attach sticky notes to convey their thoughts.

#### Concept Feedback Open House (December 13, 2016)

A second session was held from 5 – 8 pm where three concepts for the creek restoration were presented. This open house presented the same background information from the November open house in addition to the concepts. These concepts were reflective of public feedback and each had a distinct focus.

## Online

The project website ([edmonton.ca/millcreekstudy](http://edmonton.ca/millcreekstudy)) included background information on the project and details of the next upcoming open house. In addition, a survey link was provided for individuals to provide feedback on the three restoration concepts if they were unable to attend the December open house. Online feedback received after the December 13 open house was not addressed in this report, and will be addressed by the City in a stand alone report.





## What Was Said

It is clear that Edmontonians are passionate about the Mill Creek Ravine, as combined participation from all of the engagement activities had an estimated 200 individuals participating.

### Community Stakeholder Group Visioning Workshop (October 25, 2016)

This open house session was attended by approximately a dozen members of key community stakeholder groups.

Highlights from the focus group discussions and comments received at the open house are presented below.

#### Focus Group Discussion Feedback

- Fish and aquatic ecology top priority
- Carry upstream character of creek through project (being in nature)
- Culvert crossings should be avoided
- Educational opportunities
- Winter recreation
- Improve/re-align/simplify road network
- Don't change the road network
- Water quality and odour
- Connectivity with existing trails, footbridge, downtown, Muttart, LRT
- Daylight east of Valley Line LRT
- Existing trail/sidewalk is not good (safety, unpleasant, lack of way-finding)
- Provide tangible benefits
- Wetland/pond/water body
- Access to touch the water

### Other Feedback

#### Values

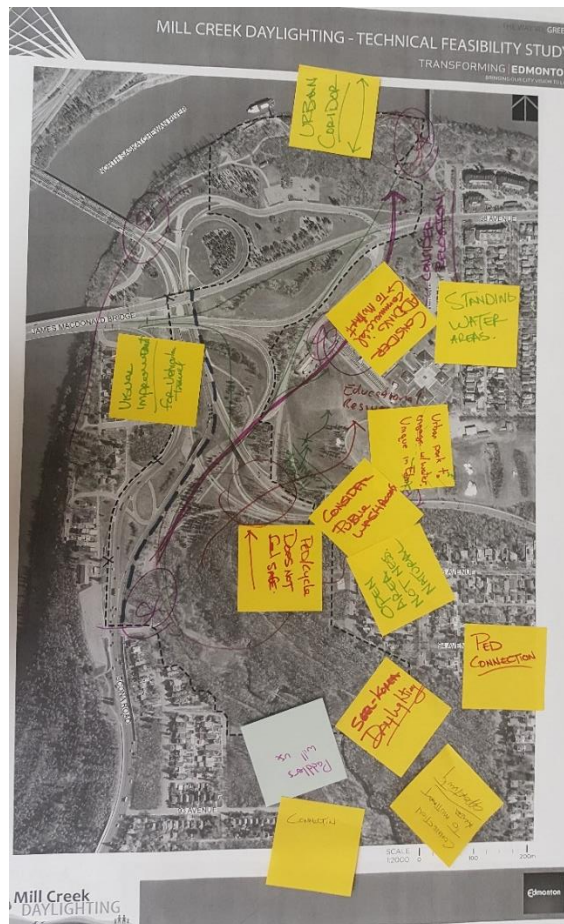
- Connections and education
- Connected trail from Mill Creek to NSR
- Multi-user and single track trails
- Being away from cars
- Picnics
- Bird watching
- Biking

#### Concerns

- Design lacking learning and education
- Fish access from NSR
- Current transportation is a barrier
- Improve safety of road crossings
- Odour
- Don't create an off-leash dog area

#### Vision Input

- Create a place/space that people can relate to and be proud of
- Consider replacement for any single-track removal
- Design suitable single track trails
- Improve trail connection and flow rather than creating more pinch points
- Naturalized
- Encourage wildlife
- Connect to existing trail and transportation network
- Reduce traffic, vehicle noise and speed
- Create an urban park unique to Edmonton



### Public Visioning Open House (November 16, 2016)

This open house session was attended by approximately 60 to 80 individuals, tracked through a sign-in sheet, and a total of 47 comment sheets were returned.

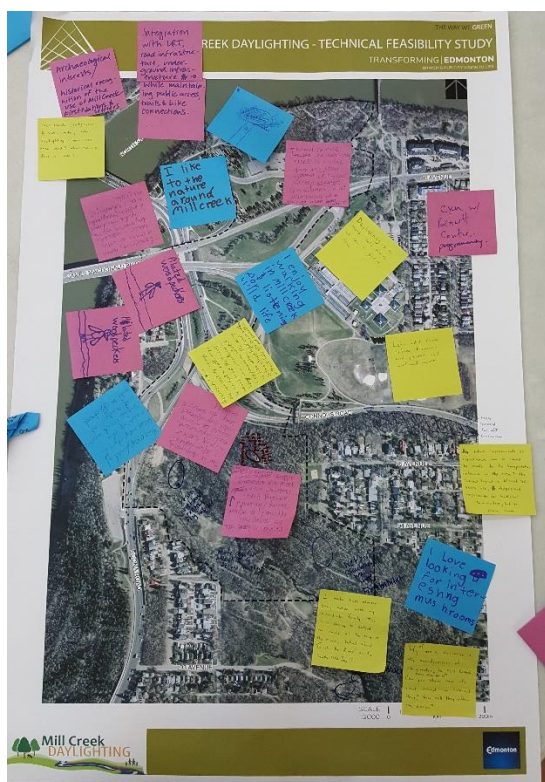
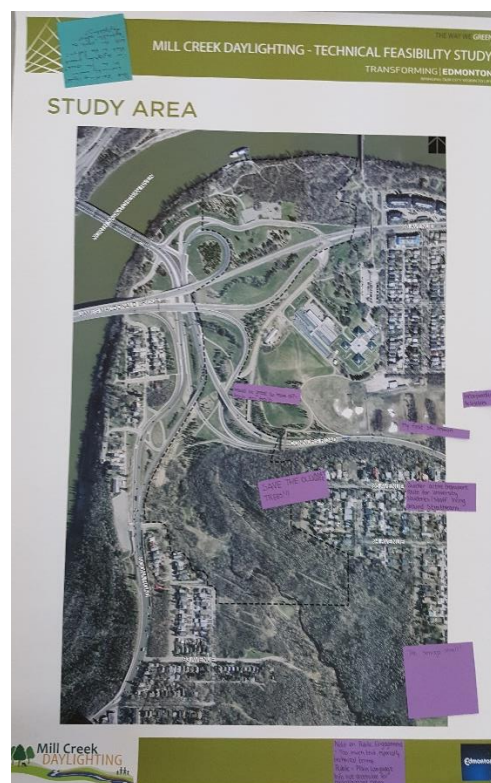
The following section outlines what the community values about Mill Creek and concerns over both the proposed project and existing naturalized portions of Mill Creek.

Summary of Key Values and Concerns
Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to see wildlife, frogs, mushrooms, etc.</li> <li>• Ability to walk along a creek</li> <li>• Connection to nature in the City</li> <li>• Natural area that provides habitat and encourages wildlife to come to the area</li> <li>• Naturalized area with good balance of man-made elements</li> <li>• Lack of traffic and noise</li> <li>• Accessible for those with mobility issues</li> <li>• Ties into the River Valley system</li> <li>• Multi-use paths service variety of users</li> <li>• Recreational, dog walking and picnic opportunities</li> <li>• Many access points from adjacent neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Educational opportunities for children</li> </ul>
Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will creek be accessible (e.g. wade in the Creek)</li> <li>• Road network is currently overly complex and is a barrier to accessing Creek and North Saskatchewan River</li> <li>• Road network is not pedestrian/cyclist friendly (lack of wayfinding)</li> <li>• Road network is not safe for path users (vehicle speed and proximity of sidewalk to major roads feels unsafe)</li> <li>• Area currently lacks trail connection to funicular</li> <li>• Retaining trail system and providing continuous paths under road crossings</li> <li>• Flooding</li> <li>• Construction of multiple projects in the area – traffic impacts</li> <li>• Some ravine access points are not accessible for those with mobility issues</li> <li>• Current erosion and path issues along Creek, lack of maintenance</li> <li>• Water quality in the Creek</li> <li>• Project costs (navigating existing infrastructure and what the end product will have to show for cost)</li> <li>• Ability to enjoy trail system while adjacent to road network</li> </ul>



**Summary of Specific Ideas for Daylighting**

- Simplify the road network; make roads smaller
- Completely re-design road network
- Re-align road network with goal to make room for Creek and green space
- Connect to funicular
- Don't alter the roadways
- Maximize active transportation potential of the area
- Provide sitting and picnic areas
- Lots of trees
- Create fishing opportunities
- Plan with the future in mind
- Ensure naturalized aesthetic and focus on ecological benefits, limit man-made elements
- Preserve existing trails
- Make area accessible and ensure no transition issues between roads and paths
- Create ponds and wetlands; enhance existing wetlands
- Ecosystem restoration is a high priority
- Make area a destination
- Consider winter usage (e.g. cross-county skiing and skating on ponds)





## What We Heard – What We Did

The feedback the above two sessions was incorporated into concept development in a variety of ways, as presented below.



What We Heard	What We Did
Reconnect the creek to allow fish to enter from river and create fish spawning habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each concept has a fully daylighted (open air), continuous creek corridor reconnecting upper Mill Creek to the North Saskatchewan River and provides some fish spawning habitat</li> </ul>
Simplify and/or re-design road network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept 1 (Ecology) and Concept 3 (Urban Park), involve significant adjustments to the roadway network to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create a wider park corridor that provides high ecological connectivity or allows for more recreation opportunities</li> <li>decrease conflict between roads and people</li> <li>reduce the number of bridge crossings required</li> <li>reduce traffic noise</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Don't change the road network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept 2 (Trails) road changes are limited to shifting 98 Avenue</li> </ul>
Create new habitat, restore ecosystem and improve biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept 1 (Ecology) provides a restored corridor that emphasizes new habitat, biodiversity and strong ecological connectivity</li> <li>Concepts 2 (Trails) and 3 (Urban Park) provide this to a much lesser degree; however, all options provide fish spawning habitat north of 98 Avenue</li> </ul>
Provide a natural aesthetic, non-manmade character, form and components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All concepts have a natural aesthetic creek</li> <li>All concepts have some naturalized vegetation</li> <li>But all concepts require some retaining walls to accommodate creek grade and create space</li> </ul>



What We Heard	What We Did
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept 1 (Ecology) concept has fewest man-made elements, Concept 3 (Urban Park) provides a balanced mix of natural and man-made elements</li> </ul>
Extend current uses of the creek and ravine (recreation, natural space, walking, cycling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept 1 (Ecology) is fully naturalized and provides one path suitable for walking or biking and nature appreciation</li> <li>Concept 2 (Trails) focuses on trail connectivity, specifically for walking and cycling (including commuting). This concept includes a paved Shared Use Path, naturalized vegetation, view points</li> <li>Concept 3 (Urban Park) extends all current uses of Mill Creek</li> </ul>
Make the area a destination, provide education opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concept 3 (Urban Park) provides open/green park space, naturalized vegetation, turf and picnic areas, an in-stream pond adjacent to the Muttart LRT stop, viewing points, trails, and a learning centre</li> </ul>
Create wetland habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All concepts have some wetlands</li> </ul>
Plan for the future, think long-term and don't rush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This feasibility study aims to assess constraints, identify priorities, provide concepts and associated estimate costs prior to project approval</li> <li>All concepts account for future infrastructure that will be in the area such as the Valley Line LRT stop and footbridge and the funicular</li> <li>All concepts could be staged across several years as funding and other opportunities for project coordination become available</li> </ul>
Save mature trees and include many trees in final design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All concepts retain some existing trees near the current diversion and near the river, but all require some mature tree removal to re-establish a creek channel</li> <li>All concepts establish new treed areas</li> </ul>
Ensure high functioning trail system that ties into surrounding areas, trail networks and funicular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All concepts have at least one trail that ties into existing system</li> <li>Concept 1 (Ecology) includes only a single gravel path</li> <li>Concept 2 (Trail Connectivity) and 3 (Urban Park) include a paved Shared Use Path and other trail types</li> <li>Where paths are lost in order to facilitate re-establishment of the Mill Creek channel, replacement paths will provide equivalent or improved connectivity</li> </ul>
Ensure paths go under roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All concepts include at least one continuous grade-separated trail that crosses under all roads and eliminates crosswalks</li> </ul>
Historical recognition of past uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All concepts include the potential to incorporate various interpretive values through signage and other educational material</li> <li>Concept 3 (Urban Park) provides the most opportunities for this</li> </ul>
Consider winter usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each concept has a trail or space that could be used for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing</li> </ul>
Improve sense of safety around road network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All options include trails through the new corridor and road underpasses, eliminating road crossings</li> <li>Vegetation will screen traffic from view, further increasing sense of security</li> </ul>



What We Heard	What We Did
Make creek swimmable and allow for canoe access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water quality improvements in the creek are currently being investigated by the City through other studies</li> <li>Major flows will be diverted away from the daylighted reach to minimize downstream erosion concerns; water depths are not expected to be conducive to canoeing or kayaking</li> </ul>
Design the Creek to run through Gallagher Park and Muttart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant technical constraints exist with this option including permission to work on LRT lands, a known contaminated site (because of past, historic land use), existing hills in the area conflicting with Creek profile and elevation, conflicts with existing Muttart infrastructure and creating two new crossings</li> <li>Not impossible, but not identified as a desirable alignment and therefore not included in any of the three concepts.</li> </ul>
Consider flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High flows will be diverted through the existing tunnel to the river</li> <li>Creek to be well below existing infrastructure</li> </ul>

### Concept Feedback Open House (December 13, 2016)

This open house was open to the public and was attended by approximately 40 to 50 individuals. The three concepts were presented to the public to gather feedback with the intent that feedback would inform future design. The concepts were: Concept 1: Ecology focus, Concept 2: Trail Connectivity focus and Concept 3: Destination Park focus. Feedback was gathered on concept preference, what features were supported, how the concepts could be improved and preference on the individual features that could be mixed and matched in each concept. Some of the more commonly recurring themes are presented below.

Concept 1: Ecology Focus	
Supported Features	Improvements and Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most naturalized with focus on ecological health</li> <li>• Best option for wildlife, birds and fish</li> <li>• Gravel pathways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a food forest</li> <li>• Multi-use paved trails would ensure bike access and encourage winter recreation</li> <li>• Allow for more access to creek</li> <li>• Add some developed features such as a café, a lookout and a washroom near the LRT station</li> </ul>
Concept 2: Trail Connectivity Focus	
Supported Features	Improvements and Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connectivity to existing trails</li> <li>• Paved pathways encourage active transport and accommodate both pedestrian and cyclists</li> <li>• Natural focus on creek, river, and bird and fish populations</li> <li>• Balance of recreation and ecology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trail access to Riverdale Bridge</li> <li>• More roadway redesign</li> <li>• Add some developed features such as a small plaza or washroom near LRT station</li> <li>• Granular trails</li> </ul>
Concept 3: Destination Park Focus	
Supported Features	Improvements and Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational features and learning centre</li> <li>• Pond</li> <li>• Amenities at LRT station such as plaza and washrooms</li> <li>• Creation of a destination for new users and tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less manicured turf area</li> <li>• Minimize impact and make more natural</li> <li>• Too commercial and manufactured</li> <li>• Doesn't make sense to do this option, dislike the features and concept</li> </ul>

### General Comments

- Happy about project and hope it moves forward
- Concern about cost of project
- Ensure dog-walking is considered
- Ensure to focus on ecology, Edmonton has many parks similar to Concept #3



### Feature Ranking

Feature rankings were averaged and are presented below in Figure 1. **Features considered most important were given a 1 and least important a 10.** Features below are sorted from those ranked most important to least important.

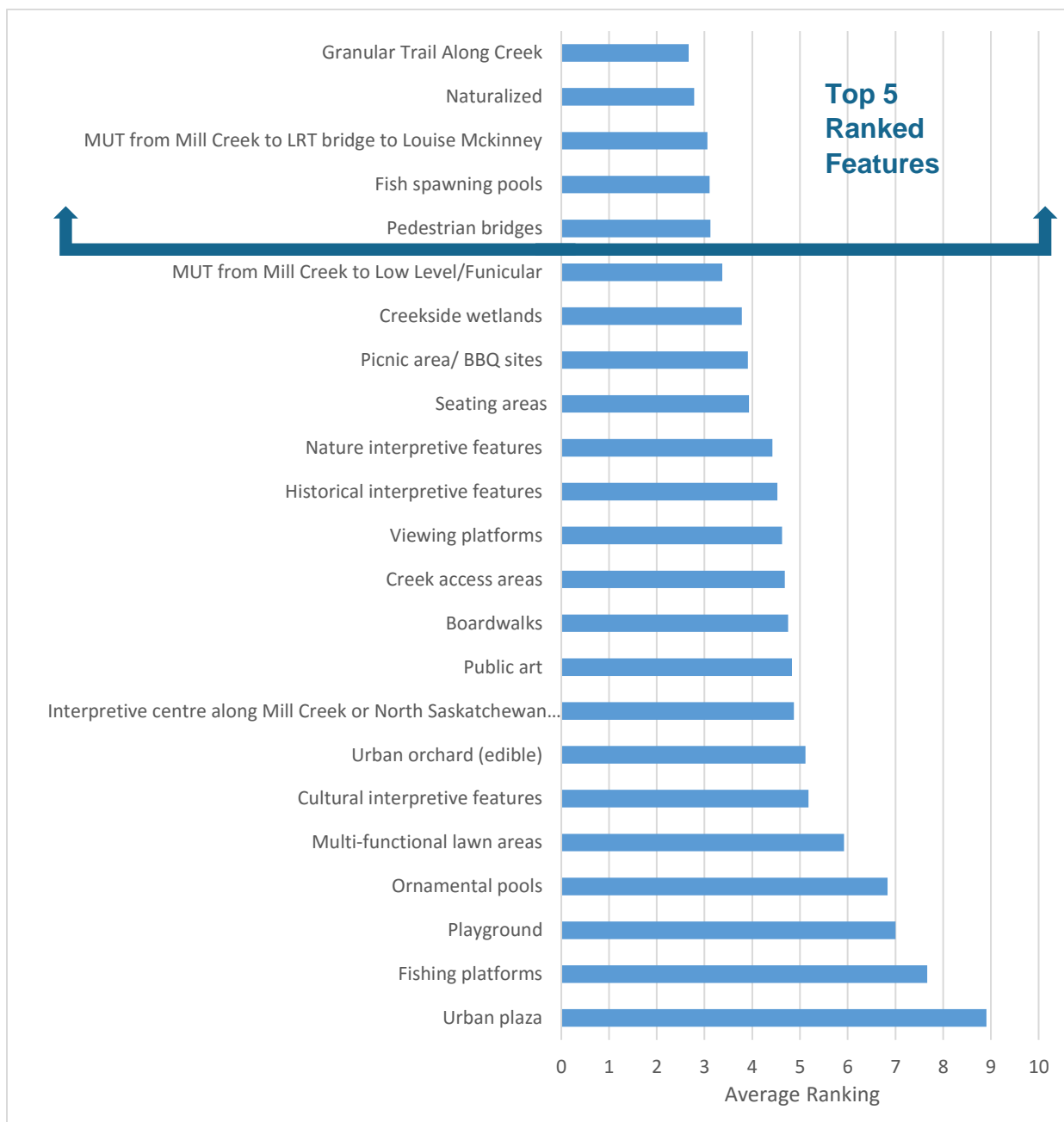


Figure 1: Feature Ranking

## Next Steps

Engagement feedback has been compiled for use by City officials and Council. Feedback from the December 13 open house has been compiled to guide concept refinement in future design phases of this project.