



COUNCIL MEMBER APPOINTMENT REPORTING

Appointment:	River Valley Alliance
Classification:	External Agency - Intergovernmental
Councillor(s):	Councillor Ashley Salvador Councillor Michael Janz
Reporting Period:	November 1, 2022 - April 30, 2023

Mandate

The River Valley Alliance (RVA) is an incorporated company established to promote, coordinate and facilitate the protection, preservation and enhancement of the River Valley for year-round accessibility and enjoyment of citizens and visitors. Shareholder municipalities include: the Town of Devon, Parkland County, the City of Edmonton, Strathcona County, the City of Fort Saskatchewan, and Sturgeon County.

The goal of the RVA is to preserve, protect and enhance the largest metropolitan river valley park system in the world – a legacy for generations to come – by connecting the trail system and making it easier for all to access and enjoy.

Background

The City of Edmonton is one of six shareholder municipalities represented on the RVA. The work of the RVA aligns with the City Plan and the goals outlined in ConnectEdmonton.

Shared priorities and advocacy areas

Completion of Longest River Valley Trail in North America

The trail is 75% complete and links the Edmonton metro region river valley through 6 municipalities. It includes 3 pedestrian bridges crossing the North Saskatchewan River, including the world's 2nd longest stressed ribbon suspension bridge; 1 mechanized access connecting Edmonton's downtown core to the river valley trail, Alberta's only river valley funicular; 8 boat docks and launches providing river access for paddle boards, canoes, rafts; trail heads at key locations, including parking, washroom facilities and wayfinding.

25 kms of trail connecting West Anthony Henday Bridge to Rabbit Hill Creek Ravine are remaining. This section of trail is all within the City of Edmonton. This gap in the trail system is also adjacent to Big Island Provincial Park. A pedestrian bridge linking the existing trail in Devon to the existing trail in Parkland County is also needed.

The cost to complete the 25 kms of trail is estimated at \$18 million, completed in 3 equal segments of \$6M each. The cost to complete the pedestrian bridge linking Devon and Parkland County trails is \$18 million.

The project is funded by Municipal, Provincial and Federal Governments under a one third funding model. \$110 million has been invested in Phase I which will be complete in 2025. This includes the Edmonton-Strathcona County Footbridge.

Projects are described in detail in the RVA Plan of Action, a three-phase blueprint created and agreed upon by the six shareholder municipalities. The RVA Plan of Action is referenced in CoE's Ribbon of Green Plan, Strathcona County's Regional Park Master Plan and other municipal park and trail planning documents.

Urban National Park

RVA is well positioned to assist in the planning and implementation of a new National Urban Park by building on the work that has already been completed. As engagement opportunities arise, RVA will be an important stakeholder to include in discussions.

Report on activities, projects, and outcomes

Trail Completion

By December of 2024, the RVA will have successfully completed Phase I and coordinated the connection of 75% of the regional river valley park system. Advocacy continues as the RVA looks to complete the remaining 25% in partnership with stakeholder municipalities.

Trail Naming

In 2021, the RVA launched a trail naming initiative to establish an overarching, unifying trail name. On May 11, 2023 a Trail Name Ceremony was held to announce the new name. The name Amisko Wacîw Mêskanaw, or Beaver Hill Road, was shared by Elder Jerry Saddleback, representing the connections we wish to make for Edmontonians between our past and our future.

The RVA was joined by key stakeholders, regional partners, and elected officials, including members of City Council.

Annual General Meeting and Stakeholder Reception

The RVA's AGM was held on April 27, 2023 at the historic Yorath House, followed by the Annual Spring Reception to celebrate another year of working together to connect the longest river valley trail in North America.

Trail Walks

Trail walks have continued and offer an engaging opportunity for community members and the RVA to connect and enjoy our trail network.

Evaluation

It is recommended that the City of Edmonton continue to work with the River Valley Alliance to advance municipal priorities and areas of shared interest.