

EPCOR - Edmonton Water Treatment Plant Flood Protection Program Phase Two Indigenous Engagement Update

Executive Summary

Forum Community Relations was contracted by EPCOR to develop and execute an Indigenous engagement plan for phase two (refined design concepts) engagement related to EPCOR's Edmonton Water Treatment Plant (EWTP) Flood Protection Program. A holistic approach that offered multiple pathways for Indigenous Nations and communities to participate was applied to Indigenous engagement. The ongoing nature of this approach results in overlap and interconnection between some outcomes for discrete phases.

EPCOR recognizes the significance of the lands under and around its E.L. Smith and Rossdale water treatment plants to Indigenous rights-holders and communities. During phase two Indigenous engagement, EPCOR engaged 32 Indigenous Nations and communities with an interest in these lands and will continue to engage with them throughout the project. So far, 28 Indigenous Nations and communities have participated in some way.

The summary herein, highlights the approach, timeline and Indigenous engagement activities that occurred between November 2021 and June 2022. We heard from Indigenous participants in many ways, including online workshops, in-person tours, emails, phone conversations, monitoring activities, ceremonies and telephone surveys.

Through input shared during Indigenous engagement activities EPCOR received feedback and heard comments, questions, concerns and preferences related to specific engagement questions and the project in general. Indigenous participants referenced many histories and stories of the Rossdale and E.L. Smith areas, and noted their historical and contemporary significance to Indigenous peoples. We heard that access to the river, harvesting and gathering areas was important and that harvesting remains an important activity. Respondents also told us that preservation and enhancement of the ecology of the area were priorities. We heard that art should be from Indigenous artists and that Indigenous peoples and histories of the area should be honoured and shared in different ways on and near the flood barriers. When asked about preferences related to flood barrier designs and materials diverse responses were heard. EPCOR will respond to and utilize what was heard as next steps in the project are planned.

Background and Approach to Indigenous Engagement

EPCOR is undertaking a multi-year flood mitigation project with the goal of **ensuring EPCOR is prepared for a major flood event**. The Indigenous engagement plan for phase two is informed by EPCOR’s Engage Strategy document, EPCOR’s Indigenous Engagement Framework, and certain shared outcomes and design principles as outlined in: “EPCOR Newsletter-Shared Outcomes Design Principles.pdf.” The public engagement approach includes four phases prior to construction and seeks to engage with stakeholders throughout the phases. EPCOR recognizes the unique perspectives of Indigenous rights-holders and communities and that engagement with these groups requires a unique approach that is ongoing in nature. The result is that phase outcomes may overlap and interconnect. A high-level timeline of phase two engagement activities is included in Figure 1 below.

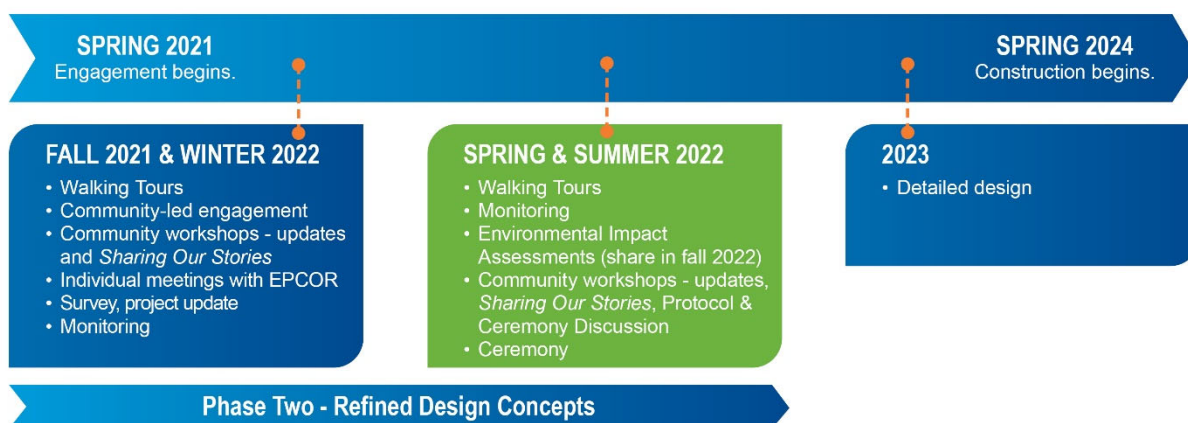


Figure 1 – Phase Two Indigenous Engagement Timeline and Activities for EPCOR EWTP Flood Protection Program

Phase two Indigenous engagement activities provided participants with opportunities to share feedback, preferences and concerns about the planned flood barriers and asked what opportunities for Indigenous inclusion should be considered at each flood barrier location and for the project as a whole. During this period, EPCOR also continued to share information about the project.

Engagement Methods Used

Details of the engagement methods applied during the second phase of engagement are included in Table 1 below. To reflect the holistic approach to Indigenous engagement, some methods, like ceremony, were added to the plan based on feedback received from Indigenous Nations and communities.

Table 1: Phase Two Indigenous Engagement Methods and Details

Engagement Method	Details
Community-led engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support material for communities interested in broader membership participation (copy, links and graphics for social media, newsletter, online survey).
Direct communications with Indigenous Nations & communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations to participate • Information and participation updates • Follow ups as required (inquiries, requests, expressions of interest - i.e. narrative contribution, monitoring)
Indigenous Monitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation to participate (E.L. Smith Test Pits, E.L. Smith and Rossdale Utility Locate Program monitoring) • Application of Monitoring Principles to schedule shifts • Monitoring summaries • Archaeologist summary recording
Narrative - Indigenous Perspectives Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with Knowledge Keepers and/or Elders who wish to share historical significance of lands surrounding Rossdale and E.L. Smith WTP. • Scripted for reading by Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices (set tone for Walking Tours). • Shared Narrative - annotated and referenced version to share with Nations and communities as a request for use in other applications (OCAP® and protocol). • Some of these took place in September 2021 and are included in the November 2021 update report.
Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 – E.L. Smith and Rossdale – what we heard, wall/embankments refined design concepts, FAQ, survey link (email distribution; mail distribution upon request).
One-on-one meetings with Nations & communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 79% of respondents attending the June 2021 session indicated an interest in one-on-one meetings. • Mix of in-person and Zoom meetings
Virtual Community Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 – Meetings to share information: how Indigenous input has been used as the project enters Phases 2 and 3 (acknowledge limited ability to engage deeply through virtual sessions). • 1 – Meeting to discuss Protocol and Ceremony with Elders and Knowledge Keepers to open dialogue about how EPCOR might appropriately incorporate protocol and Ceremony into activities related to ground disturbance at the Edmonton WTPs.
Walking Tour Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 - E.L. Smith and Rossdale WTPs (materials: golf carts, narrative for reading, conversation kits, renderings, EPCOR technical staff and note takers) • 1 - Individually scheduled site visits of E.L. Smith and Rossdale WTPs • Two Walking Tour dates were offered in October 2021 and were included in the November 2021 update report. The same tour was offered in April for those Nations and communities that shared an

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Engagement Method	Details
	interest in the October tours but were unable to attend. Additional site visits were scheduled upon request.
Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 – Pipe Ceremony - Response to feedback from Virtual Protocol and Ceremony Discussion
Archaeologist Summary Video Viewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - Not included in the engagement plan. Scheduled based on a request and positive feedback from virtual community meetings (May 2022).
Public Open House (Rosssdale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - Not included in the engagement plan. Consultation office representatives invited to share the invite with their Nation or community members living in Edmonton (May 2022).

Timeline

Table 2 below includes a detailed timeline for engagement activities undertaken during the second phase of engagement on EPCOR’s Flood Protection Project.

Table 2: Phase Two Indigenous Engagement Timeline for Engagement Techniques

Engagement Technique	Timeline
Direct communications with Indigenous Nations & communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2021¹ & January 2022 - Invitation to participate in monitoring (E.L. Smith Test Pits and Utility Locates Program) November 2021 & February 2022 - Invitation to participate in Virtual Community Update Meetings November 2021 - Individualized Nation/Community Engagement Summaries January 2022 - Project Update Newsletter, survey link, community-led engagement resources March 2022 - Invitation to participate in Walking Tours April 2022 - Invitation to attend viewing of archaeological summary via Zoom May 2022 - Invitation to attend Public Open House (May 26); invitation to participate in Protocol and Ceremony Discussion; invitation to participate in ceremony (June 10) Ongoing - various, follow ups
Indigenous Monitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2021 - E.L. Smith Test Pit Monitoring February 2022 - April 2022 - Rosssdale and E.L. Smith Utility Locates Program

¹ Although the initial invite was sent in October, monitoring did not occur until November, and therefore, was not included in the November 2021 update report.

Table 2: Phase Two Indigenous Engagement Timeline for Engagement Techniques

Engagement Technique	Timeline
Virtual Community Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 23 & 24, 2021 & March 21 & 23, 2022 - Information sharing: how Indigenous input has been used as the project enters phases two and three, including archaeologist summary video (during March updates). May 31, 2022 – Protocol and Ceremony Discussion with Knowledge Keepers
Newsletter (email, direct mail upon request)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2022 - Share how Indigenous input has been used as public engagement enters phase two, what we heard, wall/berm refined design concepts, FAQ, survey link.
Community-led engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2022 - February 2022 - Nation/community-led, supported by Forum & EPCOR through shared resources and links
Walking Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 7, 2022 - E.L. Smith and Rossdale WTPs for Indigenous Nations and communities who expressed interest in attending in October 2021 but who were not able to attend, those new to EPCOR’s engagement participant list. May 6, 2022 - E.L. Smith and Rossdale WTPs individualized site visit for Nations not able to attend April 7.
Narrative - Indigenous Perspectives Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 5, 2022 - Virtual conversations with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders to gather stories of the sites (respecting principles of OCAP - Ownership, Control, Access, Possession™)
Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 10, 2022 – Pipe Ceremony at Rossdale site following feedback from Virtual Protocol and Ceremony Discussion.
One-on-one meetings with Nations & communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing - Scheduled as requested or invited (either in person or via Zoom)

Indigenous Nations & Communities Engaged

Table 3 below shows how many Indigenous Nations and communities have participated in engagement activities during the second phase of engagement on EPCOR's Flood Protection Project. Phase two captures engagement activities between November 2021 and June 2022, although numbers for activities that occurred prior to November 2021 but that were repeated in, or continued through the November 2021 to June 2022 period are included in the table and referenced with a footnote.

Table 3: Indigenous Engagement Activities and Participation for Phase Two Engagement on EPCOR's EWTP Flood Protection Project									
	Engagement Activity <i>(participation between November, 2021 – Jun. 2022 of 32 Indigenous Nations and communities included)</i>								
	Narrative - Indigenous Perspectives Workshop²	November Virtual Update Sessions	March Virtual Update Sessions	Test Pit Monitoring	Utility Locate Monitoring	Walking Tours/ Individual Site Visits³	1:1 Meetings	Virtual Protocol & Ceremony Discussion	Ceremony
Number of Indigenous Nations/communities who participated	5	11	11	6	16	17	1	6	6
Number of Indigenous Nations/communities who expressed interest but who did not participate⁴	4				5	4	5		
Number of representatives who participated	10 Elders & Knowledge Keepers, 2 Helpers	28	31	7	23	33		8 Elders & Knowledge Keepers, 6 Helpers	32

Excluded from Table 3 are community-led engagement, an archaeologist summary video viewing, and a Rosedale public open house. Community-led engagement was excluded because no Indigenous Nations or communities participated. This activity occurred in January 2022 and offered a way for Indigenous Nations and communities to share project information and collect feedback from their members. We shared visual assets, links, a newsletter and online survey for consultation offices to distribute via their web sites and social media channels and undertook the activity because three Indigenous Nations explicitly expressed interest in participating in this engagement activity. Follow up conversations provided EPCOR with valuable feedback that can be considered for future activities.

² This engagement activity began in September 2021 and is ongoing.

³ This engagement activity occurred in October 2021 and again in April and May 2022. Engagement outcomes were for phase two engagement.

⁴ Numbers not included for all activities. Cited reasons for not participating: lack of consultation office capacity, insufficient shifts, health and wellness.

The archaeologist summary video viewing was not a measured engagement activity and was offered as an additional opportunity based on feedback received. The Rossdale public open house was not included within the Indigenous engagement plan, but an invite was extended to members of Indigenous Nations and communities living in the Edmonton area. Any Indigenous participation in this activity would be captured within the public engagement summary for this activity.

Of the 32 Indigenous Nations and communities included in EPCOR's consultation list, 28 have engaged in some way beyond receiving a notification package and project update emails.

What We Heard

During phase two engagement EPCOR wanted to understand and appreciate **the perspectives of Indigenous Nations and communities** along with **what considerations were important for EPCOR to include in the selection process** for flood barriers to protect the Rossdale and E.L. Smith water treatment plants.

With multiple pathways for Indigenous Nations and communities to participate, not every engagement activity sought to answer specific engagement questions. For instance, monitoring activities were a way for EPCOR to engage with community members but did not include specific questions for participants to respond to.

Themes and a sample of participant quotes from Indigenous engagement activities that took place during phase two are included in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Phase Two Indigenous Engagement What We Heard Themes (from Walking Tour and Virtual Community Update Engagement Activities)	
Theme	Quote or supporting participant evidence
Understanding area use and value	
Allow for interaction with the land	“At this spot maybe there could be opportunity for Ceremony. A place for families to gather, enjoy the river valley and pick berries.”
Harvesting opportunities	Community members harvest berries and medicines.
Concerns over tree removal Replanting should occur	<p>“What happens to trees that are removed?”</p> <p>“We would like to be consulted on the types of trees/shrubs that are replanted.”</p> <p>“Highbush cranberries - all along river. Grow well here. Can eat berries and make jam. Inner bark (cambium layer) is used for medicines. Red willow is from here used in pipes. Commercial cedar bush is not from here.”</p> <p>“Cedar, maple, chokecherry, aspen, spruce, juniper and willow.”</p> <p>“Plant trees instead of spending on wall design.”</p>
Consideration for Environment Importance of Water	<p>“We need to be careful of our natural resources...in this area in Edmonton much of this area has been disturbed. As much as can be saved and brought back (should be – in relation to trees). It is important that we do this.”</p> <p>“Check with the water tables to make sure there are no issues (due to the piles). Water tables are so delicate.”</p>

Table 4: Phase Two Indigenous Engagement What We Heard Themes (from Walking Tour and Virtual Community Update Engagement Activities)

Theme	Quote or supporting participant evidence
	"The water should be very important to all of us. Feeds everything that we eat...The water is sacred."
Flood Concerns	"Consider impact of flood on neighbourhood. Where does the water go?" "Is EPCOR prepared to mitigate against flooding that could happen before construction in two years?"
Many histories and stories of the areas	"Plaques, benches that say this is treaty territory. Telling stories of the area to people." "We want to be the people sharing the story." "This was a Sundance area." (North of reservoir)
Importance of Treaty	"Historical sites are to be protected by the Nations under Treaties."
Design considerations and preferences	
Diverse preferences	<i>A mix of preferences for walls, berms and materials was heard at both the Rossdale and E.L. Smith water treatment plans. EPCOR has a record of each response.</i>
Indigenous artwork	"Artwork should be by Treaty Six artists." Artwork should represent stories and histories of the area. "Plaques, benches that say this is treaty territory. Telling stories of the area to people." "Row of flagpoles with different Nations' flags (not too touristy)."
Acknowledge Indigenous perspectives	"Maybe include stories, books, plaques in ways other than on the walls. Represent background of Indigenous peoples here and their languages." "Around old Fort Edmonton hang interpretive renderings or art showing the history of the Fort." "Two people can't speak for the whole Nation. We need to bring this to our Elders" (other community representatives)."

Table 4: Phase Two Indigenous Engagement What We Heard Themes (from Walking Tour and Virtual Community Update Engagement Activities)

Theme	Quote or supporting participant evidence
Opportunities for Indigenous inclusion	
Ceremony and protocol at various times	<p>"Pipe ceremony before shovels are in the ground."</p> <p>"Sites here should have monitoring and protocol."</p> <p>"Strongly suggest something should be in place for chance finds."</p>
Participate in monitoring throughout the project	<p>"Monitors on site at all times. Notify in advance."</p> <p>"Want archaeological monitors during ground disturbance and are looking for opportunities."</p> <p>"Sites here should have monitoring and protocol."</p> <p>"Glad the Nations are being included in this work. Glad for EPCOR to create these opportunities to work with Nations....Grateful and thankful to partner with EPCOR."</p>
Employment opportunities	<p>Construction employment</p> <p>"Bid - vendors list and how to get on it. May be some Nations with experience."</p>
Technical interest in the project	
	<p>Pile depth, erosion, facilities, impact on groundwater, access to analysis reports comparing berms and walls.</p>

EPCOR will respond to and utilize what was heard as next steps in the project are planned.