

Overview of Plans, By-laws and Policy Initiatives to Protect the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System

1907 - 1915 Recommendations from Frederick C. Todd

Human impacts to the river valley and ravine system were acknowledged by City Council in 1907 when Frederick C. Todd, a Montreal Landscape Architect, recommended the River Valley and Ravine System be retained as open space for future generations. His report and recommendations were adopted by City Council and the Province in 1915.

1970 - 1980 - Edmonton Parks Master Plan

The Plan provided recommendations for the long-term purchase of river valley lands for parks and environmental protection. The Master Plan also included recommendations for establishing a top-of-the-bank-roadways to separate residential development from the park system, prevent encroachment and improve public access to the river valley margin.

1970 - Top of Bank Policy - Public Roadway Policy

Additional policy work was completed in 1970 when the City adopted a top of bank policy to define the limit of development. The Edmonton Parks and Master Plan (1970-1980) set out policies for environmental protection and the purchase of properties in the river valley for parks purposes.

1978 - Capital City Recreation Parks Initiative

In 1978, 3000 acres of the North Saskatchewan River Valley was jointly protected between the Province and the City through the Capital City Recreation Parks initiative.

1985 - North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan

Further guidance for the protection of the River Valley was provided on February 26, 1985, when Council approved the *North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan* (Bylaw 7188) as a means to preserve natural and parkland areas for environmental protection and passive/active recreation uses. *The North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan-Bylaw 7188* provides the authority for Council and Administration to determine "...that the River Valley and Ravine System shall be primarily used for major and natural parks and environmental protection uses." The purpose of the Area Redevelopment Plan is "...to protect the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System as part of Edmonton's valuable open space heritage and to establish the principles for future implementation plans and programmes..."

The major plan goals are:

- a. to ensure the preservation of the natural character and environment of the North Saskatchewan River and its ravine system
- b. to establish a public metropolitan recreation area
- c. to provide the opportunity for recreation, aesthetic and cultural activities in the Plan area for the benefit of Edmontonians and visitors of Edmonton

- d. to ensure the retention and enhancement of the Rosedale and Cloverdale communities

1992 - Ribbon of Green Master Plan

Provides a planning framework to evaluate resource capability for park development; guidelines and standards, details of park projects and resource management and operations guidelines. The Ribbon of Green promotes a framework of five basic principles related to conservation, recreation, development, trails, and education with the North Saskatchewan River Valley system.

2005 – Urban Parks Management Plan

Guides the acquisition, development, maintenance, preservation, and use of parkland. It provides strategic direction for all river valley and ravine parkland as well as all school and park sites outside the river valley. The plan expires in 2016 and a replacement policy document is currently being prepared.

2007 - Natural Area Systems – Policy C-531

States that all natural areas in Edmonton should be considered as part of an integrated ecological network, and ensures that equal consideration is given to ecological, economic, and social issues in decision-making. The associated procedure defines specific City responsibilities for policy implementation. Attachments to the policy outline requirements for the provision of specific ecological information during the planning process, and guidelines for determining Environmental Reserve.

2007 - Natural Connections Strategic Plan

The Plan focuses on strengthening connections: between natural areas, in the form of diverse, functional biological corridors that support critical natural processes and the movement of wildlife; and between people, in the form of supportive, creative partnerships that empower Edmontonians to work cooperatively to protect and sustain Edmonton's natural systems.

2010 - Development Setbacks from Valley/Ravine Crests- Policy C-542

In October of 2010, Council approved Policy C542-Development Setbacks from the Valley/Ravine Crests. This policy provides a means to identify and demarcate the boundary between developable upland area and non-developable upland area or Environmental Reserve. This separation is created through the establishment of a scientifically derived Urban Development Line in conjunction with such other legal, planning, and technical measures necessary to demarcate the boundary between developable upland area (urban development) and non-developable upland area or Environmental Reserve.