

River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan

Edmonton Mountain Bike Alliance ("EMBA") Response
August 18, 2025



Pictures of 2 River Valley "Developments"



Ribbon of Green Strategic Plan

1992 Plan

- Limited coverage area (Fort Edmonton to Rundle Park)
- Cycling prohibited in all preservation areas

Current Plan

- Applies to all areas of the river valley and ravine system within City of Edmonton boundaries
- “Trail based Recreation” sub-category of Preservation LMC added to permit cycling and foot based recreational access.

Changes to the Ribbon of Green

- “Trail-based Recreation” sub-classification - responds to overwhelming citizen interest in ensuring a **balance** between preservation and responsible citizen access to the River Valley.
- Mountain bikers were active participants throughout the consultation process.
- **Thank you!** We have been very appreciative for the opportunities provided to our community and EMBA to engage with Administration throughout the process.
- Our River Valley trail system contributes profoundly to our quality of life and holds the potential for contributing even more.



Development

Constructed buildings, structures, or facilities, or **changes to the land [emphasis added]**, undertaken to serve social, economic, or environmental needs.

This does not include work or a change in use occurring entirely within existing constructed buildings, structures, or facilities, and with no potential for impact to the surrounding environment.

- 4.1.11 Outside of the Residential Community portions of Rossdale and Cloverdale, as shown on Map 1, **development** in the floodplain, as outlined in the District Policy, relevant District Plans, or the Zoning Bylaw, as amended, **shall be [emphasis of this mandatory direction added]** discouraged.



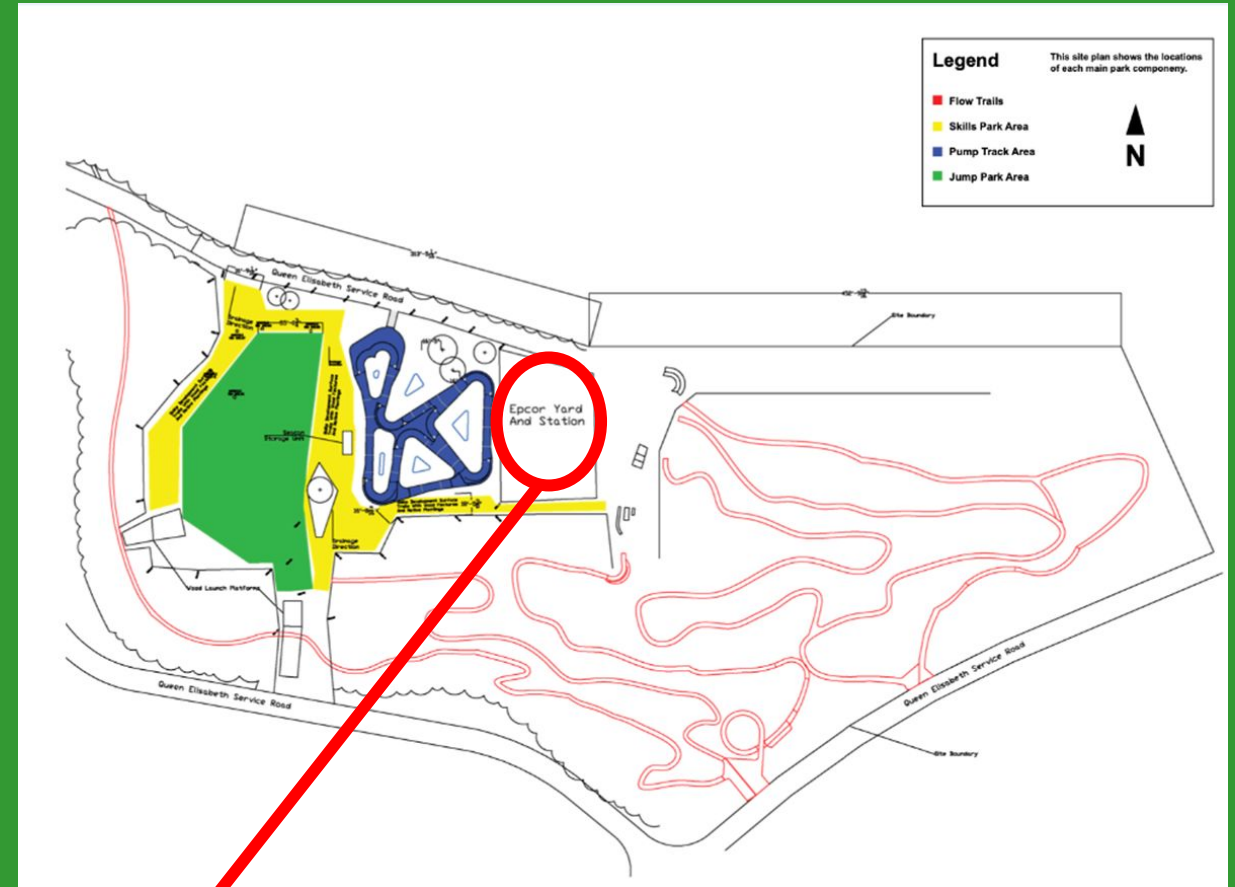
The Policy put in practice – QE Flow Trails

**Extracts from June 5, 2025
Conditional Sign Off of EIA and
SLS, received from Planning and
Environmental Services:**

“Please avoid the floodway entirely
in the final version of the trail
network.”

“Preserve a 100m setback distance
from the major river system and
riparian zones”

“The floodway area must be
protected for high levels of flood
mitigation through controlling
erosion and pollution prevention.”



NOTE EPCOR Yard and adjacent service road





- Epcor “Development”
- natural surface trail “Development”
- City risk mitigation

Extracts from June 5, 2025 Conditional Sign Off of EIA and SLS, received from Planning and Environmental Services:

“Increased human activity along the narrow wildlife corridor will negatively impact the wildlife habitat and movements.”

“there are chances of increased
invasive spread through human
activities”



Current North Saskatchewan River Valley ARP

Parkland Development Policies:

3.2.1 Natural Conservation Area

It is a policy of this Plan that those **areas which have significant vegetation, potential wildlife and waterfowl habitat**, or other unique natural physical features shall be managed as nature conservation areas and **may be used for outdoor education, interpretation or low intensity recreational activities** [*all emphasis added*].

3.2.4 Ravines and River Edges

It is a policy of this Plan that **ravines and river edge lands will be used for low intensity outdoor recreational use** [*emphasis added*].

Intensity of Recreational Uses

INTENSITY OF RECREATIONAL USES covers a range of recreational activities which considers the spectrum of uses from a low intensity use to a high intensity use. **A low intensity use is a minimum level of recreational development with the possible existence of a minor amenity structure. An example is the trail and buffer system in Capital City Recreation Park** [*emphasis added*]. A high intensity use is defined as recreational development which includes a major structure and substantial parking facilities ...



Application of enhanced oversight:

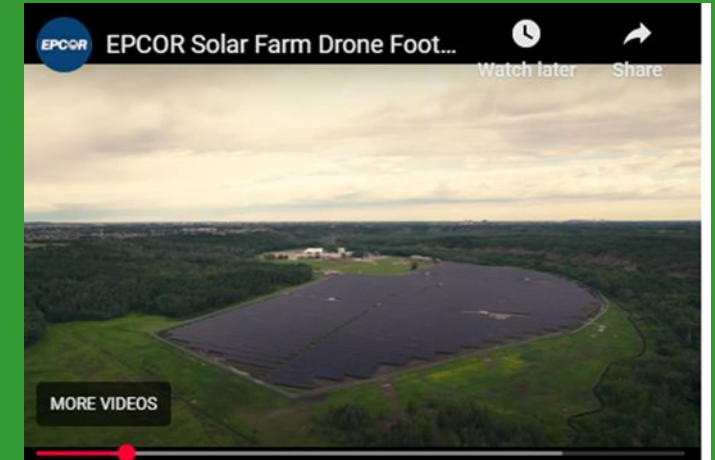
UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION and LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

- the permission to do preliminary route planning for the flow trails planned for the Queen Elizabeth Bike Skills Park contains **66 conditions**, authored by **8 different City departments**, including the requirement for a project specific tree plan
- Although EMBA volunteers have been conducting this routine maintenance pursuant to the terms of a written Trail Maintenance Agreement with the City since 2018, the July 16, 2025 approval letter for the addition of trails to EMBA's list of trails approved for routine maintenance (trimming and water/erosion control) contained comments from **11 City sub-departments**. Comments from 3 distinct groups within Parks and Road Services demonstrated a fundamental misunderstanding of what this work entails and the established process: requiring **6 total pre- and post- trail day inspections** (2 for each of those 3 groups); requiring protection of all trees within 5 meters of our “construction area” (which would be the natural surface trail running through a forested area); specifying conditions for a laydown area and vehicular activity within that area; etc.



Our Request:

- As natural surface trails facilitate low intensity recreation **restore the definition and policies from the existing ARP**
- **Amend the “Development” definition** to recognize the distinction between Natural Surface Trails and Intensive Opens Space Facilities
- **Provide bylaw assurance** that EMBA projects will continue to be subject to the review processes established under our written Trail Maintenance Agreement, and **remove Administration discretion** to undermine that agreement.
- **Eliminate duplication** in City review and ensure that there are **informed** employees charged with decision making authority over the natural surface trail system



Thank You!

We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with City Council and Administration to maintain and enhance our cherished network of natural surface trails!

