

Lansdowne Staircase and Trail Concept Design

Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study

Recommendation

That Urban Planning Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That the Lansdowne Staircase and Trail Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study reports, as outlined in Attachments 1 and 2 of the May 21, 2019, Integrated Infrastructure Services report CR_6752, be approved.
2. That the location of the Lansdowne Staircase and Trail as outlined in Attachment 2 of the May 21, 2019, Integrated Infrastructure Services report CR_6752, be deemed essential and approved.

Executive Summary

A staircase and trail are proposed at the intersection of Lansdowne Drive and 47 Avenue, to connect the neighbourhood to an existing shared use path in the Whitemud valley. The *North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan, Bylaw 7188* requires City Council approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Site Location Study. Further, it requires the location of the Lansdowne Staircase and Trail to be approved and deemed essential.

Report

During engagement for the Lansdowne neighbourhood renewal, the community identified a desire for an improved connection between Lansdowne and existing shared use trails in the Whitemud valley. The existing informal trail, which extends south from Lansdowne Drive, is steep and presents access challenges for trail users. A staircase and shared-use path are proposed at the existing location to provide a safer connection and improve the recreation amenity for the community, while minimizing impacts on the river valley.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (Attachment 1) and Site Location Study (Attachment 2) has been prepared for this project, to meet the requirements of the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan, Bylaw 7188.

The Environmental Impact Assessment contains a summary of the findings and identifies potential physical, environmental and community impacts resulting from the construction of the staircase and trail. The assessment identifies mitigation measures to ensure the project will not have any significant adverse effects on the environment. The stair design will include wildlife passages that follow the City of Edmonton Wildlife Passage Engineering Design Guidelines to allow wildlife movement in the project area. Following construction, any habitat loss will be compensated for by planting native species. As the project is on disturbed lands and follows an existing trail, further environmental monitoring is not required post construction.

The Site Location Study shows that the location proposed will not cause significant environmental impacts as the alignment is already being used informally by the public. The Site Location Study (Attachment 2) consists of an analysis of the site and provides location justification based on various considerations, conditions and factors.

Pending the outcome of Council review, the design and build will proceed with funding from the Great Neighbourhoods Initiative (CM-21-5800). Construction is projected for 2020.

Legal Implications

The North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan, Bylaw 7188, requires City Council to approve the Environmental Impact Assessment and the Site Location Study before the proposed development can proceed. Further, Bylaw 7188 requires the staircase and trail be deemed essential and approved by City Council prior to construction.

Public Engagement

A public engagement session was held on September 25, 2018, for the proposed Lansdowne Staircase and Trail project. The session solicited feedback on the two concept design options presented. The input and feedback received from the public engagement session were used to develop a preferred concept design option.

The overall response to the concept plans presented at the session was positive and the majority of the respondents indicated support for the development of the staircase and were interested in additional amenities such as benches, lighting and garbage receptacles.

Concern was expressed that the proposed staircase bike rail would promote biking in the Whitemud Nature Reserve area. Clarification was provided that the proposed staircase would connect to the existing shared use-path and respect the Whitemud Creek natural area. Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they live, work and play			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they live, work and play.	City Park Usage (percent of survey respondents who report using a City park in the last 12 months)	89% (2017)	83% (2018)

Risk Assessment

Risk Element	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score (with current mitigations)	Current Mitigations	Potential Future Mitigations
Public	If the report is not approved, the connection desired by the community will not be able to be constructed.	2 - Unlikely	3 - Major	5 - Low	Approval is recommended. Ensure current and up to date project information is available to the public and stakeholders.	Maintain project communications with public and project stakeholders.
Environmental	If the report is not approved, use of the informal trail will continue, and unmitigated impacts will continue.	5 - Almost Certain	2 - Moderate	7 - Medium	Approval is recommended.	Ensure mitigations measures in the Environmental report are adhered to.
Wildlife Impact	If the report is approved, the staircase could be a barrier for wildlife passage	2 - Unlikely	2 - Moderate	4 - Low	Proposed staircase design includes measures for wildlife movement.	Construction to take place during daytime hours to avoid impacts during peak wildlife movement times. During construction, minimize blocking wildlife passage.
Construction Impact	If the report is approved, construction activity negatively impacts neighbourhood	2 - Unlikely	2 - Moderate	4 - Low	Design of the trail and stairs will be limited to areas which are already disturbed by human foot traffic as much	During construction, delineate and fence the project work area to minimize disturbance. Respect working hours as to not

	and environment				as possible to avoid disturbing existing vegetation.	disturb the neighbourhood residence.
Weed management	If the report is approved, weeds establish during construction phase	3 - Possible	1 - Minor	3 - Low	Prior to construction a project specific weed management program will be provided by the contractor.	During construction, implementation of the weed management program. Monitor for weeds post construction.

Attachments

1. Lansdowne Staircase and Trail Environmental Impact Assessment
2. Lansdowne Staircase and Trail Site Location Study

Others Reviewing this Report

- R. Kits, Acting Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor