
Bike Skills Park Feasibility Study

Fort Saskatchewan

September 2023



EDS



CITY OF
FORT SASKATCHEWAN



Bike Skills Park Feasibility Study

Fort Saskatchewan

prepared for: **City of Fort Saskatchewan**

prepared by: **Eds Group Inc.**

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Executive Summary

During the 2023 budget deliberations, the City of Fort Saskatchewan Council voted to direct Administration to support an initial investigation of the feasibility of constructing a bike skills park within Fort Saskatchewan that includes:

1. defining different scope / program options;
2. options for supporting amenities;
3. potential locations;
4. a Class 5 estimate for the project along with operating impacts; and
5. exploring options for grant funding for the project.

In spring 2023, the City of Fort Saskatchewan hired EDS Group Inc., a professional landscape architectural and environmental planning firm, to develop a feasibility study for the development of a bike skills park within the City of Fort Saskatchewan. The main objective of the assignment was to determine whether offering this type of recreational amenity in the City was achievable, and if so what the most ideal sites were based on criteria developed through the study. The primary outcomes of the study were the identification of ideal sites, establishing potential costs of development and identifying opportunities through research and targeted stakeholder input. In addition, funding opportunities and potential partnerships were explored on how the City might realize a future bike skills park development. Stakeholder involvement was used in the work program to enhance initial understanding of local perspectives and views on potential locations, program option considerations and support amenities.



A review of other comparable recreational amenities across Alberta and British Columbia was completed to understand overall land requirements, operational models, the types of support amenities valued at other comparable developments, and general configuration of bike features. In some instances, municipal staff from these other municipalities were interviewed to help understand how their bike skills park was conceived, operational challenges and lessons learned. This was an invaluable exercise to bring back recommendations to the City of Fort Saskatchewan on site selection, operations and long-term maintenance.

A small stakeholder group was part of the study process, with backgrounds in environmental protection, cycling and mountain biking, and indigenous interests. The project team met with these groups to review project objectives, to review the pre-selected sites and the rationale for selecting them, and to scrutinize the scoring matrix that was developed to evaluate each candidate site.

A total of 17 candidate sites were evaluated against a scoring matrix. The scoring matrix includes a range of criteria such as access, financial impacts, ability to expand the development over time and environmental impacts. The scoring matrix was provided to the stakeholder group comprising of three local interest groups and was given full support by this group.

After scoring the candidate sites, concept plans were developed for the three highest scoring candidate sites. Class 5 cost estimates were then developed for each of the three sites.

1.0 Introduction

During the 2023 budget deliberations, City Council had directed Administration to explore the feasibility of developing a bike skills park as a new recreational amenity in the City. A request for proposals was issued to retain the services of a professional consulting firm to oversee this feasibility study, with the following general tasks:

- research best practices and develop criteria to scrutinize sites for the suitability of bike skills park development;
- review statutory and non-statutory documents such as the MDP and Land Use Bylaw to determine what restrictions there may be in developing recreational amenities like this;
- explore approximately three different potential sites within, or nearby the City possessing characteristics that are well-suited to bike skills park developments;
- understand if any environmental impacts will be caused by the development, and if so, provide guidance regarding a future environmental review by others for the selected site;
- conduct a round of engagement with identified stakeholders, as listed in the RFP; and
- complete a detailed report that outlines background review, site characteristics, what was heard during stakeholder engagement, recommendations for site development, and a rough cost estimate for development.

At the onset of the project, guiding principles were developed, as follows:

- Reinforce the mindset of a **livable winter community** and present the opportunity to integrate concepts of living in Canada with positive, year-round outdoor experiences. This site should be developed with all seasons in mind, and the program needs to be compassionate to potential opportunities for year-round enjoyment;
- Develop a public realm is compassionate to people with **limited mobility and physical impairments**, through development strategies that allow for a range of users. We want to explore opportunities to make this skills park accessible to all people, including those with physical impairments;

- **Ensure safety** for people and pets as a primary concern, ensuring that all amenities conform to local, provincial and national safety standards and guidelines. The bike skills park must also be developed to accommodate access for maintenance, enforcement / patrol and emergency services. We are also well aware of **potential wildlife encounters** that come with actual and perceived safety and are prepared to implement best management practices on this design to mitigate for public safety related to wildlife;
- **Minimize ecological impacts** from all proposed development and long-term use, while providing a high quality and safe experience for users;
- **Design using sustainable, cost effective materials**, ensuring that proposed features last the test of time while being cost effective to build and maintain; and
- Develop an open space that comes with as **minimal maintenance as possible**, while still achieving the goals of aesthetics, form and function.

This feasibility study recommends three potential sites that can be considered if the City chooses to fund the development of a bike skills park. It offers high level conceptual plans for each of the sites, along with a Class 5 cost estimate for development and annual operations

Site 1

Preliminary cost range of \$600-\$625k (no additional parking, washrooms),
annual operation cost 7-10% of preliminary cost.

Site 2

Preliminary cost range of \$650-\$700k (no additional parking, washrooms),
annual operation cost 7-10% of preliminary cost

Site 3

Preliminary cost range of \$950k-\$1.1M (washrooms + \$450k),
annual operation cost 7-10% of preliminary cost.

2.0

Precedent Site Review

2.0 Precedent Site Review

A review of other comparable recreational amenities across Alberta and British Columbia was completed to understand overall land requirements, operational models, the types of support amenities valued at other comparable developments, and general configuration of bike features. In some instances, municipal staff from these other municipalities were interviewed to help understand how their bike skills park was conceived, operational challenges and lessons learned. This was an invaluable exercise to bring back recommendations to the City of Fort Saskatchewan on site selection, operations and long-term maintenance.

A total of nine sites throughout Alberta and British Columbia were visited during the study process, and can be described in Figures 1 through 9.

Alice Lake Park

Alice Lake, BC

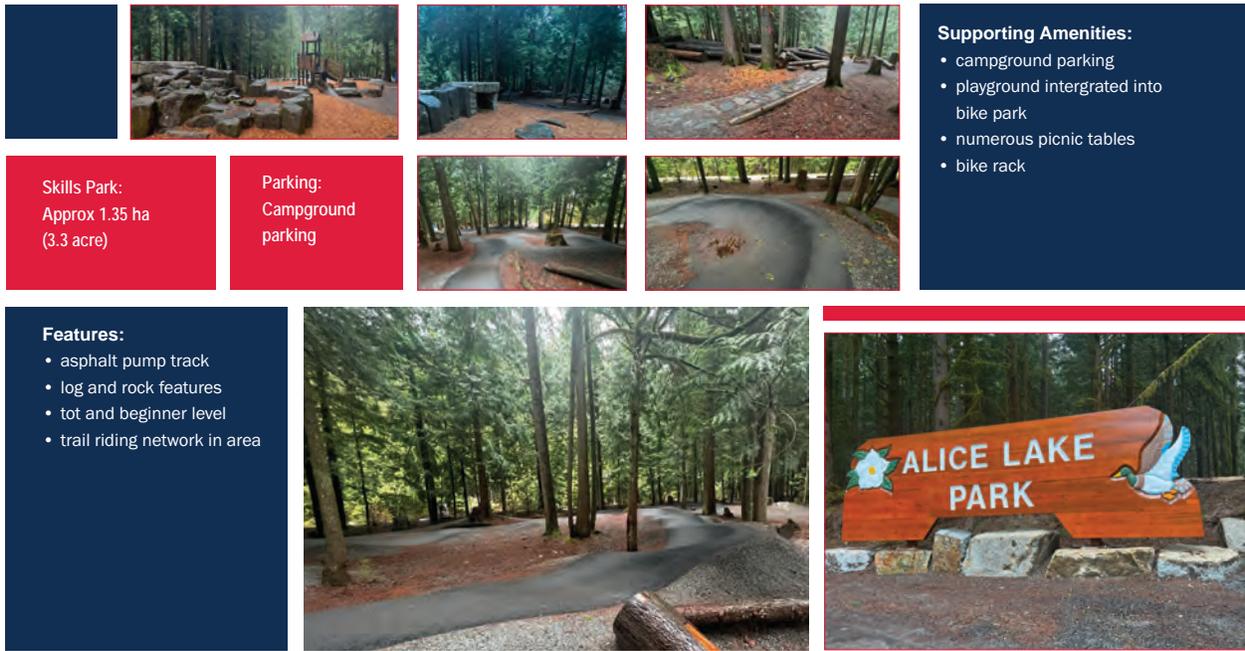


Figure 1 - Alice Lake Park – Alice Lake, BC

Blackfalds Bike Park

Blackfalds, AB



Figure 2 - Blackfalds Bike Park – Blackfalds, AB

Benchland Trail Bike Skills Park

Canmore, AB



Supporting Amenities:

- informal gravel day use parking lot (approx 18 vehicle capacity)
- Dero Fixit bike repair stand
- walking trails
- boulders / logs as informal seating
- waste and recycling receptacle

Skills Park:
Approx 0.4ha
(1 acre)

Parking:
Approx. 18 cars
840 sq. m

Downhill Area:
Approx 0.62ha (1.5
acre)

Features:

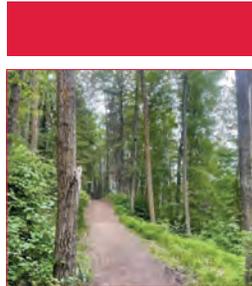
- dirt jumps
- queue area for riders
- log and skinny riding
- downhill mountain bike trails and drops
- easy, medium and hard difficulty



Figure 3 - Benchland Trail Bike Skills Park - Canmore, AB

Riverside Bike Park

Devon, AB



Supporting Amenities:

- gravel parking lot (approx 50 vehicle capacity)
- park mapping, park rules and cautionary signage
- waste receptacle and picnic tables/fire pits/pit toilets
- asphalt trail connection to town trail network
- along side river/walking trails

Skills Park:
Approx 4.0 ha
(9.8 acre)

Trail Riding:
Approx. 35 ha
(86 acre)

Parking:
Approx. 50 cars
2,300 sq. m

Features:

- pump track
- jump and drop area
- queue area for riders
- single and wide trail network
- downhill track
- wood skills area
- log and skinny riding
- easy, medium and hard difficulty



Figure 4 - Riverside Bike Park – Devon, AB

Edson Bike Park

Edson , AB



Overall Park Area:
Approx 0.7 ha
(1.7 acre)

Trail Riding:
Approx. 25 ha
(61 acre)

Parking:
Day Use parking at
Wilmore park (50cars)



Supporting Amenities:

- gravel parking lot (approx 50 vehicle capacity)
- park mapping, park rules and cautionary signage
- waste receptacle, benches and picnic tables/fire pits/pit toilets
- along side river/walking trails
- bike tool and tire fill station

Features:

- pump track
- jump and drop area
- queue area for riders
- single and wide trail network
- downhill track
- wood skills area
- log and skinny riding
- easy, medium and hard difficulty



Figure 5 - Edson Bike Park – Edson, AB

Mission Creek Mountain Bike Skills Park

Kelowna, BC



Skills Park:
Approx 2.0 ha
(5.0 acre)

Parking:
Approx. 20 cars
490 sq. m



Supporting Amenities:

- parking lot (approx 20 vehicle capacity)
- excellent signage, park rules and cautionary signage
- waste receptacle, portable washroom
- asphalt trail connection to town trail network

Features:

- pump track
- jump area
- queue area for riders
- beginners have a boardwalk deck
- easy, medium and hard difficulty



Figure 6 - Mission Creek Mountain Bike Skills Park – Kelowna, BC

Red Deer Mountain Bike Park

Red Deer, AB



Trail Network:
Approx 26 ha
(64 acre)

Flow Track:
Approx 1.1 ha
(2.8 acre)

Parking:
Approx. 5 cars
240 sq. m

Features:

- wood structure jumps
- queue area for riders
- flow track
- downhill mountain bike trails and drops
- easy, medium and hard difficulty



Supporting Amenities:

- dirt parking lot (approx 5 vehicle capacity)
- trail mapping, trail markers and cautionary signage
- walking trails
- sea can storage
- waste receptacle



Figure 7 - Red Deer Mountain Bike Park – Red Deer, AB

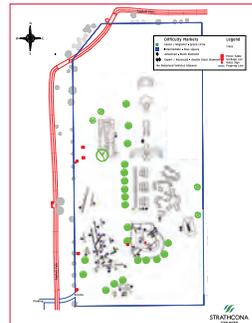
Strathcona County Bike Skills Park

Sherwood Park, AB



Overall Park:
Approx 2.4 ha
(5.8 acre)

Parking:
Approx. 20 cars
1,500 sq. m



Supporting Amenities:

- gravel parking lot (approx 20 vehicle capacity)
- park mapping, park rules and cautionary signage
- waste receptacle, benches and picnic tables
- landscaped areas and perimeter wood fencing
- perimeter asphalt trail connection to county trail network

Features:

- pump track
- jump and drop area
- queue area for riders
- flow trail
- wall ride
- wood skills area
- log and skinny riding
- easy, medium and hard difficulty



Figure 8 - Strathcona County Bike Skills Park – Sherwood Park, AB

Becker Bike Park

Vernon, BC

Skills Park:
Approx 3.3 ha
(8.3 acre)

Parking:
Street parking

Supporting Amenities:

- street parking
- no parking at recreation centre
- signage and benches

Features:

- climb trail
- flow trail
- three pump tracks
- bike repair station
- trail riding network
- tot beginner and intermediate track separated

STREET PARKING

JUMPS, FLOW TRAIL AND PUMP TRACK

BECKER PARK
3404 - 39 AVENUE

Figure 9 - Becker Bike Park – Vernon, BC

3.0

Initial Site Selections

3.0 Initial Site Selections

The candidate site selection process considered the following objectives:

- Offering residents and other park users an all-seasons public amenity that **recognizes Fort Saskatchewan as a winter city** and the importance of promoting year-round opportunities for outdoor enjoyment. This can be achieved not only by the types of supporting activities programmed around this bike skills park, but more importantly the materials selected, placement of features, comfort of amenities available in all seasons, etc.;
- Developing a park amenity that comes with **as minimal of maintenance obligations as possible**, through wise selection of plant materials and turf, reducing mowing obligations, placing features in strategic locations that require less ongoing care, amongst others. Long-term maintenance costs can be a significant financial and human resource burden and wise up-front planning can minimize this;
- Developing site selection criteria and choosing a site that builds on a **strong base of stakeholder** input that we will pursue;
- Bringing the **latest in research and practice-based studies** on establishing bike skills parks to ensure success of this important amenity within the City's network of public open space; and
- **Providing a safe environment for all activities**, for example ensuring there are no hazards that bike riders would be exposed to while riding around the periphery of the skills park area.

Figure 10 highlights all the City-owned parcels of land in green including public reserve (ER, MR, PUL). These parcels were considered when selecting the first round of candidate sites.

Of all the City-owned parcels, the following considerations were used in selecting the first round of candidate sites. Figure 10 identifies the 17 proposed sites that were evaluated in this feasibility study.

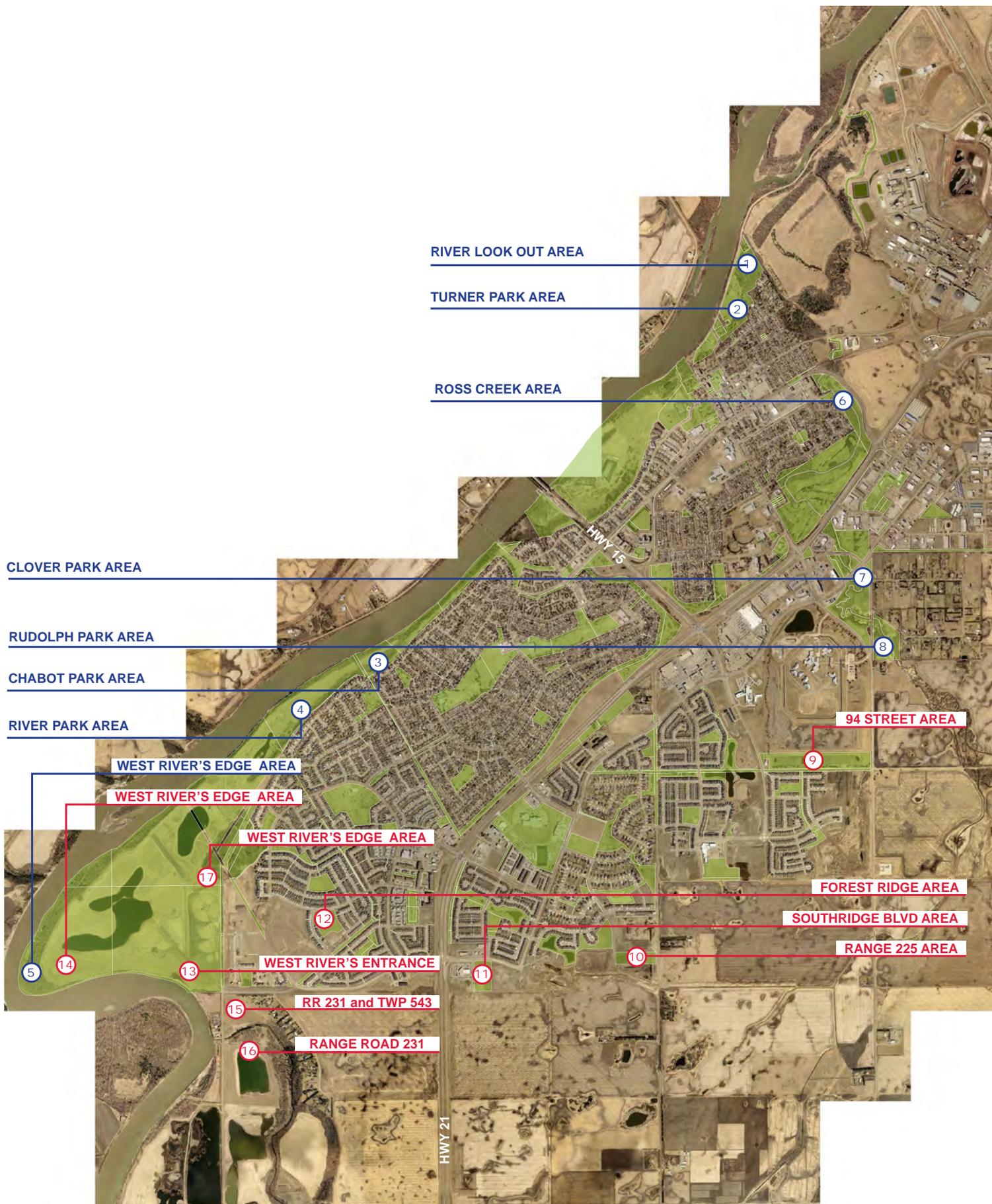


Figure 10 - Site Context Plan

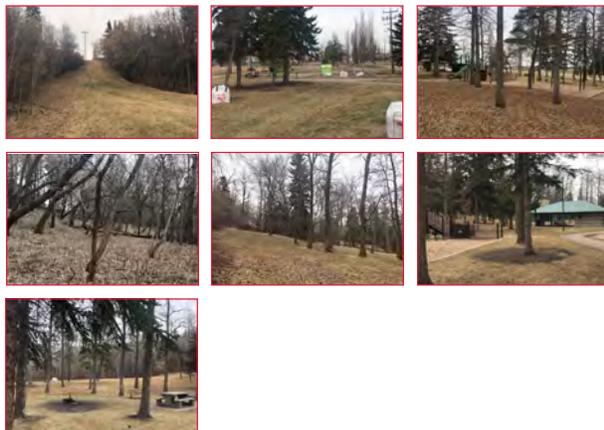
Below is a list of the 17 site showing site photos from the evaluation process, notes the land use designation, lists any nearby amenities such as trails and washrooms and provides an overall description of the site characteristics:

Site 1 - River Look Out Area



- Possible site - good
- zoning PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- small existing parking lot
- treed area with existing single track from main paved trail network, this area could be expanded and enhanced with built features for all ages
- close to Turner Park existing site amenities - washroom, campground, picnic, playground
- open slope area could accommodate a flow track for all ages
- bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 2 - Turner Park Area



- Possible site - good
- zoning PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- existing parking lot
- existing site amenities - washroom, campground, picnic, playground
- treed/open area with slope great potential single/wider track with built features for all ages great
- open slope area could accommodate a flow track for all ages
- bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 3 - Chabot Park Area



- Possible site - good
- zoning PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- no parking lot
- large open area available could accommodate tot to intermediate pump track, jumps and skills area
- treed area with existing single track from main paved trail network, this area could be expanded and enhanced with build features
- existing signage for emergency location identification
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 4 - River Park Area



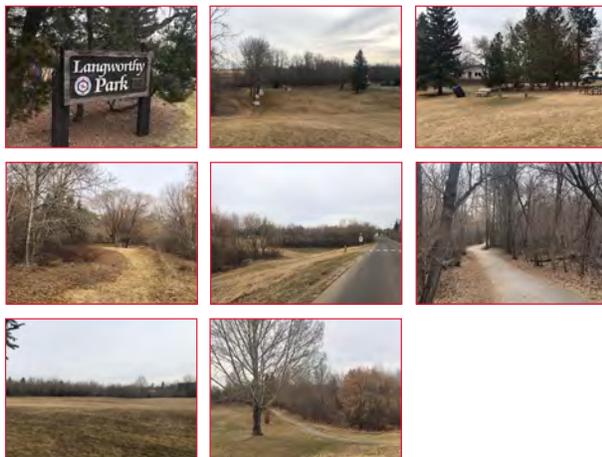
- Possible site - fair
- zoning PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- no parking lot
- large open area available could accommodate tot to intermediate pump track and skills area (in flood/dry pond area)
- mix of existing gravel and paved trails
- areas of slope that could provide location for flow track
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network
- site used by local residents could lead to conflicting uses

Site 5 - West River's Edge



- Possible site - good
- zoned PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- existing parking lot
- treed area with existing single track with built features from main paved network, this area could be expanded and enhanced
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 6 - Ross Creek Area



- Possible site - fair
- zoning PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- no parking lot
- multiple small/medium open areas with rolling terrain, could accommodate tot to intermediate pump track and jumps
- treed area could provide single track with built features from main paved network
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network
- site used by local residents could lead to conflicting uses

Site 7 - Clover Park Area



- Possible site - poor
- zoning PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- existing parking lot
- medium with rolling terrain, open area could accommodate pump track and skills area
- no existing trails in treed area to enhance area low and swampy
- poor bike accessibility
- site used by community garden group could lead to conflicting uses

Site 8 - Rudolph Park Area



- Possible site - poor
- zoning PR - Parks Recreation and EP - Environmental Protection
- city owned land
- no parking
- small open area could accommodate tot pump track
- no existing trails in treed area to enhance area low and swampy
- poor bike accessibility

Site 9 - 94 Street Area



- Possible site - good
- zoning PS - Public Service
- city owned land
- room for parking
- large open area could accommodate pump track, jumps and skills area for all skill level
- could be connected to future paved trail network in area
- growing residential area to the south

Site 10 - RR 225 Area



- Possible site - poor
- zoning PU - Public Utility
- city owned land
- designated as future residential use in Southfork ASP

Site 11 - Southridge Blvd Area



- Possible site - poor
- zoning C2 - Commercial - Commercial Retail and Service District
- city owned land
- parcel next to future home of Hemuth Ritter Fire Station

Site 12 - Forest Ridge Area



- Possible site - good
- zoning PS - Public Service
- designated as future school in Westpark ASP
- location would be good for tot/beginner pump track and skills area (smaller footprint) with future school in mind
- growing residential area
- street parking and good street frontage
- could be connected to paved trail network

Site 13 - West River's Entrance



- Possible site - good
- zoned PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- existing parking lot
- large open area available could accommodate tot to expert pump track, jumps and skills area
- near treed area with existing single track with built features
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 14 - West River's Edge



- Possible site - good
- zoned PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- existing parking lot
- large open area available could accommodate tot to expert pump track, jumps and skills area
- near treed area with existing single track with built features
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 15 - RR 231 and TWP 543



- Possible site - good
- zoned AG-S - Agricultural General South
- city annex land, privately owned land
- large open area available could accommodate tot to expert pump track, jumps and skills area
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 16 - Range Road 231



- Possible site - good
- zoned AG-S - Agricultural General South
- city annex land, privately owned land
- large open area available could accommodate tot to expert pump track, jumps and skills area
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network

Site 17 - West River's Edge



- Possible site - good
- zoned PR - Parks Recreation
- city owned land
- existing parking lot/porta potty/playground
- large open area available could accommodate tot to expert pump track, jumps and skills area
- nice rolling terrain for built features
- great bike accessibility to paved trail network
- near treed area

4.0

Bike Skills Park Best Practices: Site Selection

4.0 Bike Skills Park Best Practices: Site Selection

The following are some best practices that influence the selection of quality sites for bike skills parks:

- **Natural undulating terrain:** selecting a site with varying terrain is preferred. Sites such as this require less earthworks in order to create the features required such as pump tracks and jumps. These sites are often less expensive to develop, offer a great deal of interest and opportunity for riders, and result in minimized environmental impact.
- **Well-draining soil:** bike skills parks are most commonly constructed out of compacted dirt and or gravel. Ensuring these parks are constructed on well-draining soils is essential to their success. Standing or pooling water can cause significant damage to the park resulting in long closures and high costs for maintenance purposes.
- **CPTED:** Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a set of principles for designing spaces to reduce the incidence of fear and crime. Below is a brief description of how the CPTED principles should be applied to a bike skills park:
 - **Natural surveillance:** this principle primarily focuses on ensuring public spaces are easily observable to prevent undesirable activities. For bike skills parks this means selecting a site where sightlines through the park are maintained, there are no “hiding places” or dark corners where undesirable activities are more likely to occur, adequate lighting either exists or can easily be installed so the site can be observed though the night, and selecting an area of high-use where other park users and residents presence alone will deter unwanted activities;
 - **Natural access control:** this principle looks at ensuring a public space has a clear boundary to deter unwanted activities. These borders can range from fencing to a landscaped border to a topographical feature. Creating this distinct border around the bike skills park is proven to prevent offenders from entering the space simply to take part in undesirable activities; and



- **Territorial reinforcement:** this principle helps people develop a sense of ownership of a place, therefore resulting in decreased crime or unwanted activities. For example, ensuring a bike park is easily and consistently maintained creates community pride of a place and greatly decreases the chance of vandalism.

Access for emergency vehicles: as with any public space, it is essential that bike skills parks are created with consideration for access for emergency vehicles. This means that while a remote patch of forest may have the natural terrain and features that are well-suited to a bike skills park, its emergency access challenges negate it as an appropriate site; and

Proximity to other supporting amenities: bike skills parks are most likely to be successful when they are located in vibrant areas of a community where existing amenities exist to support the park. Washrooms, trails, bike repair stands and water fountains are just a few examples of supporting amenities that can enhance a bike skills park.

5.0 Site Selection Criteria

A comprehensive set of criteria was established to evaluate each of the candidate sites. The primary areas of evaluation included:

Site Access – Does the site allow for accessibility, both vehicular (can you arrive to site by car and park in a nearby lot?) and trails (can you walk or cycle to the site with an existing trail);

Budget Impact – are there site conditions that present extra costs, such as being secluded and having access challenges for construction;

Environmental Protection - will the construction and long-term use of the site have adverse impacts on natural systems immediately surrounding the development;

Site Opportunities – how the site offers unique characteristics appropriate to bike skills parks, such as natural terrain;

Service Levels – can the amenity be expanded over time, with sufficient room to grow as needs increase;

Land Use Compatibility – is the land use designation of the parcel and surrounding parcels compatible with recreational use; and

Supporting Amenities – are there amenities such as parking lots, washrooms, trails, benches, overhead structures, etc. nearby that are important to a bike skills park.

The following table (Figure 11) outlines the detailed scoring criteria that was used to evaluate the sites. The three stakeholder groups discussed, made minor revisions and agreed on the criteria and weighting in the chart.

	CRITERIA	SCORING	WEIGHT	
Site Access	Parking availability versus seclusion	Parking immediately accessible to the amenity	100	16%
		Parking is available, approx. 100m away	70	
		Parking is available, approx. 200m away	35	
		Parking is not available within 250m of the site	0	
Budget Impact	Probable, high-level costs	There are site characteristics that will incur significant extra costs, such as limited access for equipment, seclusion, sensitive natural areas adjacent to the site, etc. - greater than \$60k	-100	20%
		There are site characteristics that will incur large extra costs - between \$30-60k	-70	
		There are site characteristics that will incur minor extra costs - between \$0-30k	-35	
		There are no apparent site limitations	0	
Environmental Protection	Impact that the development will have on natural areas	There will be significant impacts on sensitive natural assets such as wetlands, riparian areas	-100	16%
		There will be significant impacts on other natural assets such as forested areas	-70	
		There will be minor impacts on natural assets	-35	
		There are no known impacts to natural assets	0	
Site Opportunities	How the site offers unique characteristics appropriate to bike skills parks	The site has excellent terrain that will offer a range of opportunities for this development	100	16%
		The site has good terrain for this development	70	
		The site has limited terrain for this development and any undulations would need to be constructed	35	
		The site has no terrain and is entirely flat	0	
Public Risk	Any potential risk to the public to access or use the site such as adjacent waterbodies	High potential risk to the public that will require significant mitigation such as high perimeter fencing	-100	16%
		Medium potential risk to the public that will require significant signage and potential barriers	-70	
		Low potential risk to the public that can be resolved through signage	-35	
		No foreseeable risk to the public	0	
Service Levels	Does the site offer opportunities for a large-scale development that may be phased in over time	There are great opportunities to expand the amenity	100	8%
		There are limited opportunities to expand the amenity	70	
		There are no opportunities to expand the amenity	35	
		The site may be too small for the scale of park we envision	0	
Land Use Compatibility	How this development relates to surrounding amenities	The recreational use fits well in its context, such as being in a park area with adjacent complimentary uses	100	8%
		The recreational amenity can work with its context but is not ideal and may require public engagement	70	
		The recreational amenity is not well suited to the context and will likely come with push back from adjacent landowners	35	
		Does not suit the context	0	

Figure 11 - Scoring matrix used to evaluate each of the sites

The following table (Figure 12) identifies the scores of the evaluation process based on three experienced recreational planning staff working on the assignment. The chart includes aggregate scores (average of the three), total sum (adding all three together) and the final rank. The final rank was based on the total sum score. As shown on the table above, the top three ranked sites were Site 17, Site 2 and Site 14.

Site	Aggregate Score	Total Sum Score	Final Ranking
Site 1 - River Look Out Area	0.40	1.20	7
Site 2 - Turner Park Area	10.80	32.40	2
Site 3 - Chabot Park Area	-10.67	-32.00	11
Site 4 - River Park Area	-30.53	-91.60	16
Site 5 - West Rivers Edge South Treed Area	-7.33	-22.00	8
Site 6 - Ross Creek Area	-8.87	-26.60	10
Site 7 - Clover Park Area	5.96	17.88	4
Site 8 - Rudolph Park Area	-32.60	-97.80	17
Site 9 - 94 Street Area	-20.80	-62.40	15
Site 10 - RR 225 Area	-19.60	-58.80	14
Site 11 - Southridge Blvd Area	-18.20	-54.60	13
Site 12 - Forest Ridge Area	-12.60	-37.80	12
Site 13 - West River's Edge Entrance	5.80	17.40	5
Site 14 - West River's Edge south open field Area	8.53	25.60	3
Site 15 - RR 231 and TWP 543 Area	1.60	4.80	6
Site 16 - Range Road 231	-7.73	-23.20	9
Site 17 - West River's Edge north of ball diamond area	8.4	41.00	1

Figure 12 - Candidate site scoring



6.0

Engagement

6.0 Engagement

6.1 Stakeholder Meeting

On June 1, 2023, a meeting was held with consulting staff, City of Fort Saskatchewan staff, and three local stakeholder groups the Naturalist Society, Fort Saskatchewan Trail Alliance and Fort Saskatchewan Indigenous Society. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- provide an overview of the goals and outcomes of the bike skills park feasibility study;
- to review 16 candidate sites that were pre-selected by the consulting and City team;
- to identify if any of the proposed sites the groups may consider an absolute no-go, or if there were potential new sites to be considered;
- to scrutinize the site evaluation criteria in detail, ensuring the criteria were all-encompassing and that the weightings were appropriate;
- to review workbook feedback from groups; and
- to discuss next steps.

Highlights of the engagement session include:

- bike enthusiasts prefer sites in natural terrain with existing features in more natural areas, nature enthusiasts prefer constructed MR sites within developed areas;
- we need to explore strategies to limit disturbances in natural areas if placed in those types of areas;
- the City would need to replicate natural features or develop entirely contrived ones (such as hills / terrain) if placed in upland MRs to meet needs of users;
- there is the perception that this development may be a disruption to residents, opposed to a valuable amenity;

Tonight's Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Project Scope & Timelines
3. Site Selection Process: 16 to 3
4. Discussion on Selection Criteria
5. Highlights of Workbook Responses
6. Scoring Exercise



- we need to fully understand adverse neighbourhood impacts that these developments may cause before placing any bike skills park immediately adjacent to residential areas;
- the involvement of Indigenous community is important in this process;
- we need to avoid sensitive ecological areas for any development – “sensitive” needs to be clearly defined;
- the costs of the project can be reduced if we take advantage of existing amenities: washrooms, trail connections, etc.; and
- the proposed selection criteria seems to be comprehensive and all-inclusive. Only one minor change was made, which increased the weighting of the reduction of environmental impacts.

A workbook was provided to each group in advance of the meeting, and responses were provided by two of the three groups. The overall comments received have been included in the highlights above. A copy of the workbook questions has been included in the Appendix.

7.0

Support Amenities & Resources

7.0 Support Amenities & Resources

The following support amenities and resources are important considerations in the development of bike skills parks:

- **Washrooms** - bike skills parks often attract young children that require washroom services on short notice. While permanent, year-round serviced and fully accessible washrooms are preferred, many bike skills parks successfully operate with portable washrooms. Running water is a great addition for not only potable drinking water, but to wash off after getting dirty in the mud;
- **Bike Repair Stations** – the ability to have proper tables and tools to make repairs on bikes as they take considerable wear and tear in more aggressive use areas of skills parks. Riders often make alterations to their bikes depending on the type of riding, which may change during a visit;
- **Water Fountains** – while fun, the use of pump tracks and other bike skills features can be tiring. Offering drinking water fountains nearby is an excellent way to ensure users have a positive experience and use the space for even longer periods;
- **Trails** – Many people who visit bike skills parks do not drive to the park, instead, they ride their bike. Ensuring the bike skills park is located within a well-connected trail network ensures easy access for all who wish to use it, not just those who can drive to the park; and
- **Parking** – while ensuring the park is located within a trail network for easy access is important, it is equally as important to ensure there is parking available nearby. Whether it be designated on- or off-street parking it is beneficial to have parking available nearby for those who wish to drive to the park. This will in-turn decrease the possibility for any conflicts resulting from users parking in undesirable areas such as residential areas.



8.0

Final Site Selections

8.0 Final Site Selections: Concept Plans & Cost Estimates

Each of the three top selected sites were evaluated further, and a concept plan was prepared for each site.



Site 1 West River's Edge North



Site 2 Turner Park area



Site 3 West River's Edge South



Figure 13 - Preferred Site #1 Conceptual Plan

- West River's Edge north of the Dow Ball Fields;
- Preliminary cost range of \$600-\$625k (no additional parking, washrooms);
- Annual operation cost 7-10% of preliminary cost;
- Additional site that was selected during engagement session;
- Excellent access, natural terrain, but single-directional being a downhill slope from left to right; and
- Minimal footprint at 1.0ha (2.47ac).



CONTEXT PLAN



Figure 14 - Preferred Site #2 Conceptual Plan

- Turner Park area;
- Preliminary cost range of \$650-\$700k (no additional parking, washrooms);
- Annual operation cost 7-10% of preliminary cost;
- Scores very high, however a comment during stakeholder engagement expressed concern with potential indigenous significance and contrary to the principle of “no tree disturbance”;
- Opportunity to integrate into natural terrain and be inconspicuous; and
- Minimal footprint at 1.0ha (2.47ac).



DOWN HILL FLOW TRACK



PUMP TRACK



FLOW/SKILLS TRAIL



CONTEXT PLAN



Figure 15 - Preferred Site #3 Conceptual Plan

- West River's Edge South;
- Preliminary cost range of \$950k-\$1.1M (washrooms + \$450k);
- Annual operation cost 7-10% of preliminary cost;
- Requires significant site grading for jump and pump features; integrated with existing trail network in river valley;
- Furthest site from residential areas & parking; and
- Largest footprint of the proposed options, at 2.0ha (4.69ac).



JUMP AREA

WALL RIDE



WOOD SKILLS



PUMP TRACK



FLOW/SKILLS/RETURN TRAIL



CONTEXT PLAN

9.0

Funding Sources

9.0 Funding Sources

There are a variety of funding avenues to be considered when it comes to implementing and maintaining a bike skills park. Below outlines several of these potential sources to consider:

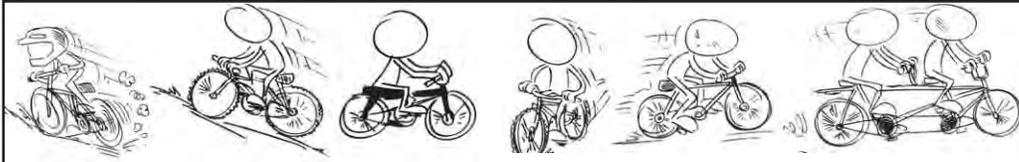
- **City-Funding:** A new bike skills park will likely be predominantly capital and operational funding by the City. It is important to consider this when planning so that the City can ensure adequate funding is allocated towards the bike skills park, therefore ensuring it does not fall into a state of disrepair;
- **Partnerships:** Partnerships with local groups can be a great way to reduce both implementation and operational costs for the City, while also fostering pride of ownership of the bike skills park among user groups. Local groups can access additional grants and funding that the City may not have access to, further decreasing capital costs. However, it is important to ensure that the City takes on the prime maintenance role as many other bike skills parks have failed when volunteer groups are relied on solely for upkeep of the park and we want to ensure the park remains well-cared for;
- **Work-in-Kind Contributions and Donations:** Local businesses and organizations may be willing to donate money, time and resources towards the development and on-going maintenance of a new bike skills park. It is important to reach out to any groups that have previously expressed interest in the project to see what they are able to contribute. Donated labour and construction materials can go a long way in realizing a project such as this. These donations and contributions further foster a sense of pride of ownership in the park, especially when contributions are appropriately acknowledged and appreciated. For example, erecting a plaque that thanks all donors whose contributions made the bike park possible is one simple gesture that can go a long way in creating community pride for the space; and
- **Tourism Grants:** When properly built and readily maintained, bike skills parks can be fantastic tourist attractions. As such, they create the ability to access grant funding related to tourism. Requirements of these tourism grants should be explored early in the design and development stages to ensure compliance for applications.

10.0 Next Steps

The following are recommended next steps for the bike skills park initiative:

- establish a capital project with an appropriate budget for the proposed site that includes engagement, design and construction costs;
- consider the long-term operational commitment required to sustain this facility over time, as well as the potential for adding on to the site as demand may increase;
- secure a design-build firm that specializes in this type of development, with strong and well-rounded experience in public engagement, design and implementation. Having professional certification of stormwater management, structural design and site planning is essential;
- pursue more in-depth public and stakeholder engagement program that develops a full understanding of any site limitations that can be mitigated for, the overall design components and skill levels that will be accommodated, to understand demand and level of service required, the types of support amenities that will be required, amongst others;
- pursue a design-build process to implement the amenity; and
- have a good, early-on understanding of operational costs and be prepared to keep the site in top shape to help mitigate for safety risks.

Appendix A: Stakeholder Workbook Questions



Thank you for your participation in our stakeholder workshop session, to develop a feasibility study for a new bike skills park in Fort Saskatchewan. Please take the time to review the following questions. Once complete, please save your file and email it to info@edsgroup.ca with the subject line "FS Bike Park Workbook". Please return this workbook by end of day, Wednesday May 31st. We will be reviewing the feedback the following day at our scheduled workshop.

1. Of the various sites selected, which six would you eliminate from the list of potential sites?

2. What are your primary values that affected this decision - what was your main reasons for eliminating the sites that you had selected for #1? Describe up to three reasons only.

3. Of the various sites selected, which three would you prefer most from the list of potential sites?

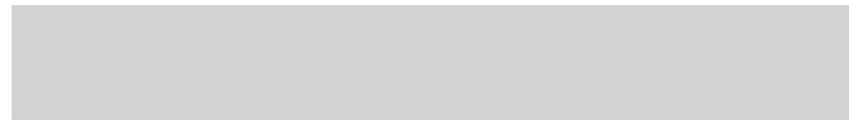
4. What are your primary values that affected this decision - what was your main reasons for preferring the sites that you had selected for #3? Describe up to three reasons only.

5. What supporting amenities do you feel should be included in this development, such as washrooms, benches, bike repair station or water?

6. Please review the selection criteria provided, which includes seven themes. Do you feel any of these are not applicable?



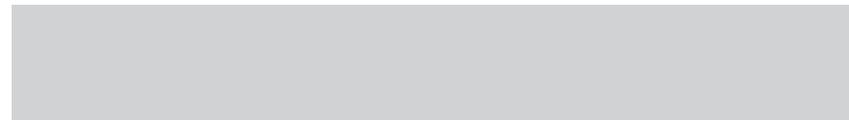
7. Within the selection criteria provided, are there any themes that you feel are missing?



8. What land use do you feel is best suited to be surrounding this type of development (environmental reserve, municipal reserve, single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, light industrial?). Pick your top choice and explain why it is the best potential fit. (For more information and definitions of each land use, you may refer to the City of Fort Saskatchewan Land Use Bylaw found at <https://www.fortsask.ca/en/your-city-hall/land-use-bylaw.aspx>)



9. Concerning potential damage to the natural environment, are there certain types of ecosystems (such as grasslands, wetlands, forested areas, riverbanks, flora, etc.) that are less suited to be within or immediately adjacent to a bike skills park? Explain why, and how potential damages can be mitigated.



10. What abilities should be accommodated in this bike skills park – beginner, intermediate, expert, or all of these?



11. There are various types of styles of bike skills park, some including:



Constructed Features



Natural Features



Earthen Pump Track



Paved Pump Track



Jump Park

What is your preference, and why? (You may also select a combination of more than one type in the same park)

Thank you for your interest in this project and for the time taken to complete this workbook. If you have any questions please contact Sheila Gagnon at the City of Fort Saskatchewan, at sgagnon@fortsask.ca or 780.992.6210