



LITTLE RED RIVER PARK

Master Plan



City of
**Prince
Albert**



HTFC
PLANNING & DESIGN

OXBOW
ARCHITECTURE

May 2020

Acknowledgements

The City of Prince Albert and the Consultant Team recognize that the Prince Albert and Little Red River Park are part of Treaty 6 Territory, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dene, Dakota, Saulteaux and Ojibwe peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. We acknowledge, honour, respect, and give thanks to the peoples and traditions that have come before us.

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The team extends a heartfelt thank you to all of the committed and enthusiastic City of Prince Albert staff, and the kind and welcoming residents of Prince Albert and District who have helped to shape this vision for Little Red River Park.

Little Red River Park Master Plan

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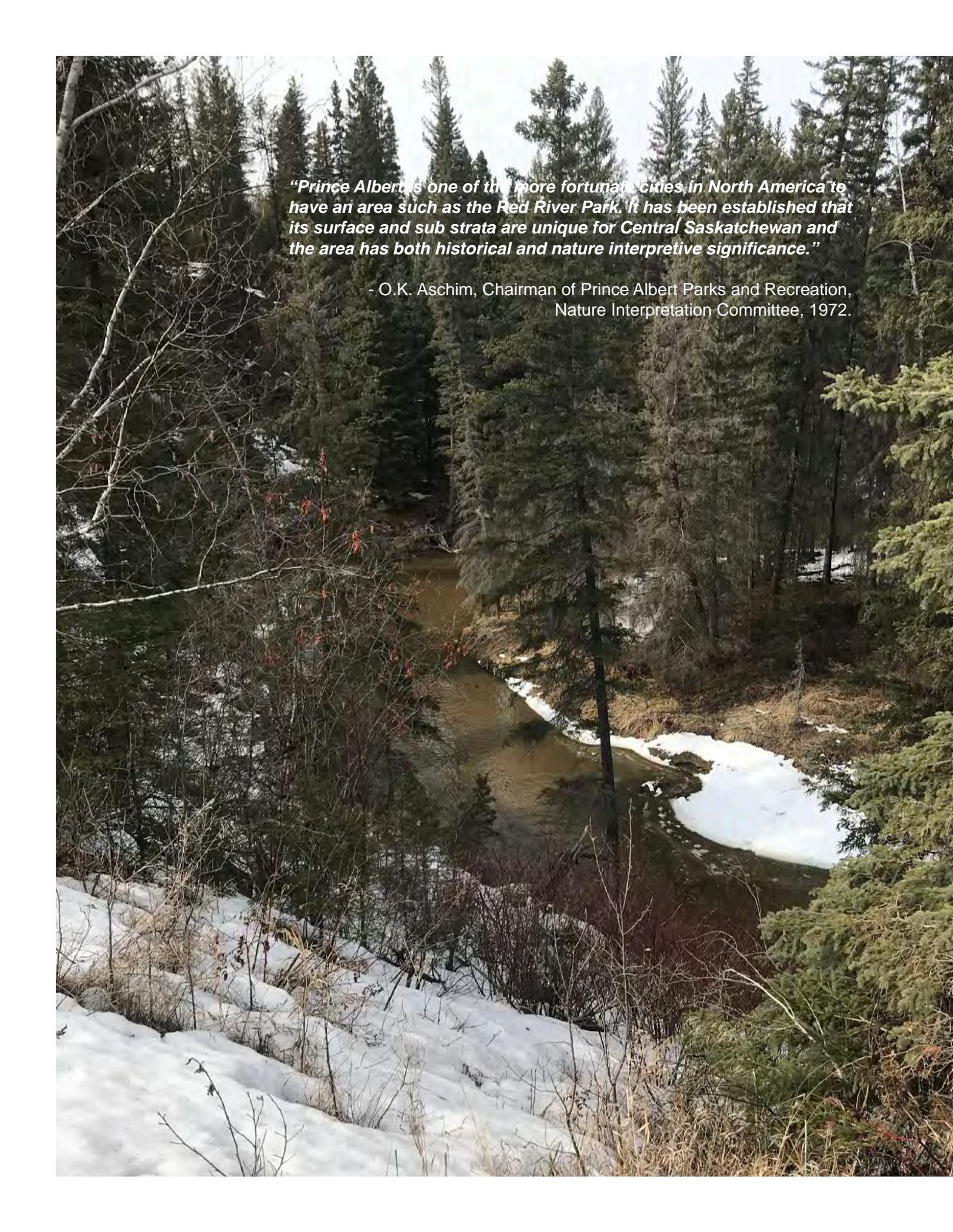
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“Prince Albert is one of the more fortunate cities in North America to have an area such as the Red River Park. It has been established that its surface and sub strata are unique for Central Saskatchewan and the area has both historical and nature interpretive significance.”

- O.K. Aschim, Chairman of Prince Albert Parks and Recreation,
Nature Interpretation Committee, 1972.



Executive Summary

Little Red River Park covers approximately 7% of the footprint of the City of Prince Albert. Its ecological, recreational, and cultural importance to the region cannot be overstated. Its exemplary biodiversity, extensive network of trails and recreation facilities, scenic beauty, and historic significance for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, make Little Red River Park a hidden gem in the vast landscape of Saskatchewan.

Recognizing the need to protect this natural treasure, the City of Prince Albert, acting on a direction laid out in the Community Services Master Plan, commissioned this Master Plan for Little Red River Park. This document is the result of an engaging process of listening – to the people of Prince Albert and district, those that use the park regularly, and indeed the land and water themselves – to determine a direction forward.

1.1. Process

The first step to creating this Master Plan was data gathering, which included:

- An examination of the history of the site;
- An inventory and analysis of the site and its operations;
- Engagement with park users and the general public;
- Engagement with Indigenous communities; and
- Reviewing existing planning documents, standards and frameworks;

From there, the process moved on to thoughtful consideration of the foundations on which to base the Plan by:

- Identifying the Goals of the Plan;
- Generating a Mission and Identity Statement;
- Devising a set of Guiding Principles.

The data gathered in the first step was then examined against the foundations in the second step, and a master list of recommendations was developed, leading to a Renewal Plan. From this plan, a Strategic Action Plan was laid out to determine a course for implementing the recommendations through achievable phases.

The process was rounded out by a Financial Analysis of the Plan and identification of potential partnerships and sources of funding for completion of the Strategic Directions.

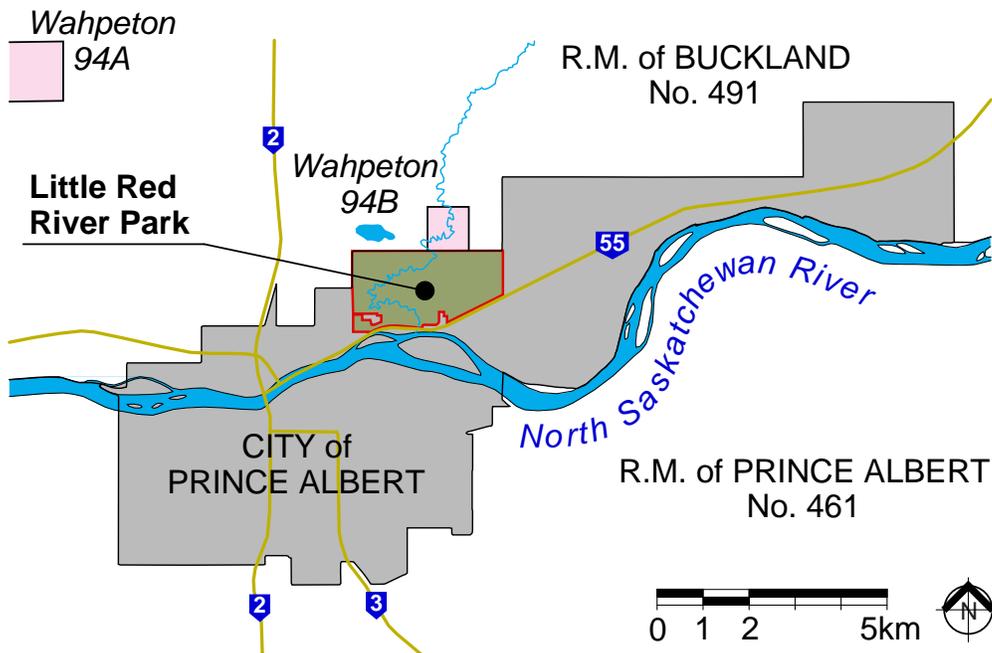


Figure 1. Location of Little Red River Park

1.2. Foundations

Goals and Objectives

The Little Red River Park Master Plan aims to:

1. Build a comprehensive current overview and inventory of the Park.
2. Listen to stakeholders and rights-holders;
3. Develop a 10-year vision for the Park.

Mission and Identity Statement

Little Red River Park strives to be a place where healthy relationships with the land and the community are promoted and nurtured. It is a place where conservation of natural systems and heritage resources are balanced with recreation and cultural amenities, and programming to enhance the quality of life for Prince Albert and District residents, as well as providing a destination for visitors to the city and region. It is a place for Prince Albert to demonstrate its commitment to the education, growth, health and wellness of its citizens by providing recreational and learning opportunities in a natural setting, and programming for youth to foster sustainable values for current and future generations.

This is achieved through Learning, Healing, and Doing by:

- Providing opportunities for land-based learning to nurture the **MIND**.
- Providing for places and ceremonies to promote healing of the **SPIRIT**.
- Encouraging activities to promote healthy lifestyles, to promote honouring the **BODY**.

Guiding Principles

Little Red River Park is a place that:

- Ensures resources in the Park are inclusive and accessible to all;
- Conserves natural and heritage resources;
- Tells the truth; tells the story of Prince Albert;
- Reconciles the past with the future; and
- Encourages public participation in decision-making with listening as a key tool.

1.3. Key Strategies

1. Invest in repairs to meet safety and accessibility requirements.
2. Implement a governance model that provides a single point of contact for the Park, allows access to private funding opportunities, and establishes a clear system for managing programs and facilities.
3. Commission feasibility studies, branding and wayfinding packages, and engineering reviews in anticipation of major improvement projects.
4. Commit to seeking sources of revenue and establishing partnerships that can offset capital and operating costs.
5. Work persistently at enhancement projects, keeping the public and park users well informed, and give opportunities for public input where appropriate.
6. Construct and operate Little Red River Park in a manner that is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable, and embraces new partnerships and innovation.
7. Assess successes and monitor progress each year of the ten-year process to determine the best course of action for full implementation. This may require adjustments to the Strategic Directions as the Plan progresses.

1.4. Measuring Success

Each project undertaken as part of this Master Plan must be scrutinized through a Development Review Process to ensure that it meets the following criteria prior to full implementation:

1. It meets the foundations of the Plan.
2. It is environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable.
3. Full public consultation, including with Indigenous communities, has been undertaken and concerns are addressed to a satisfactory level.
4. It adheres to the principles and policies of local plans and by-laws.
5. It follows the provincial and national standards.





Project Background

2.1. Introduction

Little Red River Park is a natural urban park covering approximately 1,200 acres within the city limits of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. It is situated immediately north of the North Saskatchewan River. Prince Albert is fortunate to have such a large park in proximity to its urban core. A place of great natural beauty, Little Red River Park is of comparable size to Winnipeg's Assiniboine Park (1,100 acres) and Vancouver's Stanley Park (1,000 acres).

At the confluence of the Spruce (Little Red) and North Saskatchewan Rivers, the Park is ecologically contiguous to the Nisbet Provincial Forest. It is one of the series of parks along the North Saskatchewan River known collectively as the *Pêhonân Parkway*.

Although Little Red River Park (the Park) does not serve as large an urban population as Winnipeg or Vancouver, Saskatchewan's park tourism has traditionally drawn visitors from the whole province, and not just the nearest urban centres. Because of its large size and natural setting, Little Red River Park has the opportunity to serve as an urban park while functioning similarly to a municipal or regional park, offering a broad range of potential visitor experiences. The site has offered appeal to people from across Saskatchewan and Canada, through thousands of years, for a variety of human activities.

In 2019, HTFC Planning & Design and Oxbow Architecture (the Consultant Team) undertook the tasks of collecting data, engaging the local community, and analyzing findings on the Park in order to offer recommendations for moving forward through a 10-year Master Plan. The purpose of this Master Plan is to guide future operations, development, partnerships, governance and funding of the Park to ensure that it remains a valued place in the Prince Albert region, and that it might become an example of a successfully operated and maintained urban public space.

Throughout the data-gathering phase of this project, both the Consultant Team and the City of Prince Albert have recognized the importance of the site's history to informing the process of creating a Master Plan for the Park. As the project progresses, this history continues to expand and become more comprehensive. This, along with the other factors outlined in Figure 2, lay out a framework for guiding this process.



Figure 2. Master Plan Process

2.2. Historic Context

The site of Little Red River Park has been a meeting place (*Kistahpinanihk*) for Saskatchewan First Nations for many hundreds of years.¹ Located on the forest edge, it sits in the ecotone between Saskatchewan's two major ecoregions: the prairie and boreal forest. According to ecological historian Merle Massie, First Nations "people chose to live near – or to create – ecological edges in order to exploit the resources of more than one biome and promote economic resilience and health. Those who resided at or near ecological edges usually exhibited high levels of cultural interaction that promote the exchange of knowledge, technologies, and resources in such a way as to increase the adaptive repertoire available to any one group."² It is for this reason – the diversity and shelter offered by the edge condition biome – that, to the Cree People, the Prince Albert area was known as 'the Good Wintering Place.'³

Within the forest prairie edge biome, and within Little Red River Park, the alluvial plain at the exit point of the river, as well as the upper plains on both sides of the river, served as a major gathering site. Although there have been no official archaeological investigations within the Park to date, and an archaeological survey was not included within the scope of work of this project, evidence exists, both physically, and in oral tradition and written reference, to suggest that the area of the Park is likely to contain a rich repository of archaeological artifacts.

In the 1860s and 1870s, Dakota families who had visited and used the region as part of their traditional territory moved more permanently into the area following unrest in the United States. A small village formed on the alluvial plains and upper plains of Little Red River, accessing both high ground and fresh water. While some of these families left during the struggles of the 1885 Resistance, others stayed. Recognizing the important connection to place, the Wahpeton Dakota people won Crown recognition through the creation of Wahpeton Reserve 94B in 1917, adjacent to the north boundary of today's Little Red River Park.

Kistahpinanihk, the Cree word for "a gathering place," is embraced as an important 'term' and 'identifier' as it helps to qualify the community's distinct sense of place by expressing the dynamics of multiculturalism, pluralism and cosmopolitanism practiced from pre-settler to modern times. Today, the community is considered a meeting place for northern communities – and a significant regional city in the Province. Kistahpinanihk has also been adopted as the name of Prince Albert's Official Community Plan.

- from Section 5: Prince Albert's Culture Themes, Goals and Actions, City of Prince Albert Municipal Cultural Action Plan (2016).

As an indication of the Dakota connection to this place, the origin of its place name should be mentioned, for the name 'Little Red' is said to relate to a significant event in Dakota history:

Now, why did we call Wahpeton Reserve #94B, the Little Red Reserve? We knew the small river that flows past that reserve as *Wakpa Sa Ci'stin'na*. It was said by our older Dakota relatives, long ago (*enhanna*) this is where our ancestors had a big fight with (the) *Zu'zu'he'ce'dan* (Gros Ventre). They said the *Zu'zu'he'ce'dan* attacked our campsite early in the morning, the one on the plateau above that now known as the Cosmo Lodge in Little Red River Park, across the river from the City of Prince Albert. While our ancestors pushed the *Zu'zu'he'ce'dan* back towards the North Saskatchewan River, where the *Zu'zu'he'ce'dan* had left their canoes, many died on both sides (and much blood was spilled). This is why our older Dakota relatives said the river was named *Wakpa Sa Ci'stin'na*, which means Little Red River.⁴

Throughout the years, the area of the Park has become a centre for many local Indigenous cultural practices, including a sweat lodge located on the upper plains, which was used throughout the 20th century; and as a picnic site for various Indigenous cultural and political groups. More recent gatherings have been hosted by the Prince Albert Métis Women's Association, which include Elders lunches, First Nations craft and language workshops, and bingo for seniors.

Although most of the Wahpeton First Nation now lives on their original site, 94A, not all of the Dakota moved there when it was established in 1894. A small group remained in the village at the site of Little Red River Park. In 1912 members of this group were moved half a mile north of this location, due to pressure from the private landowners, likely because of financial incentives by a land boom that was underway at the time.

This parcel of land was eventually set aside for Wahpeton in 1917 and is referred to as 94B. This land adjacent to Little Red River Park remains an important part of the Dakota community. An historic mass grave is located at 94B, where victims of the Spanish Flu were buried during 1917-18, a time when the Wahpeton population was decimated, reduced from 300 to less than 30 people. The 94B site is also home to a healing lodge, administrative offices, and community gatherings. Both 94B and the site of the historic village within Little Red River Park have important cultural significance to the Wahpeton First Nation and are considered sacred ground.

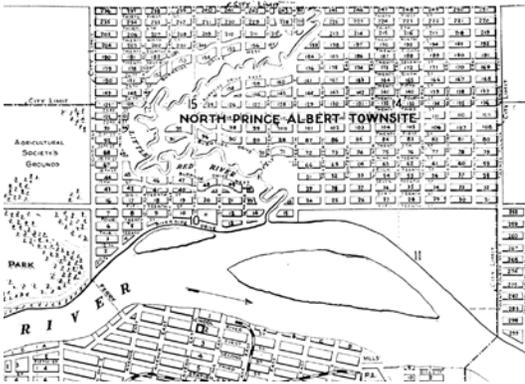
Beginning in the 1880s, Prince Albert's lumber industry began to grow. Several townships north of the river were withdrawn from development or lumbering, so the lumber and cordwood industries began about six miles out from the river edge. Prince Albert homeowners grumbled about having to drive so far to cut cordwood for their wood stoves.

Lumber companies working northern timber berths would float logs down both the Shell/Sturgeon and Little Red Rivers to the mills at Prince Albert. Little Red would often experience low water, with logs jamming and unable to be floated downstream. Lumber companies would build temporary dams near what would become Prince Albert National Park, to build up a large flow of water to burst the logs downstream. Floating cookshacks floated behind the log drivers downstream to Prince Albert.



As Prince Albert grew, Little Red River became a favourite recreational space for Prince Albert residents and visitors. Canadian author L.M. Montgomery (famous for her *Anne of Green Gables* and *Emily* series of books) stayed with her father in Prince Albert in 1890-1891. She and friends rowed across the North Saskatchewan River to Little Red River Park for a berry picking day trip. She was enchanted. In her diary, she recorded:

What a wilderness it was! Steep banks covered with mighty, heaven-sweeping pines, weird with age: below, a thick undergrowth of poplar through which we forced our way to a most romantic little spot where nature ran riot in untrained luxuriance....



Prince Albert plan, 1912 (PAHS)

In 1912, the city of Prince Albert embarked on an ambitious hydroelectric project, the LaColle Falls Hydroelectric Project, hoping to become a centre of industry and commerce. During this time, and perhaps under the suggestion of the Toronto urban planning firm E.A. James and T. Aird Murray, the City of Prince Albert considered developing the area into residential housing. The area of the Park can be seen divided into suburban residential lots in a plan from this era. The plan for the hydroelectric dam was never completed, abandoned because of the city's financial woes, along with the onset of war. The land that was Little Red River Park was spared from suburban residential development.



Choir picnic, 1923. (PAHS)

By the 1920s, Little Red River Park had settled into its new role as a day trip destination for Prince Albert residents. A swinging bridge was added to its enticements. In 1930, the Prince Albert Sanatorium was built to house and treat tuberculosis patients. Its situation amongst the pines was thought to help bring healing to patients.



Ski jump. 1940

Ski jump fever took the city by storm and by the 1940's, a major ski jump and hill was constructed on the convenient slopes of the Little Red River, in the place where today the Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre hill operates during the winter. In 1947-48, the provincial ski jumping competition was held at Little Red River Park.⁵ While daredevils leapt, children flocked to the toboggan hill, which has since become a fixture in the Park.



The healing and supportive powers of the pines for tuberculosis patients suggested that Little Red River Park might be a good place to situate Saskatchewan's new female

correctional centre, Pine Grove, built in 1965. Though the sanatorium was closed and later torn down in 1988, Pine Grove remains a critical provincial facility serving an important role in Crown policy. It is situated near the Park's shared east entrance road. Pine Grove overlooks some of the Park's most impressive and ecologically important high banks.

In the 1970s, a proposal was put forward to the provincial government to convert the Park to the Little Red River Regional Park, including the central development of a new and expanded ski hill on the plateau north and east of Cosmopolitan Lodge. According to newspaper accounts from the time, ski hill development was to include a significant addition to the existing slope, to increase the length of the ski runs. Newspaper accounts from this time include the suggestion that garbage be used to add to the height of the riverbank. This proposal faced opposition from within the community, who feared that the threats to the natural and cultural assets of the Park would mean the permanent loss of some of these features.

A summary of letters exchanged between archaeologists, historians, and environmentalists with the Province of Saskatchewan (Department of Tourism & Renewable Resources) from this time show concern for the loss of any of the fragile natural habitat ('the park is a botanist's dream, it grows most of the plants that are to be found in the province'⁶) and important archaeological remains. Although a thorough archaeological study has never been undertaken, the remains of the historic Dakota village are still visible to the informed eye. As well as this important feature, there may also be remains from earlier First Nations settlements and encampments, as well as from post-contact history. A letter from Ian G. Dyck, Archaeologist, also mentioned 'there is rumoured to be a late 1700's fur trade fort on the Little Red River that has not been exactly located. It, too, may be on the plateau within the Park.'⁷

2.3. Previous Master Plan

Little Red River Park comprised the largest contiguous part of the study area of the *Prince Albert River Valley Park 20 Year Master Plan (2004)*. This plan provided a number of recommendations for improvements to Little Red River Park, including:

- Upgrades to Cosmopolitan Place;
- Rationalization of trails;
- Roadway improvements and/or re-alignments;
- Tourism-oriented development in the old Sanitorium site (referred to as North Park);
- A festival site in the eastern upper plains;
- A large group picnicking site on the east end of the western upper plains;
- Several picnic sites along the trails north of the Spruce River; and
- Trail and canoe/kayak access to the small island to the south of the highway.

Some of the recommendations laid out in the 2004 Master Plan have been implemented to some degree. Improvements to trails, including addition of lighting to the River Trail; upgrades to Cosmopolitan Place; and use of the Park for festival events have taken place since 2004. Many of these improvements have been led and funded, at least in part, by the user groups and contractors who have acted as stewards of Little Red River Park over the years.

The 2004 Master Plan also recommended the relocation/expropriation of the Pine Grove Correctional Centre, Prince Albert Youth Residence, as well as the residential properties south of the Sanitorium site, in order to convert those parcels to a land use that is more compatible with the Park. While it would open up the possibilities of creating continuity between the Sanitorium site and the rest of the Park, the Consultant Team recognizes this as an impractical and cost prohibitive undertaking. Instead, acknowledging that this does present a constraint to the planning process, and potentially an opportunity for partnership, a more pragmatic approach to addressing this issue is recommended.

Overall, the 2004 Master Plan advocated for an approach that is “about conservation and enhancement as opposed to ‘development’ *per se*,” which is a sentiment that is generally brought forward in this current Master Plan.

2.4. The Need for a Master Plan

The *Community Services Master Plan* (2018) called for the development of a master plan for Little Red River Park as one of its strategic directions. The public engagement process for the *Community Services Master Plan* indicated that approximately 67% of households used the facilities at Little Red at least once during the previous year.⁸

All previous master plans that included Little Red River Park looked at a much broader study area, but considering the footprint of the Park and its importance to the citizens of Prince Albert and district, it is important to undertake a master plan specific to the Park itself. With the 20-year mark approaching since the release of the 2004 River Valley Master Plan, the Little Red River Park Master Plan is well timed.



Photo Credit: Prince Albert Ski Club





Goals and Objectives

3.1. Goals of this Plan

The aim of this master planning process is to assess the state of the Park, develop a vision for its future, and consider the appropriate steps towards planning for its long-term health, so that it may continue to be a place the community cherishes for years to come.

The need to address maintenance and capital improvements at Little Red River Park led to the proposal for a Master Plan, to help direct the future of the Park. Master plans are tools that help reference the future of management and development decisions for the Park, collectively compiling the community's wishes for the future while referencing best practices informed by solid research and a thorough understanding of the site.

The objectives of the Little Red River Park Master Plan are:

- 1) To build a comprehensive current overview and inventory of the Park.
- 2) To listen to stakeholders and rights-holders.
- 3) To develop the 10-year vision for the Park.

This Master Plan includes:

- Synthesis of comprehensive overview, including identifying opportunities for new development, facilities, and partners;
- Analysis of community-based input, including opportunities for cultural and recreational programming, heritage and ecology programming; and desired services;
- Linking and leveraging current uses with future opportunities, trends, and partners, including developing operating strategies and policies for current and future facilities;
- Linking and leveraging the Little Red River Park Master Plan with other City of Prince Albert plans, including the *Municipal Cultural Action Plan*, the *Community Services Master Plan*, and others;
- Prioritization, ranking, and linking of each Master Plan recommendation (needs, demands, potential directions) and long-range planning guidelines to responsible entities (City, private, non-profit, commercial), with timelines, financial requirements (where feasible), partnerships, and potential granting agencies;
- A conceptual Park Renewal Plan showcasing existing and potential future infrastructure development and biophysical overview.



3.2. Mission and Identity Statement

Little Red River Park strives to be a place where healthy relationships with the land and the community are promoted and nurtured. It is a place where conservation of natural systems and heritage resources are balanced with recreation and cultural amenities, and programming to enhance the quality of life for Prince Albert and District residents, as well as providing a destination for visitors to the city and region. It is a place for Prince Albert to demonstrate its commitment to the education, growth, health and wellness of its citizens by providing recreational and learning opportunities in a natural setting, and programming for youth to foster sustainable values for current and future generations.

This is achieved through Learning, Healing, and Doing by:

- Providing opportunities for land-based learning to nurture the **MIND**.
- Providing for places and ceremonies to promote healing of the **SPIRIT**.
- Encouraging activities to promote healthy lifestyles, to promote honouring the **BODY**.

3.3. Guiding Principles

The Consultant Team has developed this Master Plan guided by the following principles.

Little Red River Park is a place that:

- Ensures resources in the Park are inclusive and accessible to all;
- Conserves natural and heritage resources;
- Tells the truth; tells the story of Prince Albert;
- Reconciles the past with the future; and
- Encourages public participation in decision-making with listening as a key tool.



Inventory & Analysis

In the opening stages of the Master Plan process, the Consultant Team undertook an extensive review of documents pertaining to Little Red River Park. This included a review of City, Provincial and Federal plans and policies, historic accounts and photographs, existing plans, maps and air photos, and online resources such as *Prince Albert Now* articles, websites and social media pages.

Over three days in May 2019, the Consultant Team visited the Park and gathered data, covering the extents of the site on foot, bicycle and vehicle. GIS (Geographical Information Systems), GPS (Global Positioning Systems), and mobile device technology along with digital photography was employed to document features and sites throughout this expansive park.

During this visit and subsequent visits data was also gathered through the public engagement process (see Chapter 5.0).

4.1. Planning Context

Along with presenting its own vision, goals, mission and guiding principles, in developing this Master Plan, it is important to ensure that the strategies listed herein concord with the City's and District's other planning documents. At all stages of implementation of the recommendations presented, these plans should be referenced and crosschecked to ensure compliance. If clashes do occur, careful thought should be given to amending the appropriate document to ensure values are consistent.

4.1.1. Alignment with Existing Plans and Policies

This Master Plan should act as part of a total package with the following documents. For each plan, the relevant sections, strategies and policies are listed for reference.

4.1.1.1. **Kistahpinanihk – Official Community Plan**

Kistahpinanihk-2035 (Bylaw No. 21 of 2015) “provides the comprehensive policy framework to guide the physical, environmental, economic, social and cultural development of the City.”⁹ This Official Community Plan touches on many important aspects of Prince Albert’s future growth.

Among the sections of the plan that relate to Little Red River Park and improvements and developments therein are:

- Section 5: Sustainability
- Section 6: Land Use
 - 6.7 Parks and Environmental
- Section 9: Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas; and
- Section 10: Environment.

4.1.1.2. **PA Planning District Official Community Plan**

The Prince Albert Planning District Official Community Plan (2018) lays out the following Regional Goals in Chapter 2:

- Environment and Heritage/Cultural Preservation:
 - Recognize the potential impacts of flooding, erosion and slope stability on development and municipal infrastructure.
 - Provide ongoing opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy and appreciate the environmental, cultural and heritage resources in the region.
 - Conserve significant cultural and heritage resources.

Other chapters in the Plan most pertinent to Little Red River Park include:

- Chapter 6: Environmental and Cultural Resources;
- Chapter 7: Hazard Lands;
- Chapter 8: Transportation and Servicing Policy;
- Chapter 9: Inter-Municipal Co-operation;
- Chapter 10: First Nations; and
- Chapter 11: Plan Implementation

Like its municipal counterpart, this Official Community Plan has a comprehensive focus that touches on all aspects of life in the region.

4.1.1.3. Community Services Master Plan

The City of Prince Albert's *Community Services Master Plan* (2018) (CSMP) has as one of its strategic directions "to develop a master plan for Little Red River Park;" recognizing the importance of this park to the health of Prince Albert. The commissioning of this Little Red River Park Master Plan is a testament to the City's commitment to following the recommendations laid out in the Community Services Master Plan.

Beyond this very specific direction, the CSMP aligns with the values put forward in the Little Red River Master Plan, with a focus on well-being and sustainability.

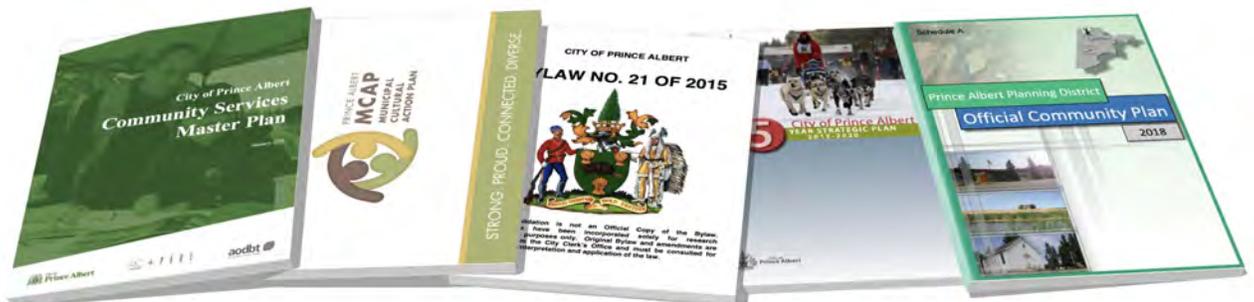
Some of the other congruent directions that are promoted through the CSMP include:

- Developing partnerships;
- Enhancing support;
- Addressing gaps;
- Engaging the community; and
- Promoting opportunities and the benefits of recreation.

The Plan also prioritizes outdoor facilities, multi-use trails, natural areas/ open spaces, toboggan hills, campgrounds, and cross-country skiing/ running trails, all of which the Little Red River Master Plan addresses.

4.1.1.4. Municipal Cultural Action Plan

The Municipal Cultural Action Plan (2016) (MCAP) touts Little Red River Park and the Pêhonân Parkway as a place that "provides residents and visitors alike an opportunity to connect with the natural environment."¹⁰



Four of the MCAP's Strategic Actions call for improvements that relate to the Park or align with the goals of this Plan, either directly or indirectly:

- 2.3: Incorporate historical and cultural landmarks to enhance and celebrate neighbourhoods and to draw tourism, interest, and cultural learnings;
- 2.4: Complete the Rotary Trail system to link to Little Red River Park;
- 2.5: Focus attention on Little Red River Park as a cultural asset to the community;
- 3.1: Celebrate, support, and promote Prince Albert's rich Indigenous history and makeup.

The MCAP also lists as one of its cultural goals to “support and celebrate the value of sports and recreational programming, activities, and initiatives and the role they play in enhancing Prince Albert's cultural identity and make-up.”

Some of the recommendations in the appendix of the MCAP also closely align with those laid out in Chapter 6.0 of this Plan.

4.1.1.5. Recreation Facilities and Parks By-Law

Bylaw No. 13 of 2018 pertains to recreation and parks. It defines roles and responsibilities, and regulates activities within that scope. As it relates to Little Red River Park, amendments to the bylaw may be required depending upon the governance model that is implemented for the Park. For example, it may become necessary to define a new role for a Park Manager or Executive Director as well as list responsibilities for that position.

It should also be noted, in relation to trails, that this bylaw recognizes it as an offence if any person “develops new trails, pathways or other passages which may distribute or destroy the material landscape or vegetation without written consent of the Director.” This clause is important for the protection of the integrity of the Park's environment. It may become necessary to further develop restrictions such as this, within this bylaw, depending on any designations the Park might obtain through the implementation of this Master Plan.

4.1.1.6. **Prince Albert Strategic Action Plan (2015-2020)**

The City's Strategic Action Plan is nearing the end of its term, but its vision, mission, core values, operational themes and strategic goals all very much align with those of this Master Plan. Encouraging entrepreneurship, being innovative, being inclusive, developing sustainably, being accountable and transparent, working collaboratively, and striving for excellence are at the heart of both of these Plans.

A renewal of the Prince Albert Strategic Action Plan must consider and incorporate the Strategic Directions of the Little Red River Master Plan to cement its implementation to the broader strategies for the City of Prince Albert.

4.1.2. **Provincial and National Guidelines**

Within the past five years, several new action plans, frameworks, networks, and guidelines for parks and recreation have been issued, both provincially and nationally. The principles within these plans have helped to inform recommendations for this Master Plan and should also be cross-referenced often throughout the implementation of this plan.

Saskatchewan

- Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association:
 - *2014 – 2019 Strategic Plan*;
 - *Recreation and the Quality of Life in Saskatchewan* (2016);
 - *Eat Healthy Play Healthy*.
- SaskCulture:
 - *2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan*;
- Sask Sport Inc.:
 - *Sport Development Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021*.
- Saskatchewan in Motion:
 - *Active Saskatchewan*;
 - *2019 – 2022 Active Saskatchewan Strategic Plan*.
- SaskOutdoors – Saskatchewan Outdoor Environmental Education Association.

Canada

- Parks Canada:
 - *Parks for All : an Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community* (2017);
- Joint Initiative of the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association:
 - *A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 : Pathways to Wellbeing*;
- Government of Canada (and provincial and territorial governments):
 - *Let's Get Moving : A Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada* (2018).
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: *Calls to Action*;

4.2. General River Valley Description

The Spruce River or Little Red River as it is traditionally known, is one of three major tributaries within the North Saskatchewan River catchment basin, near the forks of the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers, along with the Sturgeon and Garden Rivers. Water from this system – the source of which is north of the site near Prince Albert National Park – eventually flows out to Hudson’s Bay.

The land that forms the Little Red River valley is rich with diverse flora and fauna, rolling topography, and scenic beauty. Its meandering watercourse has carved out the sandy land to create habitat for life forms of all sizes from tiny microorganisms to tall trees. The valley is a living laboratory of the prairie-boreal ecotone.

Hydrology

As the ice from the last Ice Age receded, water shaped the land. The erosion and deposition processes of the muddy Little Red River (*Wakpa Sa Ci’stin’na* in the Dakota language) snaked its way down the land from its source, southward to the great north tributary of the Saskatchewan River (*Kisiskâciwanisîpiy* in the Nêhiyawêwin language). The soil deposited along the shores created the perfect conditions for the development of mixedwood forest, and as it pushed through to the lowlands, it carved away the soft, sandy cliffs of the uplands, before entering a flat plain and joining the larger stream.



As bends in the meandering river tightened, the water began to find new routes, and several oxbows in the watercourse eventually broke away forming lakes and sloughs whose waters would become still, spawning new habitats.

Flooding, both from spring meltwater runoff and from human activity, affects the river valley annually, contributing to bank erosion and silt deposition, especially in the alluvial plain near the mouth of the Little Red River. In the summer, as the basin drains, and the hot air contributes to evaporation, the water level returns to its normal.¹¹ In the wintertime, all of the waters freeze solid, and the cycle begins again.

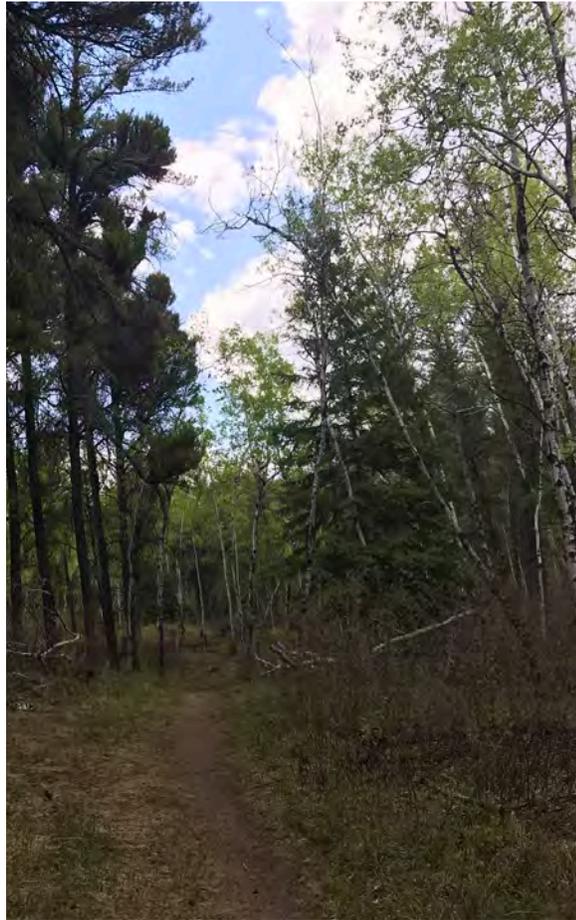
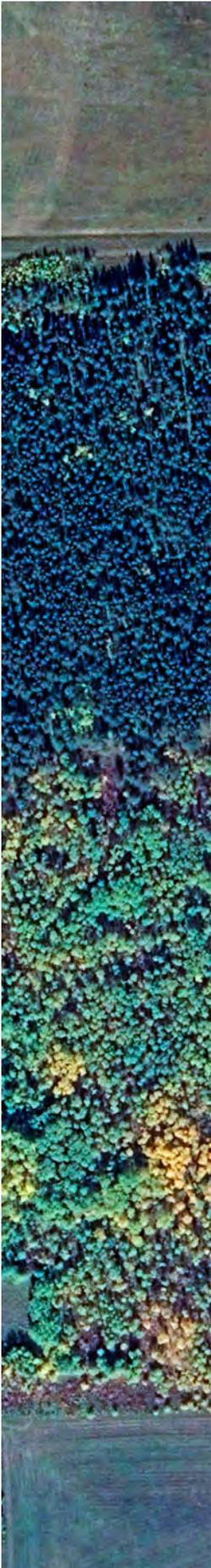
Topography and Soils

The parent material within the region of the forks of the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers is made up of glaciofluvial rock – boulders, sand, silt and clay – deposited as glaciers receded and formed Glacial Lake Saskatchewan. As a result, large deposits of sand and gravel can be found throughout the Spruce River Valley, where the soil is predominantly categorized as brunisolic. Other soil types within the valley include chernozemic (near the prairie-boreal transition), gleysolic (in wet areas such as Kristi Slough), organic (deep peaty pockets), and luvisolic (in forested areas).¹²

This sandy composition is clearly visible in the eroding hills along the river's edge within Little Red River Park. These steep walls are contrasted with open areas of undulating land and rolling hills throughout the valley. In the flatter areas near the junction of the Little Red and North Saskatchewan, silty soils have given way to bank erosion, which has been worsened by human activity. Erosion control measures have been implemented in the alluvial plain near the mouth of the river since the flooding events of the 2010s in order to mitigate the deterioration of the river's edge.

The landscape of the valley and the plains above have been in constant flux over centuries and millennia. As Merle Massie has noted, this terrain “has changed from glacier covered, to lakebed, to delta, to steppe, to spruce forest, to prairie, and back to boreal forest.”¹³ The tree line is ever moving, and so too are the inhabitants that occupy this space.





The divide between pine and poplar forests



Felling of trees by beavers



Photo credit: Brian Ho (Instagram)

Changes in soil profiles can sometimes be clearly discernable based on subtle changes in topography, moisture level, pH scale, and other such factors. This is easily observable in sudden changes of plant species. Such is the case in the southeast corner of the Park, where there are clear lines, visible from the ground level, between grassland, jack pine forest, poplar forest, and forage crop.

Flora and Fauna

The main feature of the river valley is the mixedwood forest, a medley of mostly coniferous trees, interspersed with pockets of deciduous trees and shrubs. In the higher, drier, sandier areas, jack pine is the feature species with an understory of reindeer moss, bearberry and rice-grasses.¹⁴

Areas that have moister soils, such as the floodplains in the south of the valley abound with stands of poplar, birch and white spruce with an understory of hydrophilic shrubs such as dogwoods, beaked hazel, green alder, wild rose, and saskatoon. Where there are organic deposits, one will find stands of black spruce and tamarack with understoreys of Labrador tea, raspberry, twinflower, miterwort, and sedges. The wettest areas are ideal for thickets of willow and sedges.¹⁵

A broad range of animal species dwell in the forests, plains, and waters of the river valley, ranging in size from moose to mouse and smaller still. Mammals such as deer, elk, beaver, martens and rabbits find their home in these ideal surroundings. There are also many bird species – both migratory and non-migratory – that live in the tree canopies, as well as many waterfowl that take advantage of the sloughs, bogs and marshes within the valley. Insects, especially pollinators, play a big role in ensuring the diverse ecosystem is sustained. Historically bison also grazed the plains, part of the Saskatchewan Herd that would overwinter at this site.¹⁶

Of course humans are a big part of this landscape, and have been since nomadic groups first set foot in this region. People have lived and gathered on this land for many generations and have become a part of its ecosystem – adjusting with the seasons and adapting to the changes – along with all of the other animals, birds, insects, and plants that call the valley home.

The plant and animal species that can be found in the valley include many that have traditional uses to Indigenous peoples and have been harvested for a number of broad uses such as food, shelter, clothing, tools, and medicine. Through conscientious and careful practices, this land has been able to sustain its inhabitants with all of its renewable resources.



Photo credit: Estelle Hjertaas (Instagram)

Some of the Species Found Within the River Valley

Trees:

- Jack pine
- Black spruce
- White spruce
- Tamarack
- Balsam poplar
- White birch

Shrubs and groundcover:

- Red osier dogwood
- Beaked hazel
- Green alder
- Wild rose
- Saskatoon
- Bearberry
- Lowbush cranberry
- Ostrich fern
- Horsetail
- Fireweed
- Blueberry
- Reindeer moss
- Rice grasses
- Labrador tea
- Dwarf raspberry
- Twinflower
- Mitrewort
- Sedges
- Willow
- Cattail
- Bulrush
- Reed grass

FLORA

Birds:

- Barred owl
- Red-tailed hawk
- Woodpecker
- Grey jay
- Chickadee
- Spruce grouse
- Eagle
- Heron
- Crane
- Canada goose
- Duck
- Loon
- Pelican

Fish:

- Northern pike
- Pickerel
- Sauger
- Goldeye
- Sturgeon
- Perch
- Trout
- Catfish

Mammals:

- Moose
- Elk
- White-tailed deer
- Timber wolf
- Black or brown bear
- Fox
- Wolverine
- Marten
- Lynx
- Otter
- Beaver
- Muskrat
- Mouse
- Rabbit

FAUNA

4.3. Park Edges

The perimeter of Little Red River Park totals over ten kilometres, creating a variety of edge conditions. This presents a challenge where adjacencies are homogenous with conditions within the Park boundary, and indeed serve to blur the boundary itself. While most of the Park's edges are clearly defined by roads, there are a number of areas that are ambiguous.

The western edge of the Park, particularly north of the West Parking Lot, blends seamlessly with the neighbouring Nisbet Provincial Forest. The sandy Kristi Lake Loop trail serves as a vague demarcation of this boundary, but the landscape on either side of the trail and the Prince Albert city limit (*i.e.* the Park boundary) are contiguous. This makes it difficult to discern this boundary. The same is true on the north edge of the Kristi Heights zone, and the entire length of the north boundary line, which abuts the R.M. of Buckland, and Wahpeton 94B lands.

Depending on one's perspective, this ambiguity can be seen as either positive or negative. On a positive note, the Park's lack of a defined boundary accentuates its continuity with the adjacent parcels of land, and invites trail users into the broader trail network. The trails in Little Red River Park extend nearly two kilometres beyond the northwest corner of the Park proper.

However, this also presents some challenges in the form of trail user conflicts, park security and park identity. Without fences or gates along these edges, access to the Park via trails in these locations is unimpeded, which encourages covert after-hours use of remote areas of the Park. Non-permitted uses of trails such as motorized vehicles like ATVs and snowmobiles can also be easily concealed, potentially damaging trails and natural systems without consequence to offending parties. In terms of park identity, it is unclear to park visitors where the Park/City ends and where the neighbouring jurisdictions begin.

Another edge that lacks a definitive boundary is the intersection of the Sanitorium site and the Pine Grove/PA Youth Residence properties. Because these facilities were constructed following the decommissioning of the Sanitorium facility, land once part of the hospital complex has since been amalgamated into the neighbouring correctional facilities. Security fencing has dead-ended the existing north road, and the south road leads onto the Youth Residence property, which eventually circulates back to Little Red River Park Road just west of the actual park boundary and gate.

4.4. Existing Infrastructure and Amenities

Figure 3 shows the existing conditions at Little Red River Park.

As it has always been, Little Red River Park remains *Kistahpinanihk*, a meeting place. Thousands of people from all ages, abilities, and walks of life find their way to Little Red every year. A year-round destination, nearly seventy percent of Prince Albert residents visit Little Red River Park (LRRP) annually, making it one of the city's most important recreational sites. For those not from Prince Albert, Little Red River Park is a hidden gem, known primarily via the groups most familiar with its events, including winter cross country ski loppets, summer mountain biking and music festivals; or its amenities, including the ski hill, trail network and picnicking sites.

The Park offers bird and wildlife viewing, downhill skiing, cross-country (skate and classic) skiing, hiking, cycling (mountain, fat-tire and cyclocross), snowshoeing, and picnicking. The Park also hosts the annual Pine Needle Mountain Bike and Music Festival in June, as well as loppets and other nordic ski events and competitions. In 2019, the Park hosted the national archery championships, represented by the local Prince Albert Bowbenders Club.

Because Little Red River Park is adjoining the Nisbet Provincial Forest, it is difficult to appreciate its size or to determine its boundaries while on the ground. Existing trails move freely between park and non-park space. To be an urban park within a large forest is both a blessing and a curse. Space and natural resources abound, but access is difficult to control, and unwanted or undesirable park activity occurs. With nebulous boundaries and development that has often occurred haphazardly, the Park lacks a certain clarity. It is time for Little Red River Park's identity to be more well-defined and for the citizens of Prince Albert to collectively weigh in on the future they would like for this wonderful natural area.

As the numbers show, the citizens of Prince Albert appreciate this park as nearly 70% of the city's population visits the Park annually. The Park functions with assistance from the City in the form of grant dollars provided through tendered contracts to operators of both the Cosmopolitan Lodge and Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre. The City has also formed partnerships with respected user groups such as the Prince Albert Ski Club, Rock 'n' Road Bicycle Club and others.

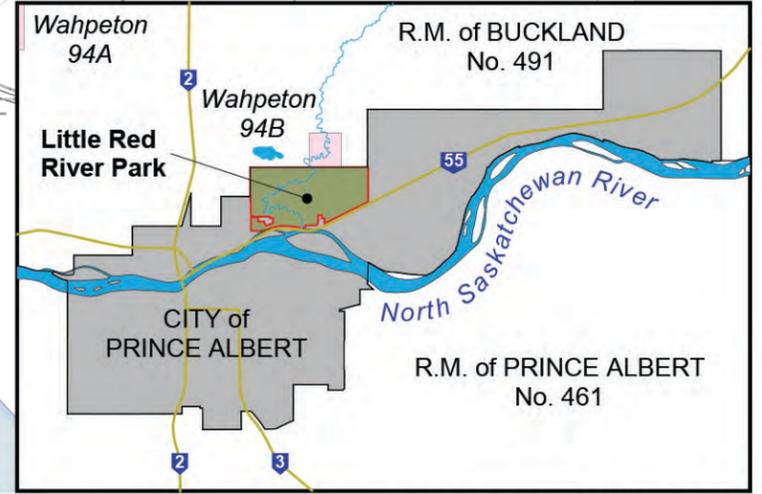
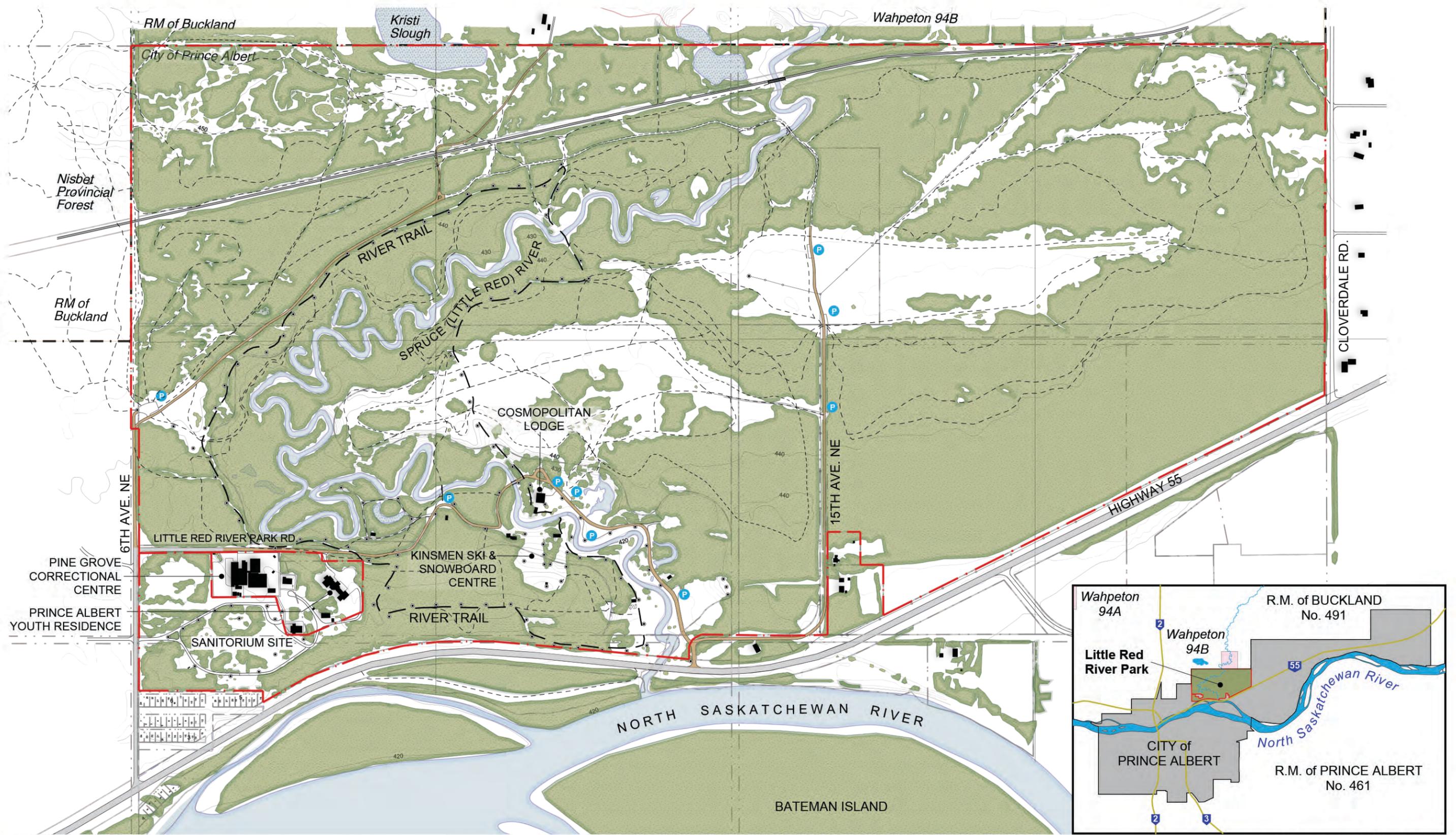
These contractors and volunteer groups contribute to the upkeep of the Park as part of their agreements and tend to concentrate their maintenance efforts in the immediate vicinity of the lodge and ski trail areas. For the remainder of the large park, volunteer labour from local sports and recreation organizations help to keep up the more outlying areas.

Although the Park is well used and successful, it is also showing signs of deterioration. The health of the forest has been compromised by dwarf mistletoe. Graffiti is a problem, as is illicit use that is causing environmental damage, especially from ATVs. The grassland upland areas are starting to fill in and the network of trails is vast, confusing and without a central trailhead. Off-leash dogs are not relegated to a specific area of the Park, so it is not possible to visit the Park without dog encounters. Infrastructure in the Park is out of date and often in a state of disrepair, particularly the washrooms and bridges.

Flooding in recent years, particularly during 2013 and 2014, caused significant damage to the Park, particularly the riparian habitat. During the flooding of 2013, the Park was closed to the public from June 20 into the fall. In 2016, the river was intentionally dammed in the Park, near the toboggan hill, to provide a reservoir of clean water for the City during the Husky Oil spill.¹⁷ This caused further damage to already eroded riverbanks and significant vegetation was lost. During the summer of 2017, a major bank stabilization and reforestation project was undertaken.

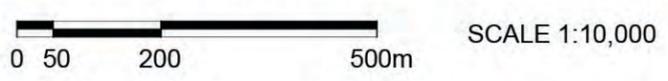
As of the fall of 2019 the health of the riverbank areas is improved, but vegetation is still establishing and the river edges, particularly at the south end of the Park, are still bare. As well, it is worthwhile noting that the river further upstream is jammed with dead trees, which might also be the result of the last decade of flooding. Although not impeding enjoyment of the Park, it makes the river unnavigable, which is an unfortunate loss of recreation potential for paddling, kayaking and paddle boarding. Bridge infrastructure lost or damaged during these flooding events is still being addressed.





LOCATION PLAN (1:200,000)

Figure 3:
LITTLE RED RIVER PARK : EXISTING CONDITIONS



- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|--|--------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| | PARK BOUNDARY | | MARSH/BOG | | TRAIL |
| | BUILDING | | WATER BODY | | ROAD |
| | LIGHT POLES | | TREE COVER | | RAILWAY |
| | PARKING AREA | | CONTOUR LINES
(2m INTERVAL) | | PLANNING BOUNDARIES |



4.4.1. **Park Access**

There are four vehicular entrances to Little Red River Park:

- The main entrance off of Highway 55;
- The west entrance on Little Red River Park Road (past Pine Grove Correctional Centre);
- The west parking lot at the terminus of 6th Avenue NE;
- The Sanitorium road (though it technically does not connect to the rest of the Park without passing through the Prince Albert Youth Residence property).

Along with the above noted, there are multiple access points for non-vehicular traffic via the numerous trails that enter the site from perimeter roads and the trail network in the Nisbet Provincial Forest.

4.4.2. **Cosmopolitan Place and Lodge**

Cosmopolitan Place comprises Cosmopolitan (Cosmo) Lodge, the Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre, the Swinging Bridge, and the picnic and barbecue areas in the lower river valley – the central, flat area of the Park – which can be accessed by Highway 55 and 6th Avenue NE.

Cosmopolitan Lodge sits at the centre of Cosmopolitan Place. A building of wood construction of approximately 530 square metres (5,700 square feet). It houses a large open hall, a smaller side hall, a kitchen/canteen, full service washrooms, and storage space.

The previous contractor in charge of operations of Cosmopolitan Lodge invested much time, effort, and capital into improvements to the lodge and its environs, as well as providing valuable public programming. More investment is required, however, to bring it up to the standard required to achieve the goal of being a destination for locals and visitors.

The current contract format encourages the operator of the Lodge to generate revenue through the operation of the food and rental services offered at the facility. This revenue supplies the contractor with the income required to sustain this business, while the contract amount can be applied to cover any overhead costs that come with operation and maintenance of the facility.

There are five large picnic areas within Cosmopolitan Place, with approximately twelve smaller picnic sites throughout. The first large site, along the east entrance road, contains a shelter, outhouse and several individual picnic spots with fire pits. The second is a picnic shelter across the river near the former playground site. The third is the picnic shelter adjacent to Cosmo Lodge. The fourth is a large group use area that sits across the road from the Swinging Bridge. This space contains a large shelter, outhouse and several fire pits and barbecues. The fifth area is situated along the loop road north and west of the group use area. This loop contains several individual picnic spots, a large shelter with wood burning stove and an outhouse.

4.4.3. Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre

Skiing has been a part of life at Little Red River Park for generations. The current facility, opened in 1990, includes the Old Log Cabin, tow-rope lifts with lift house, two ski runs, and out buildings that house grooming and maintenance equipment. The facility is operated under a contract, separate from the operating contractor of Cosmo Lodge.



Photo credit: Kinsmen Ski & Snowboard (Facebook)

4.4.4. Trails

The extensive system of trails throughout Little Red River Park is an attractive and well-used trail network in the region. There are nearly fifty kilometres of trails within the boundaries of the Park. With so many trails, there are often user conflicts, and challenges to keeping the trails organized have arisen. The task of forming, grooming, controlling and policing the trails has been undertaken by the different trail user groups, such as the Prince Albert Ski Club and the Rock 'n' Road Cycle Club, but more investment is needed to create a coherent system of trails with clear use demarcation and elimination of conflicts.

Figure 4 shows the current trail network.

4.4.5. Programming and Events

Little Red River Park has become a venue for several regular events throughout the year, including the Pine Needle Mountain Bike and Music Festival in June, the Cosmo Classic Loppet in January/February, and the Prince Albert Winter Triathlon in February. It has also been a venue for weekly trail runs, weddings, gatherings, graduation and family photographs, outdoor yoga, youth day camps, school trip outings, and one-off events, as well as cultural programming at Cosmopolitan Lodge (language classes, beading workshops, Elder bingo nights, etc.) among others.

4.5. Cultural Resources

The whole site of Little Red River Park has many stories to tell through the years, from a time before humans occupied it up to the present moment. There are three sites within the Park that hold particularly strong historical value: the historic Dakota village, the Swinging Bridge, and the Sanitorium site.

4.5.1. The Historic Dakota Village

There once existed a village in the flat area north of Cosmopolitan Lodge. This village contained cabins, roads and a community hall, along with some sites sacred to the local Dakota community. The history of this village is not widely known within the Prince Albert region, and there is an opportunity, through this plan, to honour this history.

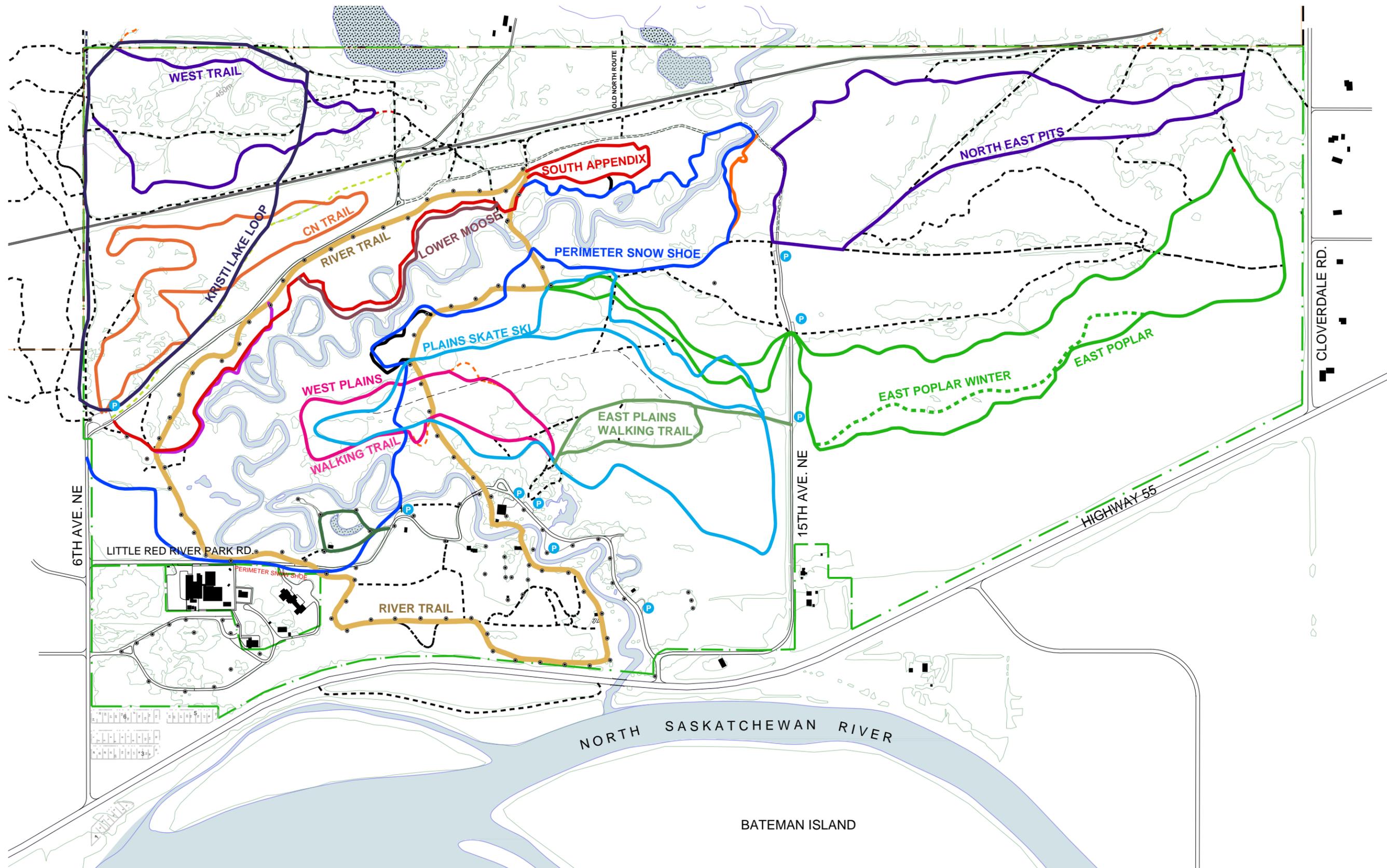


Figure 4:
EXISTING TRAILS MAP



-  PRIMARY TRAIL (RIVER TRAIL)
-  SECONDARY TRAILS
-  TERTIARY TRAILS
-  PARKING AREA
-  LIGHT POLES

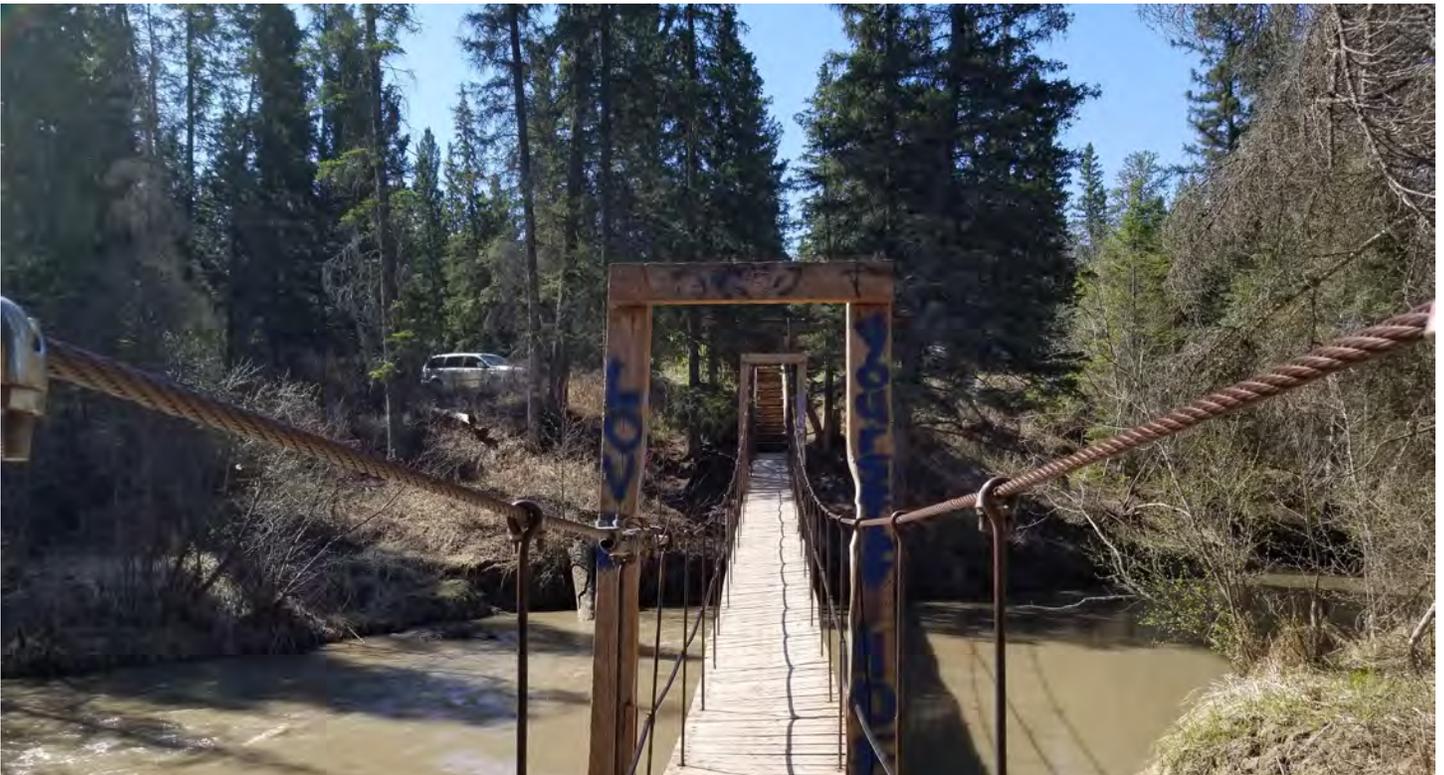


4.5.2. The Swinging Bridge

For nearly a century, the Swinging Bridge over the Spruce River has contributed to the charm of Little Red River Park. It offers visitors a fun way of engaging with the river, while also providing a thrilling sense of risk and danger. In recent years the bridge has fallen into disrepair, and unfortunately, actual risk and danger have become a part of crossing the bridge. A sign that reads ‘Caution. Damaged bridge. Use at own risk’ now greets visitors at each landing.

4.5.3. The Sanitorium Site

The site of the former Prince Albert Sanitorium is a piece of land of approximately 38 acres, within the bounds of the Park, which is currently unused. The original roads constructed for the building remain, and utilities such as water and sewer are intact at the site. There is a brick and stone monument along one of the roads commemorating the hospital. The ‘blank slate’ nature of this site and the fact that it is isolated from the rest of the Park, calls for a land use that does not rely on a direct connection to the Park’s other amenities.



4.6. User Groups

One of Little Red River Park's great strengths is the fact that so much of the programming and maintenance of the Park is undertaken and overseen by grassroots organisations, who act as stewards for the Park and care deeply about continually improving its amenities. The formation of the Friends of Little Red River Park has helped to galvanise these efforts and improve communications between user groups and the City of Prince Albert.

Among others, these include:

- Prince Albert Alpine Ski League;
- Rock 'n' Road Cycling Club;
- Prince Albert Trail Riders;
- Prince Albert Ski Club;
- Prince Albert Triathlon Multisport Club;
- Prince Albert Bow Benders;
- Operating contractors, staff and volunteers of Cosmopolitan Lodge;
- Operating contractors, staff and volunteers of the Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre;
- City of Prince Albert Summer Playground Program;
- Educational institutions: primary, secondary and post-secondary;
- Local chapters of various service and youth clubs.

4.7. Safety & Security

A number of safety and security issues currently present challenges to park users and operators. With so many remote areas and a lack of surveillance, limited number of staff, and lack of a dedicated patrol assigned to the Park's extents, deterring and apprehending illegal activities has become nearly impossible, especially after hours.

Though gates at vehicular entrances are locked at night, access to the Park is still possible, and illicit use of the Park has been occurring. Open, unpermitted fires in the Park present a wildfire hazard, especially during dry periods.

There are currently many positive aspects of Little Red River Park and its operations and use that promote safety, such as the strong sense of community and stewardship that is created by the various user groups, continuous activity in the Park, and the efforts of the operating contractors and City staff. More measures can be taken however, to increase not only the visitors' sense of safety, but actual safety and security. Examples include lighting at the Park's entrances and throughout Cosmopolitan Place, a foot or bike patrol through the Park during open hours, and an afterhours patrol.

Although the data collection process did not include a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment of the Park, all future projects should consider evaluating existing safety and security issues, and identifying potential solutions using CPTED principles. These principles include natural surveillance, natural access control, maintenance, activity support, and territorial reinforcement.¹⁸

4.8. Climate and Seasonal Cycles

Prince Albert sits at the northern edge of the Humid Continental climate zone, and experiences big differences between the four distinct seasons. Though winters can be extremely cold and harsh, the people who have inhabited the region have embraced this seasonal diversity, and have adapted their activities to suit the seasons.

The climate is changing. The changes are gradual, and may appear subtle, but small shifts in normals can have significant effects over time. The projections for climate change in this region call for a potential increase in mean annual temperature of 2.3°C within the next three decades and 4.6°C by 2080.¹⁹ Days reaching 30°C or higher are projected to increase from the historical normal of seven per year to as high as thirty-five by 2080.²⁰ Average annual precipitation is also projected to increase by as much as forty-four millimetres by 2080 with the highest increases being in the spring.²¹ This additional rain, coupled with spring melt waters could significantly increase flood risk in the Spruce River and North Saskatchewan River valleys.

This is why it is increasingly important to preserve and protect the natural resource that is Little Red River Park. The forest cover within the Park's bounds provides much needed carbon sequestration and oxygen exchange. With increasing temperatures, the shade and fresh air that these trees provide will be sought out by those seeking outdoor recreation.

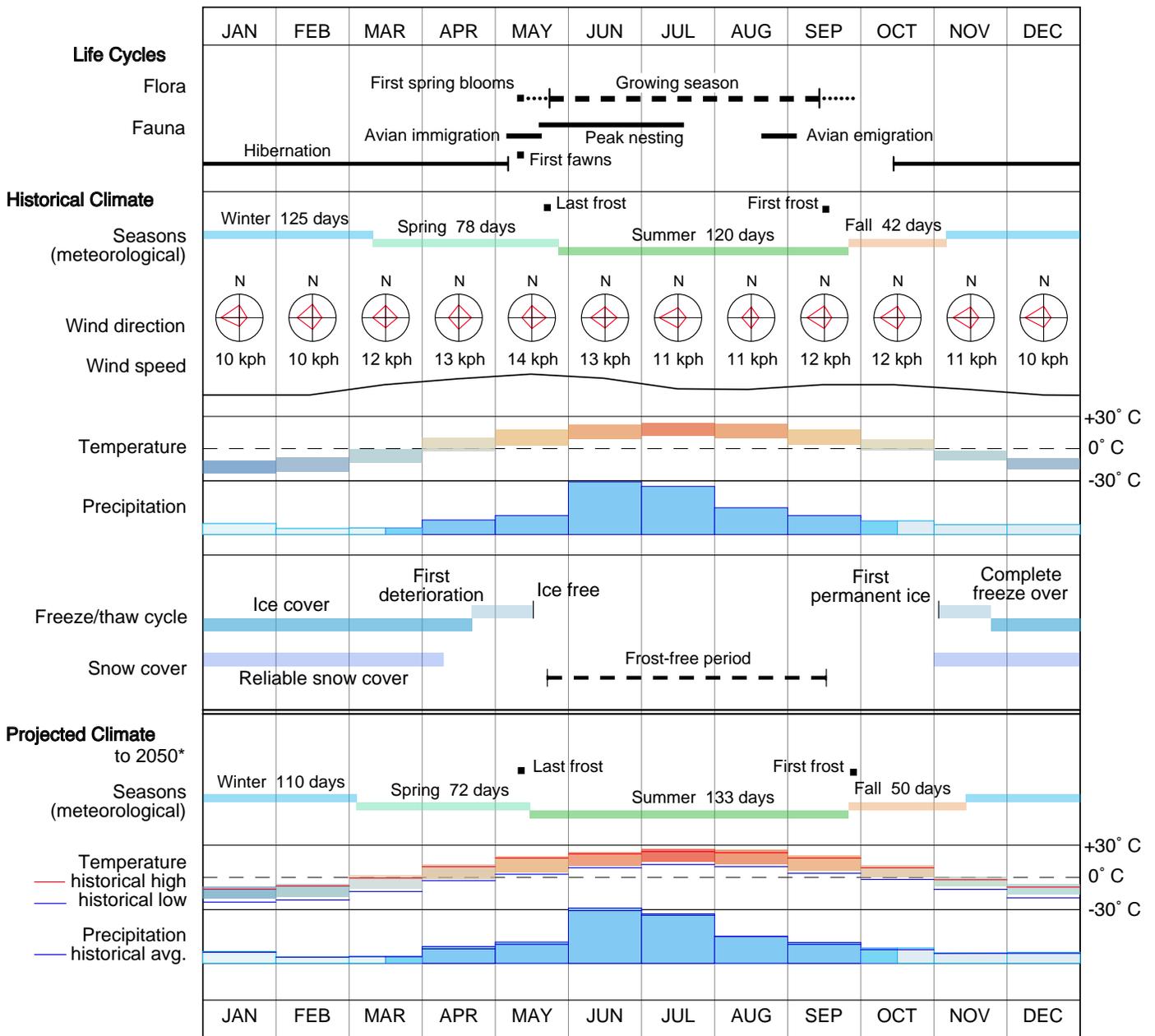


Figure 5. Seasonal Cycles

4.9. Strengths, Opportunities and Constraints

After gathering data on the Park, its history, amenities, users, and resources, some clear strengths, opportunities, and constraints became apparent. Identifying these, along with aforementioned goals, mission and guiding principles has helped to inform the process of developing a robust set of recommendations.

4.9.1. Strengths

Among Little Red River Park's many strengths, the one that stands out the most is its **natural beauty**. With an environment teeming with life, and tracts of undisturbed wilderness, balanced with low impact uses, the Park has remained a destination for locals and visitors for many generations.

The development of an **extensive recreational trail system** that ties into neighbouring trail systems to create a vast network, has given residents and visitors opportunities to enhance their well-being through exercise, enjoyment of nature, and social networking.

A **strong community infrastructure** made up of City officials, trail users, operating contractors, grassroots volunteers, and Indigenous community members has given a voice to the Park and created strong advocacy for protection and preservation of not only the environmental, but the cultural and social factors that make this place a valuable asset to the people of this region.



Photo credit: Prince Albert Ski Club (Facebook)

4.9.2. Opportunities

Building upon these strengths means embracing opportunities to make Little Red River Park an even greater asset to the people of Prince Albert and beyond. A place so rich in flora and fauna, observable hydrology, and a deep cultural heritage makes it an ideal classroom for children and adults alike. The Park has the opportunity to be a **centre for environmental education** through partnerships with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, the Province's school boards, and post-secondary institutions.

There is also a great opportunity for the Park to be a **place for Reconciliation**. As a piece of public land that has significance for Indigenous peoples, with a history of displacement due to municipal development, and a natural setting that encourages **environmental stewardship** and **land-based education**, the Park can offer a place where people of all backgrounds can come together to share in the painful memories of the past and look to a future of healing and unity, while sharing traditional knowledge and skills



Photo credit: CPAWS - Saskatchewan Chapter

4.9.3. Constraints and Challenges

Many of the most significant challenges and constraints to development within the Park have been addressed in previous sections, such as the **large scale of the Park**, incompatible **land uses of adjacent properties**, the **sandy soil conditions**, and the **prevalence of invasive species**.

One of the most challenging aspects of this site is its proneness to **flooding**. A changing climate, large storm events and changes to freeze-thaw cycles have the potential to increase the frequency and severity of flooding. Unfortunately the most developed areas in the Park are in the floodplain.

Flood mapping has identified the 100- and 500-year flood lines, denoting the extents of the most extreme events. It should be noted that these types of flood events tend to occur more frequently than the 100 and 500-year labels suggest.

It is imperative that all proposed developments are sensitive to the risks of developing within this floodplain. Wherever possible, in accordance with the restrictions laid out in the *PA Planning District Official Community Plan*, no permanent structures should be built within these zones without first mitigating the risks presented by these flood events. Priority should be given to choosing sites that sit outside of the flood lines, as indicated in Figure 6.



Photo credit: PANow

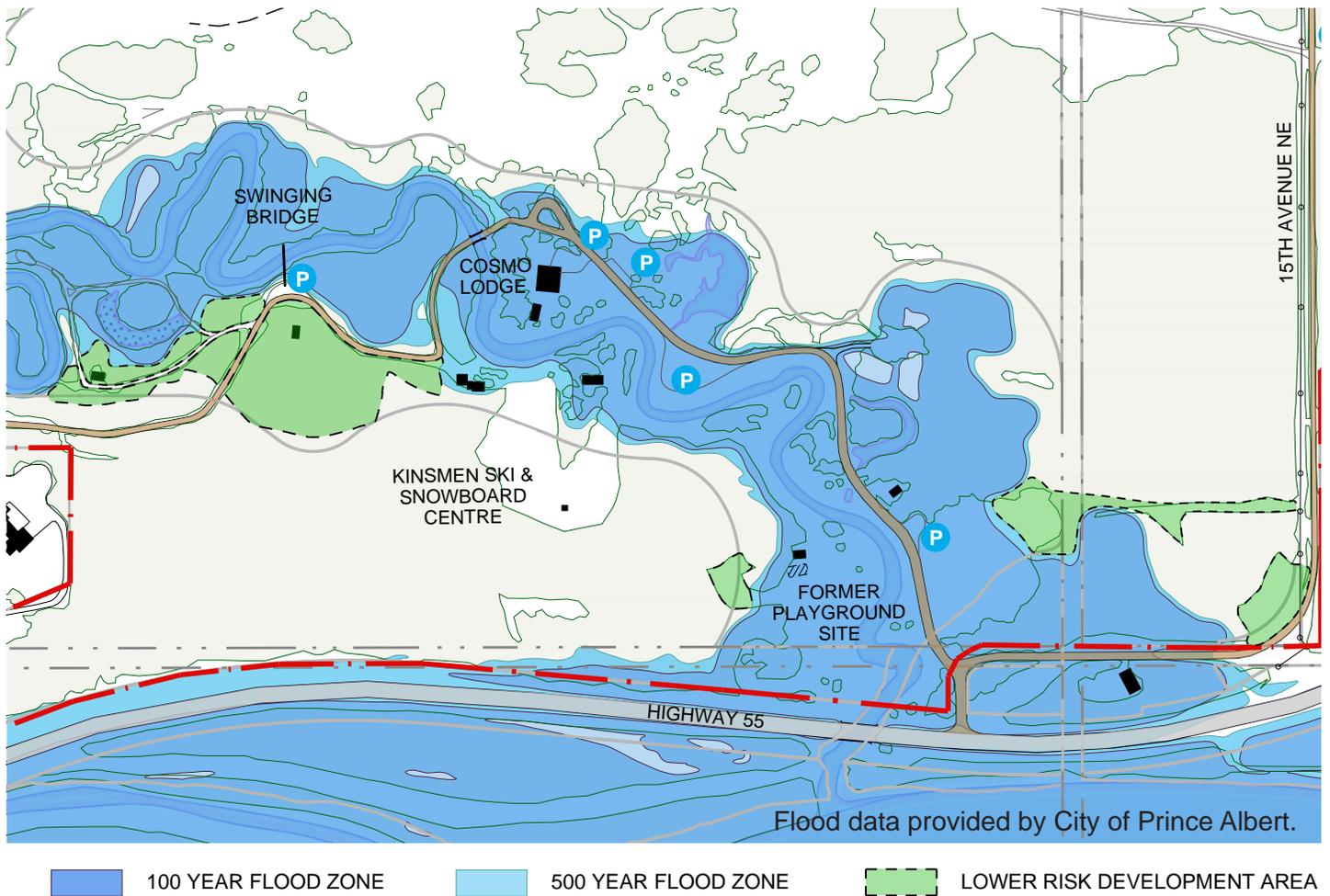


Figure 6. Flooding Constraints within Cosmopolitan Place





Public Engagement

5.1. Process

The Consultant Team completed a rigorous public engagement and data gathering process for the development of this Master Plan for Little Red River Park.

An important component of this study was meeting with members of the community to learn how the Park is currently used and to determine what the Park means to people, how it plays a part of – and adds value to – their lives, and their vision for its future.

From the start, the Consultant Team met with individuals and groups, to learn as much as they could about how this park functions in the community. Together with staff from the City of Prince Albert, a list of individuals and organizations was compiled, which became the checklist for a series of engagement sessions.

5.2. Consultation with Stakeholder Groups

Throughout 2019, the Consultant Team conducted meetings, interviews, and teleconferences with a number of stakeholders within the community in order to gather pertinent information and guidance on potential directions for the Park.

The following individuals, committees, or groups met with the Consultant Team:

- Kinsmen Ski & Snowboard Centre - Nathan Stregger, Manager;
- Friends of Little Red River Park Advisory Committee;
- Prince Albert Ski Club - Mike Horn, Fresh Air Experience;
- City of Prince Albert Technical Steering Committee - Tim Yeaman, Bruce Vance, Jeff da Silva, Craig Guidinger;
- Ranch Ehrlo - Brittany Acorn, Program Manager;
- City of Prince Albert Cultural Advisory Committee;
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic, School of Natural Resources and Built Environment - Joanne Marchand, Instructor;
- Prince Albert Tourism - Amber Pratt, Executive Director;
- Province of Saskatchewan, Nisbet Forest Representative - Trevor Jacobson, Land Manager;
- Rotary Club of Prince Albert - Keith Fonstad, President Elect and Joe Weinrich, President;

- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (Saskatchewan) - Gord Vaadeland, Executive Director, Stu Coles, Project Manager;
- Rock 'n' Road Mountain Bike Club - Quintin Wismer, President;
- City of Prince Albert Museum - Michelle Taylor, Director;

The Team met with the following through teleconferencing:

- Saskatchewan Rivers School Division - Cory Trann, Superintendent and Tyson Fetch, Indigenous Perspectives Coach;
- Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association - Katrina Irving, Executive Director;
- Province of Saskatchewan Culture & Sport, - Cynthia Bryce, Executive Coordinator to Assistant Deputy Minister of Parks;
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic, School of Natural Resources and Built Environment - Joanne Marchand, Instructor and Kevin Benmerrouche, Student.

5.3. Consultation with Indigenous Communities

Prince Albert is located on Treaty 6 land, the traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, Dakota, Saulteaux and Ojibwe peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. The Prince Albert Grand Council comprises twelve First Nations and according to the 2016 Census, close to 40% of Prince Albert's population identifies as Indigenous, which includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit.²²

An important aspect of the public engagement process was ensuring that Indigenous communities were well represented and indeed deeply involved in the master planning process. The site of Little Red River Park has significant pre-contact history, and was, up until the last century, inhabited by the local Wahpeton Dakota peoples, who today have reserve land bordering the Park.



During the data gathering process, the Consultant Team kept an open and continuous dialogue with Wahpeton Traditional Knowledge Keeper Dr. Leo Omani. During this process, Dr. Omani identified an area within the Park that was once a Dakota village. On the evening of May 22, 2019, the Team met with Dr. Omani and Elder Norma Green, offering tobacco and being subsequently led on a walkthrough of the area to identify important sites and to emphasize the importance of preserving and respecting this history and land.

The Team also reached out to Prince Albert Grand Council to engage in dialogue with the area First Nations, as well as a committee of Traditional Knowledge Keepers assembled through the Municipal Cultural Action Plan.

The following individuals, committees, or groups met with the Consultant Team:

- Prince Albert Métis Women’s Association - Noreen McBride, President;
- Wahpeton Dakota First Nation - Dr. Leo Omani, Traditional Knowledge Keeper and Norma Green, Elder;
- Jason Surkan, local Métis architect;
- City of Prince Albert Traditional Knowledge Keepers - Alan Adams, Ian McKay, Dr. Leo Omani, Joanna McKay, Leah Dorion;

5.4. Website and Survey

Over the summer of 2019, an online park survey was conducted. The Consultant Team worked with staff from the City of Prince Albert, particularly Bruce Vance, Judy McLeod-Campbell and Tim Yeaman, to assemble a survey that would provide information regarding the relevant issues, while leaving the survey questions flexible enough that responses could be more than a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ Open-ended questions were also provided. The survey was launched using the *Let’s Talk Prince Albert* online platform, and 700 registered email addresses received a direct invitation to engage with the survey. With assistance from Bruce Vance, Manager of Marketing & Sponsorship (City of Prince Albert), the survey was launched on June 13th, 2019 and was kept online through the end of the Labour Day long weekend.

Bruce Vance also helped to ensure that the online survey was promoted throughout the community, as social media posts and media releases were organized. The Consultant Team also posted on social media and sent the online survey link directly to Facebook pages associated with the Park (Prince Albert Alpine Ski League, Rock ‘n’ Road Cycling Club, Prince Albert Trail Riders, Prince Albert Ski Club, Prince Albert Triathlon Multisport Club, Prince Albert Bow Benders,

Pine Needle Mountain Bike and Music Festival and Summit Run) via Facebook Messenger, asking each administrator to post the link and distribute to their memberships. Signs advertising the survey were also posted at key locations throughout the Park.

Paper copies of the survey were left at the canteen in Cosmo Lodge, in the care of staff, in the hope that the many seniors who frequent their programming, who might not have computer access, could fill out copies of the survey. These were later entered manually into the online platform. Approximately 100 paper surveys were completed and collected during the Pine Needle Mountain Bike and Music Festival, where a member of the Consultant Team set up a table, and also circulated amidst the crowd throughout the event, to engage park visitors directly, to explain the purpose of the survey, and to ask for participation. Because the consultants were worried about over-representing participants of the bike race, special care was taken to approach anyone in the vicinity of Cosmo Lodge during the day, and surveys were completed by music festival attendees, spectators, visitors to the canteen, and people who just happened to be walking by or perhaps visiting the washrooms in the Lodge.

The Consultant Team asked school superintendents from both City of Prince Albert area school divisions (Saskatchewan Rivers and Prince Albert Roman Catholic School Division) to dispense the online survey to school principals and teachers, as this park is heavily used by school groups. The local teachers' union representative was asked to send the survey to teachers over the summer, so that they could be engaged when they were less busy. Organizations with a known interest or stake in the future of the Park were asked to circulate the survey to their staff, including: Ranch Ehrlo, the Municipal Culture Action Plan Working Group, Prince Albert Urban Indigenous Coalition, YWCA Settlement Services, the RM of Buckland, Prince Albert Chamber of Commerce, Nature Prince Albert, and the Prince Albert Wildlife Federation. The Prince Albert Community Network Coalition kindly advertised the survey on their website.

A total of 546 surveys were completed. Of the total, 26% were completed by individuals who self-identified as either being of First Nations (50) or Métis (91) descent. The Consultant Team was pleased to have a survey sample that included a strong representation from these two groups, representational of the general population of Prince Albert and a good indicator of the survey's accuracy.

The City of Prince Albert is to be applauded for its commitment to the engagement platform *Let's Talk Prince Albert*. The work it has done to set up and gain public

trust in this engagement tool was enormously helpful during this project. This was a highly useful tool during the public engagement process and demonstrates the City's commitment to listening to its citizens. City administration and staff were very helpful throughout the Park survey process and are obviously committed to the idea of public engagement and listening to what the community has to say.

The online survey also confirms what is witnessed at Little Red River Park: people from all walks of life and all backgrounds love and use this park. In so many ways, this park is already a success.

Main Takeaways from Online Survey

- ◆ A large majority of respondents (93.2%) use the Park several times throughout the year (including those that visit daily);
- ◆ Over 95% of people reach the Park by vehicle, most are travelling to the Park with others;
- ◆ More than half of respondents typically park near Cosmo Lodge or Cosmo Place, but several expressed that where they park depends on the activity in which they are taking part;
- ◆ About 25% of respondents say they know every corner of the Park, while 40% say they know some of the trails but not very well;
- ◆ About 34% of respondents are less familiar with the full extents of the Park and may be limiting their visits to the Cosmo and Kinsmen areas;
- ◆ Afternoon is the most popular time for park visits, followed by early evening;
- ◆ Lunch time visits are about a third as popular as afternoon visits, suggesting there is an opportunity to bring more people to the Park at lunch time (with improved food options);
- ◆ Summer is the most popular time for park visits, but visits in winter and the shoulder seasons are fairly even and not significantly lower than summer visits, so there already is good utilization of the Park year-round;
- ◆ By far the most popular winter activity is walking/biking, followed by tobogganing/sledding, and then cross-country skiing;
- ◆ By far the most popular summer activity is hiking/walking, followed by barbecuing/picnicking;
- ◆ Cycling (either mountain biking or recreational) is third most popular, followed by dog walking;
- ◆ Several respondents mentioned photography in the 'Other' category;
- ◆ Generally those coming to the Park to use the trails use the west parking lot. Those coming to walk dogs use the east parking lot; for most everything else, one would use the main entrance and park near Cosmo Lodge or destination.





6.0 Renewal Plan

6.1. Planning Zones

With a site the size of Little Red River Park, it is difficult to examine it as a whole without understanding that there are naturally varying levels of density and intensity in different areas of the Park. Dividing the space into zones allows for a more thorough analysis of needs, gaps, and opportunities.

The zones indicated in Figure 7 are based on a combination of distinct geographic features and density of uses and activities. These are not intended to be used beyond the distinctions required for the purpose of this Master Plan, but help to better illustrate the recommendations and priorities laid out in this document.

The Park has been separated into ten zones:

1. **The Core** encompasses the area known as Cosmopolitan Place. It is bounded to the south by Highway 55 including the Park entrance, the treeline atop the ski hill and the large group picnic area; Cloverdale Road to the east; the upper ridge and the Spruce River to the north and east. The Core includes Cosmopolitan Lodge, the Kinsmen Ski Centre, the Swinging Bridge, and the picnic areas along the main road.
2. **The Upper Plain** includes the flat area at the top of the ridge above Cosmopolitan Place and roughly follows the 440 metre contour line and the tree line along the open plain east of 15th Avenue NE. It then follows 15th Avenue NE southward.
3. The remaining portion of the **Spruce River Valley** makes up its own zone and includes many of the lower trails, the river itself and the oxbow lakes dotted along the river course.
4. To the south of The Core is the **South Trails** zone, which is bound by Highway 55 to the south, the Prince Albert Youth Residence (PAYR) property to the west and the ridge to the north and east.
5. The southwest corner of the Park is the **Sanitorium Site**, bounded by 6th Avenue NE to the west; Little Red River Park Road, Pine Grove Correctional Centre (PGCC) and PAYR to the north; and the residential neighbourhood to the south. The east boundary is formed by an extension of the PAYR property line.

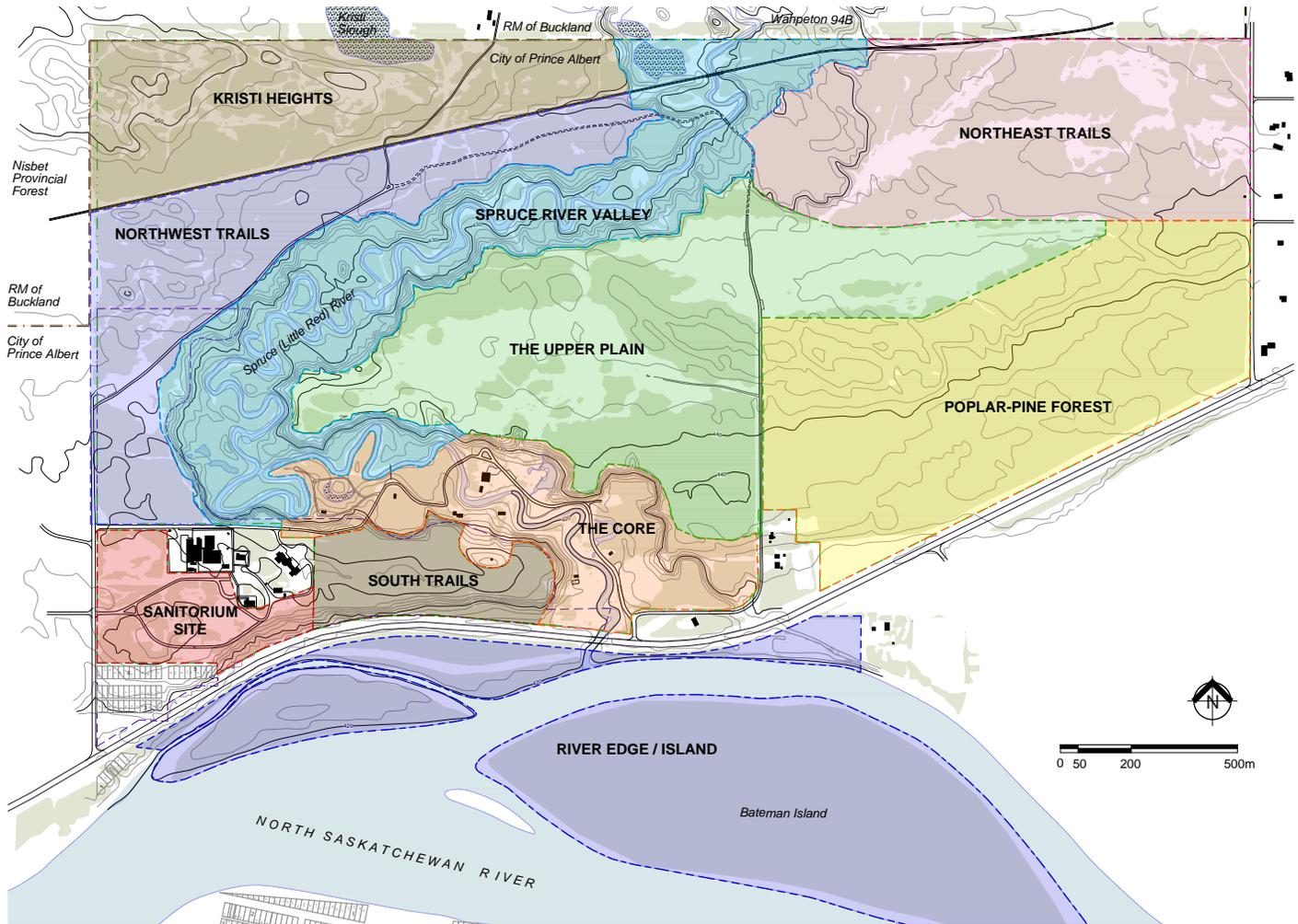


Figure 7. Planning Zones

6. North of Little Red River Park Road and bounded to the west by the Spruce River Valley and the north park road is the **Northwest Trails** zone. Bounded to the west by 6th Avenue NE, this zone fully encompasses the West Parking Lot and the CN Trail.
7. The extreme northwest corner of the Park, **Kristi Heights**, is bounded on the west and north by the city limits, on the south by the CN rail line and on the east by the river valley.
8. The extreme northeast corner, **Northeast Trails**, is bounded to the west by the river valley, to the north by the city limits, to the east by Cloverdale Road, and follows the tree line on the edge of the upper plain.
9. The southeast corner of the Park, the **Poplar-Pine Forest**, is bounded to the south by Highway 55, to the west by 15th Avenue NE and the residential properties along the road.
10. The **River Edge/Island** zone covers the area south of Highway 55 and the islands in the North Saskatchewan River, including the full extents of Bateman Island.

6.2. Improvements to Existing Amenities

Little Red River Park's existing infrastructure and amenities have been successful in building a well-used park with many activities to offer. That is why it is important to improve upon what has been established and build on the strengths of the Park in order to achieve the goals of this Master Plan.

6.2.1. The Core (Cosmopolitan Place)

The Core or Cosmopolitan Place, as it is described in Section 4.4.2, is the most developed area of the Park with the highest density of activity.

The following sections examine each of the areas within the Core zone with recommendations for improvements. Though some of the trails pass through this area, these are explored separately in Section 6.2.4.

6.2.1.1. Cosmopolitan Lodge

Cosmopolitan Lodge has the opportunity to act as the heart of Little Red River Park, a community hub. Its central location in the Core zone makes it an ideal starting point for visitors, a stop-off point for park users and a space for events, gatherings, and classes.

Additional funds should be allocated to the following upgrades to Cosmopolitan Lodge and its environs.

Upgrades to building:

- Improvement of heating and cooling systems;
- Provision of Internet and cable access;
- Installation of security and surveillance systems;
- Washroom upgrades including family-friendly facilities.

Upgrades to grounds:

- Permanent site lighting and seasonal lighting;
- Better security for wood and equipment storage;
- Soft landscaping around the building to provide a more welcoming environment for visitors, weddings, and special events;
- Patio extension and improvements that provide comfortable eating and lounging space with tables and umbrellas, accessible from the building interior;
- Improved walkways and connections to adjacent facilities (paths, bridges, etc.);
- Improved connection between Cosmo Lodge and nearby picnic shelter;
- New pathways to provide better accessibility for mobility issues.

Seasonal and programming improvements:

- Seasonal installation of a skating rink in open grassed area;
- Healthy food options with year-round café/bistro format;
- Rental services (skis, snowshoes, etc.)*
- Continuation of accessible cultural programming (Indigenous crafting workshops, Elder bingos, language classes, healthy living courses, respite programs, etc.);
- Comprehensive trail information (signage, pamphlets, etc.).

*Note: Success of rental service will be dependent upon improved security and coordination with trail user groups. Previous attempts at providing these services were challenged by frequent thefts from lack of surveillance, joy-riding/not returning equipment, and equipment that was incompatible with current standards.

All of these improvements must employ principles of universal design and be to the highest standard of sustainability to promote accessibility and advance the message of environmental stewardship.

6.2.1.2. **Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre**

In recent years, the Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre has been operated by a contractor, who along with upkeep of the hill and lifts, has added a snowboard terrain park, and ski and snowboarding programming for youth. This program has been extremely valuable to the community and provided youth with positive and healthy activity options and role models. Further investment in this facility is therefore paramount to continuing this important public service.

Much of the equipment at the ski hill is original to the facility, and requires extensive maintenance throughout the ski season, which has stretched the operating contractor's time and financial resources. Replacement of aging hardware is now long overdue and will greatly improve operations at the facility.

The terrain park has also proven to be an enticing amenity as approximately 80% of the business the hill receives is from snowboarders using this facility.²³ Further investment in this feature of the Park is required.

There are currently no washroom facilities at the ski centre. Visitors use the washrooms at Cosmopolitan Lodge. As these two facilities are operated by separate contractors, this requires coordination in order to ensure that washrooms are available during the ski hill's operating hours. The distance between the Old Log Cabin and the washrooms at Cosmopolitan Lodge is approximately 180 metres and requires crossing the bridge to access. The addition of a washroom building in closer proximity to the Old Log Cabin would greatly improve service at the ski centre, and would allow the facility to operate truly independently from Cosmopolitan Lodge.

Additional funds should be allocated to the following upgrades to the Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre.

Equipment and infrastructure upgrades:

- Replacement of current lifts with new, variable speed rope lifts, complete with lift house controls;
- Replacement of grooming equipment (snowcat);
- Removeable bridge to allow safe winter access from the Parking lot to the Old Log Cabin (in favour of current seasonal snow bridge);

Upgrades to Old Log Cabin:

- Refurbishments as required to both exterior and interior;
- Provision of water service;

Hill Improvements:

- Enhanced terrain park;
- Opportunity for development of summer activity to extend use of the hill to a four-season facility (e.g. a zip line, summer ski training track, etc.).

Safety, Security and Comfort:

- Ski patrol to be on duty during open hours;
- Opportunities for ski patrol training for local youth;
- Development of a clear emergency plan for the facility;
- Improvements to emergency access;
- Re-routing/separation of cross-country ski trail at base of hill to alleviate conflict with downhill skiers/snowboarders;
- Additional washroom building.

6.2.1.3. The Swinging Bridge

Bridge Structure

The bridge that stands today is not the one that was built in the 1920s, but regardless of the vintage of the current bridge, there is a high degree of heritage value in having and maintaining a swinging bridge structure at this location. Though the bridge was not mentioned much through the public consultation process, respondents that did allude to it, highly value it. There is also evidence online that the people of the region treasure this structure and would like to see it preserved.²⁴ Efforts should be made to enhance this feature and celebrate its contributions to life in Prince Albert.

Flood mapping suggests that in major flood events, the majority of the bridge structure would be under water and would be at risk for damage or destruction. Any design for bridge repair or replacement must consider this, and ensure that mitigating measures are taken to prevent this and eliminate risk to health or threat to life.

Full replacement of the structure is recommended with an aim to make it as accessible as possible to bring the opportunity for crossing the bridge

to as many visitors as possible. This is a costly endeavour and should be evaluated through a separate public consultation process along with a feasibility study with relevant certified engineering professionals.

Destination Space

Currently, the north landing of the bridge leads to a triangular patch of forest between the bends in the river. This space presents an opportunity for a shaded seating/picnic area. Surveillance may be a challenge in this location, however, as it is well hidden from the rest of the Core area.

At very least, a trail should connect the north landing back to the River Trail north of the traffic bridge near Cosmopolitan Lodge.

Heritage Interpretation

Whether repair or replacement is pursued, an opportunity exists for heritage interpretation at this site.

6.2.1.4. Picnic and Group Use Areas

The results of the Let's Talk Prince Albert survey indicated that picnicking, whether in small or large groups, was the top summer activity at Little Red River Park.²⁵ In the 1982 Little Red River Study, a similar question in the public engagement process at that time showed that picnicking was also the top summer activity.²⁶ It is clear that the Park has long been a destination for this activity, and is an important place for local residents to enjoy food and social interaction.

Toilet Facilities

There are currently three outhouse structures throughout the Core zone serving the adjacent picnic and group use areas. A large number of those consulted through public engagement identified that the top priority for improvements to these picnic areas is replacement of the existing outhouse structures with better, more modern facilities, complete with water and sewer service. Alternatively, composting facilities with onsite water storage for washing should be considered as a less expensive and more sustainable solution.

Each current picnic site is situated less than 220 metres from an outhouse. The picnic shelter south of Cosmopolitan Lodge is serviced by the lodge's indoor washrooms. However, if the Lodge is closed, the nearest outhouse is 380 metres from this shelter. Refer to 6.2.1.2 for recommendation of adding a washroom building at the Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre.

It is important that improvements to toilet facilities are accessible. The existing structures present challenges for park visitors with disabilities.

Picnic Sites

There are currently five group picnic areas complete with shelters, and approximately twelve smaller picnic sites, throughout the Core. Some of these are equipped with fire pits, and some are simple clearings with a picnic table.

There is spatial capacity to add more picnic sites with fire pits along the western loop road, as well as along the entrance road from the highway. This would, of course, add to the maintenance requirements of the Park operators, so it is important to evaluate expansion based on the governance and staffing model that is chosen for the Park.

Addition of waste receptacles at these sites will aid in keeping the Park clean. Again, this will add to the maintenance requirements as receptacles will need regular disposal. Refer to Section 6.2.8 for more on waste management.

Permitting local food trucks to set up near Cosmopolitan Lodge on non-festival weekend days may also encourage more visitors to come out to the Park and spend time using the various amenities. It is important, however, that this does not significantly detract from business at Cosmo Lodge, and that proper consultation with the Lodge operators is undertaken.

Play Spaces

The loss of the footbridge and asphalt paths – between the parking lot at the foot of the toboggan hill and the playground – during the 2013 flooding made the play area largely inaccessible. The aging play structure was removed in 2019, and a request for proposals was subsequently sent out, with funding from the Rotary Club of Prince Albert, to replace and expand on the playground with new equipment. Replacement of the footbridge is an important part of this refurbishment, as it will once again allow visitors to park close to the site.

As noted in Section 4.9.3, with significant capital investment in developments such as an expanded play space, the City must carefully consider appropriate siting outside of the floodplain. Rebuilding a playground/adventure centre in its previous location is not recommended unless flood mitigation measures are employed as part of the development. A risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure these investments are protected from damage or loss due to flood activity.



Photo credit: Myles Tan

Regardless of which location is chosen, the new playground site would also benefit from the addition of outdoor fitness equipment nearby, providing fitness opportunities to the public, as well as giving parents an opportunity to engage in physical activity while their children are using the playground structures.

The toboggan hill is a popular spot throughout the winter and with the addition of lighting, use has been extended. However, there is an opportunity to extend use of this hill into the summer and shoulder seasons. The hill, or a site nearby, could be developed into a mountain bike skills park or jump track. This might also be an ideal location for installation of a zip line that carries riders to the west side of the Spruce River.

Other additions to further extend play opportunities for all ages include disc golf, large swings, horseshoe pits or a biathlon training course.



Example of a zip line. Photo credit: Anita Denunzio

6.2.2. Roads and Bridges

With the decommissioning of the Hands Bridge, the vehicular route through the north portion of the Park has been eliminated. While there is an operational advantage to having a circuitous route through the Park, especially for emergency and security access, there is also an advantage to converting the vehicular road to a trail as it restricts use to foot and bicycle traffic only.

There are two options for the replacement of Hands Bridge:

1. Replace the bridge with a new vehicular bridge and restore the roads to and from the bridge, but restrict vehicular access to service or emergency vehicles only by installing gates at each end;
2. Replace the bridge with a new pedestrian bridge and convert the old road to a multi-use trail.

All vehicular roads throughout the Park require upgrades, especially 15th Avenue NE, which can become impassable when wet or snow covered, due to the sandy soil conditions of the site.

An engineering review of all bridges, both vehicular and pedestrian, should be commissioned as soon as possible to determine priorities for replacements or remedial structural repairs.



There is currently restricted access on the north-south road passing through the Kristi Heights zone. This road is the sole access to a private residence just north of the Park boundary in the RM of Buckland. This represents an inappropriate land use, and it is recommended that the City of Prince Albert consult with the RM of Buckland, and request that an access road for the private land owner be constructed off of Lato Road. Sufficient notice must be provided to the landowner in order to allow for this adjustment.

6.2.3. Parking

Parking lots throughout the Park are not formalized with stall markings, as they are typically surfaced with granular material. This is generally appropriate where there are single lines of perpendicular parking stalls or parallel stalls. However in the larger lots, such as the lot that sits across the river from the ski hill, there is an advantage to organizing the lot into rows using trees and shrubs. This may also help deter drivers from destructive activities in the lot (i.e. “donuts”). Trees should be added to all parking areas to provide shade.

If increased demand requires additional parking, low-impact, single-row perpendicular stalls can be added along the main road at reasonable intervals. The area adjacent to the road is relatively clear of vegetation and a minimal amount of clearing would be required to convert these to parking areas.

Any trees planted within the floodplain should be flood tolerant species.

6.2.4. Trails

The Park is currently lacking winter walking trails. While Nordic ski trails and fat bike trails abound, there is little provision for trails designated for foot traffic. Walkers tend to use trails meant for other uses, which becomes dangerous and destructive to trails groomed for these specific purposes. Where wide enough, such as the River Trail, multiple uses should be accommodated, with clear separations.

Trailheads, complete with signage, at key points and where trails intersect will provide trail users with comprehensive information about each trail, and convey the route, level of difficulty and distances. The signage at trailheads can also be used to reinforce trail etiquette and appropriate trail use.

Other key improvements to the trails that require further investment of labour and capital are:

- Restoration of the former Kiwanis bike trail for improved safe bicycle access to the Park;
- Re-naturalization of rogue trails with signage and demarcation to control access;
- Public roll-out of a GPS mobile app currently being developed by Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Natural Resource Management, Forestry and Ecosystem Technology Program;
- Improved accessibility where feasible;
- Benches and waste receptacles at appropriate intervals along major trails, where appropriate;
- Low impact outhouses in the more remote areas of the Park.

6.2.5. Events, Programming and Marketing

One of the Strategic Directions of the *Community Services Master Plan* is to “enhance the current promotion of existing community opportunities including facilities and amenities, programming, and activities.”²⁷ Significant investment should be made to promote Little Red River Park and its services, not just within City of Prince Albert literature and media, but beyond the region. Promotion through modern media technologies, such as social media platforms, will help to extend this reach. The natural beauty of the Park is its own best tool for promotion, and visually rich materials displaying the Park's balance of nature and recreation will benefit not only the Park but the city and region.

A big part of this promotion is external wayfinding. Improved signage within the city, and along Highway 55 will guide visitors to the Park and inform them of the services available. Roadside signage should indicate the following amenities:

- Cosmopolitan Lodge,
- Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre
- Historic Swinging Bridge;

- Symbols for picnic space, washrooms, playground, trails, toboggan hills, and interpretive elements;
- Any new facilities that may arise from the Master Plan.

6.2.6. Internal Wayfinding and Boundary Demarcation

Signage throughout the Park with discrete branding and graphic continuity will help to build a strong graphic identity for the Park and identify it as a unique and special place. Signage must be clear, unambiguous, multi-lingual, and employ best practices for universal design.

As an extension of its funding for promotion of the Park, it is recommended that the City put out a call for proposals for the development of a branding and wayfinding package for Little Red River Park.

Signage should also clearly demarcate all park entrances and boundaries of the Park. The existing signage at the main park entrance off of Highway 55 is arranged with a hierarchy that gives prominence to Cosmopolitan Place over Little Red River Park. It should be clear to visitors first that they are entering the Park, and secondly that the area of the Park that they are entering is Cosmopolitan Place.

Likewise, the signage at the intersection of 6th Avenue NE and Little Red River Park Road lacks the weight appropriate for a park of this size. The green directional sign for Pinegrove Correctional Centre is more prominent than the small painted wooden sign for the Park. The directional signage should contain both Pinegrove and Little Red River Park, but there should also be a separate, more prominent welcome signage for the Park, following the established graphic identity.

Lighting at these entrances is also extremely important. There is currently no street lighting at either of the Park entrances. This is a problem for both safety (perceived and actual) and wayfinding. The main road through the Park must be well lit, from gate to gate to ensure there is a safe route through. This is especially important with extensive winter use of the Park, when the sun sets as early as 4:45 pm.

Low fencing along the open northwestern edge of the Park (Northwest Trails and Kristi Heights zones) with a chicane or ‘kissing gate’ at trail entrances can aid in marking the Park edge as well as deterring vehicular entry in areas that have less surveillance due to their remoteness. This will help curb damage from ATV users.

6.2.7. Forests

The forest within the Park, though not recognized as being part of the Nisbet Provincial Forest, is contiguous and therefore ecologically part of said forest. Preservation and management of this ecosystem is important to ensure that it thrives for generations.

The commissioning of a forest inventory and management plan, in partnership with the Nisbet Provincial Forest, can move toward developing a potentially innovative precedent-setting management strategy. This plan should also include strategies for removal of dwarf mistletoe and other invasive species that can be detrimental to the forest inventory. There is potential for a partnership with Saskatchewan Polytechnic’s Forestry Management Program.

Another important strategy that goes hand in hand with forest management, and in line with the Prince Albert District Official Community Plan, is the commissioning of a Wildfire Management Plan for Little Red River Park. This should be done in collaboration with the Province of Saskatchewan to ensure continuity between the jurisdictions on either side of the Park boundary. This could be the site of innovative management, again possibly testing techniques in partnership with Saskatchewan Polytechnic.



6.2.8. Waste Management

With an area as expansive as Little Red River Park, disposal of waste can be challenging. The current operator contract allows for collection of waste from bins within the Park. Currently, large waste receptacles at Cosmopolitan Lodge and the northwest parking lot (Upper Plains) serve as collection points for offsite pickup and disposal by a private waste removal company.

A more comprehensive waste management plan would allow for an increase in the number of smaller receptacles throughout the Park with a central collection point that is more convenient for pickup, but also less visually obtrusive to the natural surroundings. Ideally this plan would also include recycling and compost to divert waste from the landfill site.

It is recognized that vehicular access is limited along the more remote trails in the Park, which will limit the ability to collect from receptacles in these areas. Also, the sight of waste receptacles along trails through a natural setting is generally undesirable. Unfortunately, it is difficult to curb littering, so a waste management plan should allow for staff to travel the trails on foot or bicycle to collect litter on a regular basis. Any signage that conveys trail etiquette should include instilling respect for the natural environment and deterrence of littering with posted fines for offending parties.

6.2.9. Deterrence of Illegal Activity

One concern that the Consultant Team heard during the public engagement process was that despite signage throughout the Park informing visitors of fines up to \$5000 for violations, enforcement is rarely carried out. Enforcement may be difficult due to the remoteness of sites where these activities are commonly occurring. The Park operations contractors have traditionally not been equipped with the power of enforcement, and are typically encountering these activities while alone or in pairs. This presents a risk to safety and generally the only course of action is to call police, who may not be able to respond in time to catch the culprits in the act.

As long as illegal activity goes unchecked, it will continue. A successful management structure will include provision for a dedicated park patrol that has the efficacy and authority to issue fines and if required, safely apprehend offenders. A community-based volunteer patrol program should be explored, perhaps in collaboration with a ski patrol program.

6.3. New Opportunities

Along with building upon existing amenities, there are a number of opportunities for new developments within the Park. It is important to note that the Park's natural beauty is its most important trait, and that all new development must not impede or detract from the nature of the site. Most of the new opportunities recommended in this section are proposed for The Core, as this is the area where the density and intensity of development should occur. Any development in the trail and forest zones must be limited to improvements to trails and circulation, wayfinding elements, and interpretive components.

6.3.1. New Development in the Core

Through the data gathering and public engagement process it was clear there was much support for the addition of fitness/adventure amenities in the Core. Some of these features have the potential to bring in revenue for the Park, while others can be offered free of charge with upkeep costs offset by the revenue-generating facilities. It is important that there remain a significant number of activities that are free of charge in order to fulfill the goals of being inclusive and welcoming to all.

Zip Line

The terrain of the Park allows for installation of a zip line, which is a pulley and cable system strung between two points. Users attach themselves to the pulley and use gravity to propel themselves along the cable. The popularity of this activity has been growing in recent years²⁸ and a unique zip line attraction in the region could greatly increase tourism traffic and revenue.

There are a number of challenges with zip line facilities that need to be taken into account, however. Safety is paramount, and the facility must be operated by trained professionals, and equipment must be kept to a high standard. The sandy soil conditions will also present constraints for erection of the towers required for the facility. A full geotechnical report must be commissioned, and recommendations from geotechnical engineers must be followed. This, along with potentially high insurance and permitting costs, might diminish the viability of this business opportunity. A full feasibility study is a necessary first step.

An alternative to a fully staffed zip line system is a smaller line system not requiring supervision, similar to the one at Kinsmen Park in Saskatoon. Such a system has a slope that is steep enough to create momentum but does not present significant danger from falling, providing a thrill for young kids without the high cost that a full zip line would require.

Other Climbing Features

Rope towers or climbing walls can add a more financially accessible adventure element. Climbing elements of a certain height can be integrated into the playground structure, but larger features would require the use of harnesses and safety equipment, and should be staffed to encourage proper use. Climbing features could be bundled with a zip line and other adventure elements to develop an adventure centre, where a variety of activities with different levels of admission costs could be implemented.

The current toboggan hill seems the best location for this type of activity centre, as lighting has already been installed on site, and the elevation necessary for the zip line element is ideal. The upper area of the toboggan hill also lies outside of the 100 and 500 year flood levels, so new amenities here would be protected from such damage. The climbing feature might also be iced in the winter to have its use extended year-round.

An area of the current toboggan hill might also be contoured and designated for younger children.

Camping

There is currently no campground within the boundaries of Prince Albert, and there are very few facilities in close proximity to the city. Little Red River Park has already established itself as a picnic spot and stop-off point for summer travellers passing through the region. There is an opportunity to establish camping within the Park, but it is important that there is no significant impact on the natural environment and the established activities within the Park.

It is not recommended that full service camping be implemented in Little Red River Park. However, if an RV campground is to be pursued, it must be developed within the Core zone. Bringing RV traffic into the Upper Plains could have devastating effects to the natural environment, and would disrupt the well-established trail activities throughout the Park.

While it is outside the scope of this Master Plan to make recommendations for areas outside the boundaries of the Park, it is worth noting that supporting the development of a full service campground in close proximity to Little Red River Park could be very beneficial to any revenue-generating activities within the Park.

Low-impact camping (*i.e.* non-serviced tenting sites) on the other hand, has the potential to not only generate revenue, but would extend the hours of the Park's operation. Having people staying in the Park overnight, especially if the facility has 24-hour staff on duty, would increase the surveillance and security of Cosmopolitan Place, and potentially deter illegal activity within the Park.

Fishing

The large pond to the west of Cosmopolitan Lodge, likely formed as an oxbow of the river, offers an opportunity for fishing. Following proper impact assessment and consultation with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, this water body can be dredged and stocked with local fish species to provide a spot for licensed anglers to gather. This activity would complement low impact camping, giving campers a broader range of activities while staying in the Park.



Photo credit: Jess Lindner

6.3.2. Sanitorium Site

Indigenous Ceremonial Grounds

There is a demand within the Indigenous community for space to conduct traditional activities such as powwows and sweat lodges. With the presence of water and sewer services, established ring road, and easy access from 6th Avenue NE, the former Sanitorium site is ideal for this purpose. This site was considered in the recent past for this use. With continued consultation with the City's Traditional Knowledge Keepers Committee, this recommendation should be further explored.

6.3.3. Spruce River Valley

The meandering course of the Spruce River (Little Red River) runs approximately 6.5 kilometres in total length from the point where it meets the northern boundary of the Park to the point where it spills into the North Saskatchewan River. Along this course, deadfall from the forested river edge has rendered this river course unnavigable, and indeed dangerous to watercraft. This represents a missed recreational opportunity.

Removal of this deadfall within the Park, will create an opportunity for canoe and kayak trips along the Little Red. This, in turn, if demand allows, opens up potential boat rental opportunities within the Park.

A manageable approach to this clean-up effort is to begin with the portion of the valley within the Core zone, and work northward toward the northern boundary, with an aim to complete the full clean-up within two years. Subsequently, new deadfall should be cleared as soon as possible.

6.3.4. Upper Plains

Historic Dakota Village

The Consultant Team's walkthrough of the western Upper Plain zone with Wahpeton Elders, Dr. Leo Omani and Norma Green, identified locations that once housed the local Dakota community, including the cabins, roads and a community hall that was used for gatherings. There were also sacred spots identified during the meeting.

Due to the sacred nature of this area of the Park, development of any kind, other than to interpret this history and provide space for gatherings would be inappropriate. The existing trails through the plain do not present any conflict of use, and indeed open the opportunity for the education of the public through interpretive elements or art pieces along the walking routes.

Interpretive signage in this zone might communicate:

- The general location of buildings and roads in the historic Dakota village;
- Indigenous plants with Dakota names;
- Indigenous land management techniques, such as prairie burns.

In the spirit of inclusivity and Reconciliation, there is an opportunity to work with Wahpeton and other local First Nations and Métis communities to build a gathering space for cultural events that bring together youth and Elders from Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Land-Based Learning

Prince Albert's and indeed Little Red River Park's unique positioning on the boreal-prairie ecotone makes it a prime location for nature-based education. The rich diversity of flora and fauna, the structure and composition of the soils, and the hydrology of the rivers, create a natural laboratory for observing and learning from nature.

A dedicated outdoor classroom space where the forest meets the plain in the eastern portion of the Upper Plain zone, will provide space for students of all ages and levels of learning. This might also be accompanied by a low-impact building, which would employ green building technologies, to

form an environmental learning centre, similar to the Brightwater Science, Environmental and Indigenous Learning Centre near Beaver Creek. This model combines scientific knowledge with local Indigenous Traditional Knowledge to provide a broader understanding of land, people and natural systems.

This initiative would benefit from a partnership between Saskatchewan Polytechnic, the University of Saskatchewan, local school districts and First Nation and Métis communities. In particular, the Indigenous academic programming at the local schools is a huge potential resource for ideas and inspiration.

Camping

In tandem with the development of an environmental education centre, the eastern plain is an ideal location for low-impact camping. This could take the form of tenting sites or rentable yurts. This opportunity provides overnight camping space for school groups visiting the learning centre, but could also, in the summer time, be rentable to visitors, providing another stream of revenue for the Park.

Camping in this zone could replace or complement the low-impact camping recommended at Cosmopolitan Place.

6.3.5. Trail and Forest Zones

Trails

With the aim of limiting disturbance of the natural systems in the Park, and focusing any new developments in the Core zone, there are not many new opportunities in the remaining zones, apart from the improvements described in Section 6.2.

One recommendation that provides a new opportunity that can be built off of the existing trails is the development of a flagship single-track mountain biking trail that is accessible to all. This would be an attractive feature that could extend the tourism draw for the region, and provide local residents with a unique recreation destination within the Park. Consultation with local mountain biking groups and professional track designers will help to identify



Photo credit: Irene Lasus

an appropriate route and design parameters for such a track. Liaison amongst the trail groups and the Friends of Little Red River Park is of utmost importance to ensure that there are clear terms of use, and conflicts of trail types and uses are avoided.

6.3.6. Programming and Events

Along with continuing the annual events that have been taking place in the Park, some of the ideas for further programming and events that arose during public engagement were:

- More festivals throughout the year (e.g. winter festival, summer festival);
- Celebration days (e.g. Canada Day, Treaty Days, etc.);
- A dedicated park website and social media;
- Controlled burns;
- Interpretive hikes;
- Back country yoga;
- Elder-guided medicinal plant walks and ecosystem walks;
- Powwows;
- Treasure hunt/geocaching;
- 4R (Respect, Reciprocity, Reconciliation, Relevance) training;



Photo credit: Elisabeth Wales

- Continued and enhanced funding of ski programs at Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre;
- Continuation of cultural programming at Cosmopolitan Lodge and invitation to other groups to complement this;
- Fun runs, nature walks, skills events, garbage picking;
- Living museum displays and interpretive programs;
- Art in the Park (in partnership with the Rawlinson Art Gallery);
- Enhancement of current rentals to offer choices as infrastructure improvements are made (eg. Canoes, kayaks, SUP's, mountain bikes);
- Commitment, through programming and interpretation, to telling history of the site and region.

6.3.7. Other Recommendations

Other opportunities that were identified include:

- Naming of sites and trails throughout the Park through Indigenous naming ceremonies (Dakota, Cree, Michif, and Dene) to carry on the work of the City of Prince Albert Traditional Knowledge Keepers to bring more emphasis to the languages represented in the area;
- Archaeological investigations in collaboration with First Nations and Métis and the University of Saskatchewan's Department of Archaeology and Anthropology's archaeological field school;
- Development of a Living Museum in partnership with the Prince Albert Historical Museum.

6.4. Improved Transportation To and Through the Park

Full circulation through the Park has been cut off since closure of the road leading to Hands Bridge as the bridge is no longer structurally sound.

As described above, options for remediation include:

- Restoration of access to this road and construction of a new vehicular bridge to re-establish vehicular circulation; or
- Re-naturalization of the old road and/or conversion of the road to trail with a more modest crossing at the Hands location.

The idea of a second bridge across the North Saskatchewan River has been around for a long time, and has been reignited more recently through the Municipal Cultural Action Plan. Both the 1982 Little Red River Study and the 2004 River Valley Plan called for a new bridge at 6th Avenue NE, which would bring traffic right to the edge of the Park, increasing visibility and creating opportunities for improving the Park's identity.

Extension of Prince Albert Transit's service to the Park with regular day-time service to Cosmopolitan Lodge would also increase accessibility to the Park for those with limited transportation options. This new route could also service Glass Field Airport from the main Downtown transfer point at Central Avenue and 14th Street.

Any road improvements or additions must follow municipal and provincial standards and adhere to the *Prince Albert District Official Community Plan* (Section 8: Transportation and Servicing Policy), as well as the *Prince Albert Transportation Master Plan*.

6.5. Summary of Recommendations

See Figures 8a and 8b for a summary of the Renewal Plan recommendations.

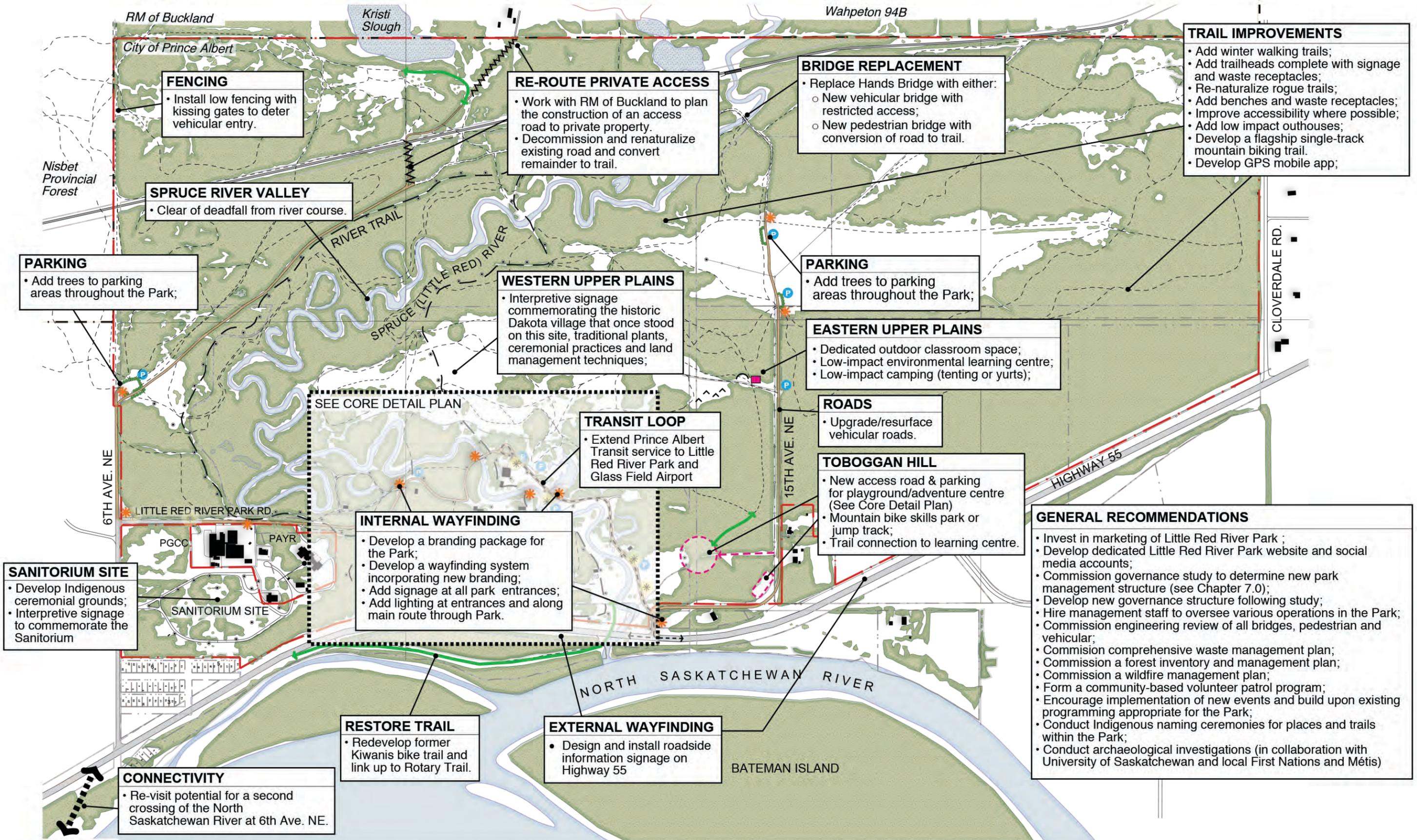
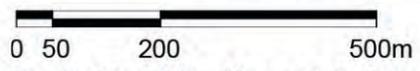


Figure 8a.
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS



Data has been gathered from multiple sources. Accuracy is not guaranteed. For information only. Drawing is not to be used for any construction purposes.

- PROPOSED WAYFINDING SIGN OR TRAILHEAD
- ADDITIONAL LIGHTING
- ADDITIONAL TREE PLANTING
- PROPOSED STRUCTURE/ DEVELOPMENT
- NEW OR RESTORED TRAIL CONNECTION



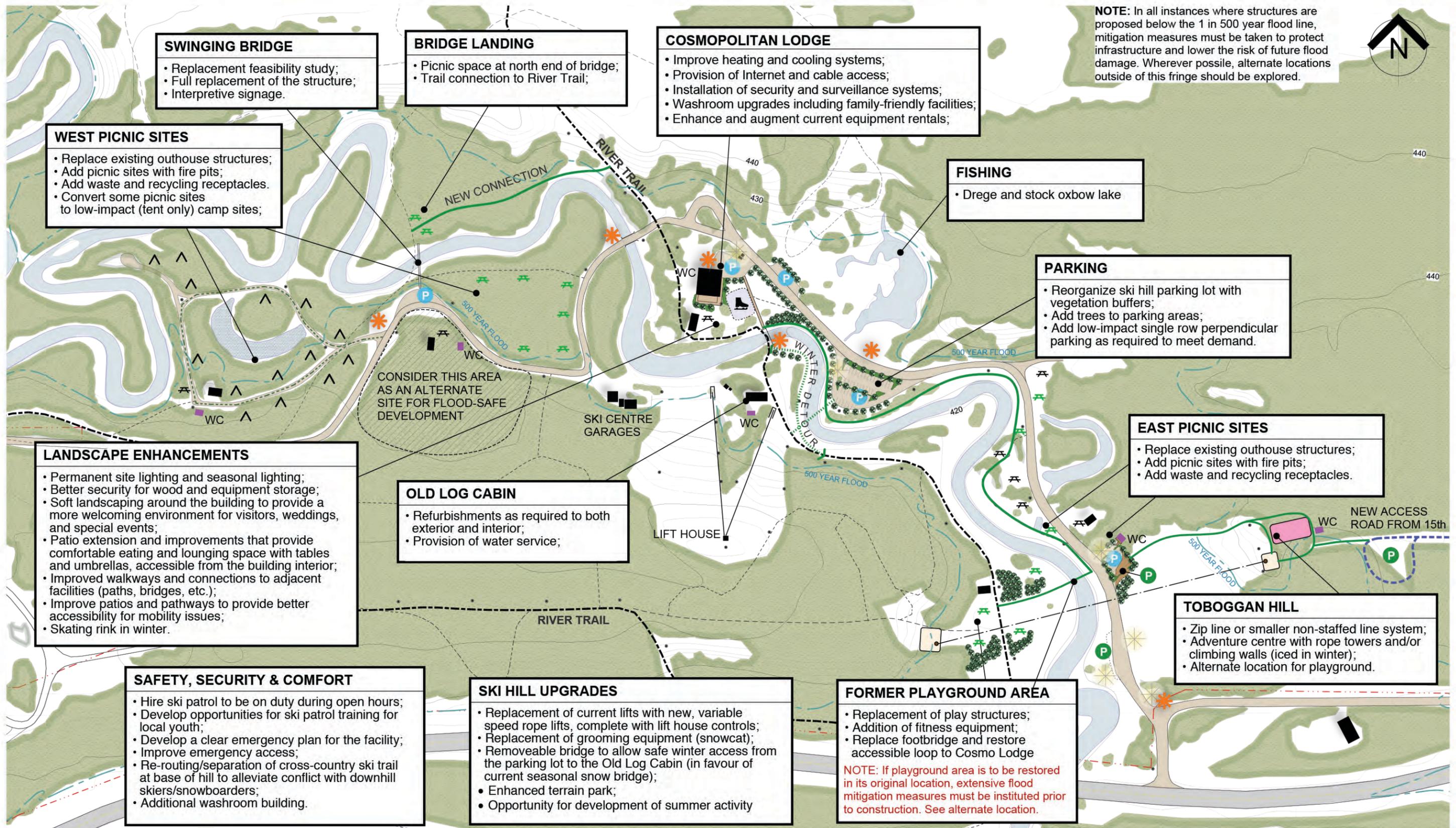


Figure 8b.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS : CORE DETAIL PLAN



Data has been gathered from multiple sources. Accuracy is not guaranteed. Drawing is not to be used for any construction purposes.

- P EXISTING PARKING
- P NEW OR EXPANDED PARKING
- * PROPOSED WAYFINDING SIGN OR TRAILHEAD
- TRAIL EXTENSION
- WC NEW OR REPLACED TOILET FACILITIES
- * ADDITIONAL LIGHTING
- * ADDITIONAL PICNIC SPOT
- ^ OVERNIGHT CAMPING SPOT





Governance and Staffing Structures

7.1. Introduction

The following options are presented as a starting point for discussion of a revised governance structure for Little Red River Park. Further study and analysis of the governance options presented herein is required before moving forward. Ideally, a full governance study with specific recommendations should be commissioned by the City of Prince Albert. Refer to Chapter 8.0 Strategic Action Plan for specific strategies to achieve this.

7.2. Option 1: City-Operated Park with Partnerships

Under this model, Little Red River Park will continue to be managed by the Parks Manager in the Community Services Department. A governance board, made up of the Park's stakeholders — a variation of the existing Friends of Little Red River Park — would aid in decision-making processes. Operation of the various park amenities would still be charged to private contractors who would have the opportunity to generate their own income from their enterprises within the Park.

Significant investment of public funds would be required under this model to implement the recommendations in this Master Plan. This investment may be sourced from increased funding in annual City budgets over the ten-year period of the Plan's implementation process, or through various grants.

A portion of this funding may also be sourced from increased taxation or fees charged for certain park services such as parking. This approach will likely be met with opposition from residents.

The City might also charge a levy on any personal revenue that is brought in from the private contractors' park operations (e.g. food sales at Cosmopolitan Lodge) though this may serve to reduce the appeal of bidding on park contracts.

Under this model, it is also recommended that the City hire a manager, specific to Little Red River Park, to alleviate the extra workload that would otherwise fall on the Parks Manager, given the added obligations that come with the implementation of the Master Plan.

7.3. Option 2: Separate Governance

This option would require the City to relinquish operation of the Park to a separate body. In most cases, the City would still maintain ownership of the land, and provide funding toward certain aspects of park management, but the governing body would head operations, and seek funding for capital projects.

Three different models for this option are presented herein.

1. Conservancy Model

Using the Friends of Little Red River Park as a seed for the formation of an arms-length organization to act as a governing body would ensure that the institutional knowledge and grassroots structure of this group is preserved and the interests of the amenities and user groups in the Park are maintained.

The Little Red River Park Conservancy would work to fundraise, advise, and make decisions regarding operations and capital projects within the Park's boundaries. The conservancy would be governed by a board of directors, and staffed by a manager who would oversee operations staff. There would still be an opportunity to contract various operations to private organizations under this model.

2. Regional Park Model

This option is not new to Little Red River Park. Attempts were made in 1978 to have the Park designated²⁹ but this did not come to fruition.

Little Red River Park far exceeds the minimum size requirement of 160 acres. Regional Parks require sponsorship from a Municipality and an application must include a 5-year plan and proposed budget. The Park must make a net profit of at least \$10,000 per year.

Advantages to this model are that the Regional Park body does the lobbying for funding from the Province, capital grants are available, there is more exposure for the Park through the provincial guide, parks can attend the Annual General Meeting, and they can assist one another.

A Regional Park must also have a local board. Again, the Friends of Little Red River Park can serve as a seed for this board.

3. Provincial Park Model

While there are examples of towns that sit within the boundaries of Provincial Parks in Saskatchewan, there are no current examples of Provincial Parks that sit within the limits of a city in Saskatchewan. This would either be a precedent-setting example, or there would be a requirement for the City of Prince Albert to transfer ownership of the land to the Province of Saskatchewan.

In any case, conversion to a Provincial Park would relieve the City of Prince Albert of all responsibility of Little Red River Park. It is likely not an ideal candidate for this model, but it is worth consideration as an option.

The disadvantage to operating as a Provincial Park, is that these jurisdictions typically rely on entrance fees to fund their operations, which would serve as an economic barrier to established park users and would go against the goal of being available to all residents of the region.

7.4. Option 3: Combined Governance

A third governance option is the transferring of responsibilities of different areas or amenities within the Park to different governing bodies or models, or to create a multi-level structure like Meewasin Valley (City of Saskatoon, Government of Saskatchewan, and University of Saskatchewan).

Examples of organizations or models that might form part of this combined model are listed below.

1. Environmental Designations

Examples of environmental designations that portions of Little Red River Park might meet eligibility for are:

- Protected Area;
- Ecological Reserve;
- National Wildlife Area;
- UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

These designations come with governance requirements.

2. Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA)

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCA) are:

...lands and waters where Indigenous Peoples have the primary role in protecting and conserving ecosystems through Indigenous laws, governance and knowledge systems.”³⁰

The rich history of the Dakota people that most recently occupied the site prior to displacement in the 20th Century contributes to the Park’s potential eligibility to be designated as an IPCA. This model is relatively new and has yet to be widely appointed, but the Federal Government has expressed a desire to designate more IPCAs. Little Red River Park could be a great model for this system of governance.

There are different management models within the IPCA system. Working under the *Indigenous People – Government Partnerships* model, the City of Prince Albert would partner with local Indigenous communities to form a governance body for the Park.

3. Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measure (OECM)

The Convention on Biological Diversity defines an “other effective area-based conservation measure” as:

A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio–economic, and other locally relevant values.³¹

4. Indigenous Guardian Program

Indigenous Guardians are paid staff who partake in a diverse range of activities to promote ecological Indigenous values including “protecting and conserving ecosystems, developing and maintaining sustainable economies, and continuing the profound connections between Canadian landscape and Indigenous culture.”³²

In 2017 the Federal Government launched a pilot program, setting aside \$25 million over four years with the aim to develop a National Indigenous Guardians Network.³³

The Indigenous Leadership Initiative is promoting a federally funded, Indigenous-led National Indigenous Guardians Network in Canada that supports development and employment of guardians across the country. This network has generated broad support, including from the Assembly of First Nations which passed a resolution in 2015 calling for a national Guardians program.³⁴

The City of Prince Albert, its large Indigenous population, and the region at large would mutually benefit from employing this program in Little Red River Park.

7.5. Personnel and Policy Recommendations

A number of personnel, both paid and volunteer, will need to be engaged to ensure smooth operation of the Park. As well, with the adoption of new governance, concrete policies must be developed.

Personnel and Staff

- Dedicated maintenance crew;
- Park Board with a clear charter;
- Park patrol/ranger;
- Establishment of Indigenous-led foot patrol for the broader PA area (e.g. Okihtcitawak Patrol Group in Saskatoon, Bear Clan Patrol in Winnipeg);
- Dedicated LRRP Volunteer Association (to add more cohesion and coordination between the groups currently doing work in the Park).

Policies to be Developed

- Off-leash policy;
- Green Event Guidelines/Policy;
- Healthy Food Environment/Health Food Policy/Guidelines.





Strategic Action Plan

The key to the successful implementation of the Master Plan is in setting out priorities for improvements and acting in a sequence of phases that build upon each other throughout the ten-year implementation period.

In the first few years, it is important to tackle existing deficiencies, especially as they relate to accessibility, safety and security. The commissioning of studies, policy changes, and development of management plans and packages that are prerequisite to major projects should also be undertaken at this stage.

It is important too in these early stages to implement some smaller projects that are visible and impactful, assuring the public that actions are being taken to improve the Park, and establishing a momentum to build upon. Therefore, a significant investment should be made in the first phase of the Plan, and subsequent periods should be relatively equal in their levels of investment.

8.1. Key Strategies

1. Invest in repairs to meet safety and accessibility requirements.
2. Implement a governance model that provides a single point of contact for the Park, allows access to private funding opportunities, and establishes a clear system for managing programs and facilities.
3. Commission feasibility studies, branding and wayfinding packages, and engineering reviews in anticipation of major improvement projects.
4. Commit to seeking sources of revenue and establishing partnerships that can offset capital and operating costs.
5. Work persistently at enhancement projects, keeping the public and park users well informed, and give opportunities for public input where appropriate.
6. Construct and operate the Park in a manner that is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable, and embraces, new partnerships and innovation.
7. Assess successes and monitor progress each year of the ten-year process to determine the best course of action for full implementation. This may require adjustments to the Strategic Directions as the Plan progresses.

8.2. Strategic Directions

Phase 1: Establishment (Years 1-2)

1. Establish governance structure and commission prerequisite feasibility and engineering studies.

- a. Based on the governance options presented in this Plan, commission a full governance study for the Park, and implement a clear governance structure for operations, funding, marketing and enhancement projects in the Park;
- b. Determine staffing requirements based on chosen governance model. Regardless of which model is chosen, staffing should include security and maintenance positions.
- c. Put out a call for proposals for a branding package for the Park, which includes a discrete graphic identity for Little Red River Park;
- d. Upon adoption of the branding package, put out a call for proposals for the development of a comprehensive wayfinding system for the Park, that incorporates the new branding and graphic identity;
- e. Commission an engineering review of all bridges, both pedestrian and vehicular to determine replacement and repair recommendations;

2. Execute improvements to Cosmopolitan Lodge and its immediate environs.

- a. Provide data and cable connections to the Lodge to allow for wi-fi access and broadcasting of televised events. Provide television in coordination with operating contractor;
- b. Install security and surveillance systems to help deter crime including enhanced security for wood and equipment storage;
- c. Extend back patio and make any improvements required to provide comfortable eating and lounging space with tables and umbrellas, accessible from the building interior;
- d. Review accessibility and implement improvements to bring the building up to current standards and best practices.

3. **Make improvements to Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre.**
 - a. Work with ski hill contractor to replace current lifts with new, variable speed rope lifts, complete with lift house controls;
 - b. Provide water service to Old Log Cabin;
 - c. Hire ski patrol to be on duty during open hours;
 - d. Develop a clear emergency plan for the facility and improve emergency road access;
 - e. Work with cross-country ski user groups to re-route trail at base of hill to alleviate conflict with downhill skiers/snowboarders;

4. **Replace existing outhouse facilities in Cosmopolitan Place picnic areas.**
 - a. Provide new accessible toilet buildings, including water for washing. Facilities should be sustainable (e.g. compost toilets, onsite water storage) and fit with the established aesthetic of Cosmopolitan Place.

5. **Enhance connectivity:**
 - a. Replace the footbridge near playground to improve access from park entrance at Highway 55. The bridge should follow accessibility standards and should be of an aesthetic that is consistent with Cosmopolitan Place.

6. **Repair Park roads.**
 - a. Re-grade and resurface 15th Avenue NE within the Park.
 - b. Make any other road improvements that are of immediate concern to general safety and security.

7. **Improve trail quality and legibility.**
 - a. Add winter walking trails alongside or near to ski trails. Monitor their use during the season and evaluate successes and any requirements for subsequent improvements. Use of branded signage should be used to convey the message of trail etiquette and the importance of use separation.
 - b. Launch GPS mobile trail application in partnership with Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Natural Resource Management, Forestry and Ecosystem Technology Program;
 - c. Identify areas of the trail system where accessibility can be improved and implement measures to achieve this. Information gathered in this process can be applied to future trailhead development. A key example is the loop between the former playground site and Cosmo Lodge.

- d. Begin re-naturalization of rogue trails to rationalize the existing trail system. Develop signage and markers to aid in this effort by prohibiting traffic to areas of re-naturalization.
- e. Install fencing and kissing gates along northwest park edge to deter vehicular entry.

8. Clear deadfall from river course.

- a. Begin clearing of deadfall from south end of the Spruce (Little Red) River. Consultation with pertinent environmental professionals should be undertaken to ensure that established wildlife habitat is not adversely affected, and that mitigating measures are instituted where disturbance is likely to occur as a result.

9. Invest in broader marketing of Little Red River Park

- a. Commit funding to a marketing budget for the Park to develop promotional material that features the Park's amenities using a combination of photography, video, copy, and current media platforms, in accordance with the graphic identity package. Promotion should be far-reaching, drawing in potential visitors from Saskatchewan, Western Canada, and beyond.
- b. Develop a dedicated Little Red River Park website and social media accounts. Assign operations to dedicated personnel, either within the City (or park management team) or externally through a marketing firm.

10. Name/re-name sites, trails, or facilities

- a. In partnership with the City's Traditional Knowledge Keepers Committee, schedule naming ceremonies for sites and trails within the Park with appropriate names that draw on Indigenous traditions and the region's history.

Phase 2: Enhancement (Year 3-4):

- 1. Generate resource management and emergency preparedness plans.**
 - a. Develop a waste management plan for the Park that includes determining waste and recycling requirements for on-site collection and off-site disposal.
 - b. Work with Saskatchewan Environment to develop a wildfire management plan for Little Red River Park that works in tandem with the Wildfire Management section of the *Nisbet Integrated Forest Land Use Plan* (July 2012)
 - c. Develop a forest inventory and management plan with certified foresters and environmental professionals.
 - d. These plans may be integrated into a single comprehensive management plan. This plan should also reference the City's flood plain policies and flood plain mapping completed in 2019.

- 2. Replace Hands Bridge.**
 - a. Based on findings of the engineering study in Phase 1, replace existing Hands Bridge with either:
 - i. New vehicular bridge with restricted access points;
 - ii. New pedestrian bridge with conversion of road to trail.

- 3. Continue upgrades to Cosmopolitan Lodge.**
 - a. Upgrade heating and cooling systems.
 - b. Upgrade washrooms including family-friendly facilities
 - c. Enhance the landscape surrounding the building, including:
 - i. Permanent site lighting and seasonal lighting;
 - ii. Soft landscaping around the building to provide a more welcoming environment for visitors, weddings, and special events;
 - iii. Improved walkways and connections to adjacent facilities (paths, bridges, etc.).
 - iv. Provision for winter skating rink in open area between the Lodge and the Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre.

- 4. Continue upgrades to Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre.**
 - a. Replace grooming equipment (snowcat).
 - b. Develop opportunities for ski patrol training for local youth.

5. Upgrade parking.

- a. Reorganize parking lot near ski hill with vegetation buffers.
- b. Plant trees along parking areas throughout the Park.

6. Develop an active recreation area in the Core.

- a. Add two new picnic sites with fire pits complete with additional waste and recycling receptacles.
- b. Add parking, signage, paths, fencing and picnic shelters near former playground site. This is only recommended in this location if flood mitigation measures are undertaken to ensure that amenities are not within the 100 year flood zone.
- c. Monitor use of these sites to determine potential for future demand of additional sites in later phases.

7. Enhance trails with trailheads and seating options.

- a. Develop trailheads complete with signage and waste receptacles. Signage should communicate trail system and routes, difficulty, and etiquette. Information and graphics must follow accessibility standards and best practices, and follow Little Red River Park's brand guidelines;
- b. Install benches along trails where appropriate to increase accessibility;
- c. Continue to monitor and mitigate rogue trails.

8. Develop the site of the old Sanitorium as an Indigenous ceremonial ground.

- a. Work with local Indigenous groups, Elders and Knowledge Keepers to design and build a gathering space and ceremonial ground that can accommodate powwows, sweat lodges, seasonal feasts and other ceremonial and celebratory gatherings that are welcoming to all.
- b. Develop and install interpretive signage, consistent with Little Red River Park branding, to commemorate the story of the history of the sanitorium and tuberculosis treatment at this site.

9. Develop land-based learning initiatives and commemoration of Indigenous history at the Upper Plains site.

- a. Develop and install interpretive signage commemorating the historic Dakota village that once stood on the western portion of the Upper Plain, as well as traditional plants, ceremonial practices, and land management techniques of Indigenous peoples that have lived in the region prior to and following European contact.

- b. Working with local schools and post-secondary institutions, develop programming for land-based learning and outdoor education.
- c. Create a dedicated outdoor classroom space where visiting school groups can gather to learn Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and environmental science.

10. Pilot low-impact camping in Upper Plains.

- a. Allow for low-impact camping (tenting or yurts) for supervised youth field trips in relation to land-based learning programs or other youth and family group trips.

11. Implement wayfinding system throughout the Park.

- a. Based on the wayfinding package in Phase 1, design and install signage at all of the Park's entrances, and at key points within the Park.
- b. Install lighting at entrances and along main route through Park.
- c. Design and install roadside information signage on Highway 55.
- d. All signage must comply with Little Red River Park's brand guidelines.

12. Continue clearing of deadfall on river course.

Phase 3: Continued Improvement (Years 5-6):

1. Consider feasibility of replacement of the Swinging Bridge.

- a. Re-visit bridge engineering study and consider any recommendations for replacement of the Swinging Bridge structure.
- b. If required, commission a specific study by engineering professionals for replacement of the bridge.

2. Consult with RM of Buckland to request construction of access road to adjacent private property.

- a. Private property north of the Park in Rural Municipality of Buckland is only accessible by internal Park road. The City of Prince Albert and the RM of Buckland should plan the construction of an access road from the RM's grid in order to give this landowner access to the property.
- b. Portions of the road within the Park should be re-naturalized to deter vehicular use.

- 3. Put out a call for provision of equipment rental service.**
 - a. With the increased trail use and cleared river course, it is assumed that there will be an increased demand for casual visitors requiring rental equipment (bicycles, canoes, kayaks, snowshoes, etc.). This may be able to be accommodated by the Cosmopolitan Lodge operations contractor, Park staff, or it may require a third party to set up a kiosk. Consider security and loss prevention requirements for this service prior to commissioning.

- 4. Continue upgrades to Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre.**
 - a. Develop a bridge structure to allow safe winter access from the Parking lot to the Old Log Cabin (in favour of current seasonal snow bridge). This structure must be able to be disassembled and stored in the off-season.
 - b. Complete interior and exterior refurbishments to Old Log Cabin as required.
 - c. Invest in further enhancements to the snowboard terrain park.

- 5. Pilot low-impact camping in Cosmopolitan Place picnic sites.**
 - a. Designate a number of picnic sites as low-impact (tent only) camp sites.
 - b. Assign staff to oversee campsite rentals and provide overnight, on-site security.
 - c. Add six new casual (non-camping) picnic spots with fire pits to mitigate conversion of existing picnic sites.

- 6. Continue development of adventure- and nature-based play spaces.**
 - a. Add playground, fitness equipment, picnic sites, pathways and lighting to active recreation area.
 - b. Make accessibility and grading improvements to toboggan hill.
 - c. Develop a mountain bike skills park or jump track.
 - d. Invite expressions of interest in developing an adventure centre (zip line or smaller line system, rope towers, climbing walls, etc.).

- 7. Repair Park roads.**
 - a. Upgrade/resurface vehicular roads as required.

- 8. Extend Prince Albert Transit service to Little Red River Park.**
 - a. Consult with PA Transit and Glass Field Airport to add a new route that services both locations. This extension might also service other neighbourhoods in North Prince Albert, such as Hazeldell and Nordale.

Phase 4: Renewal (Year 7-8):

1. Assess success of land-based learning and consider expansion.

- a. Based on first years of operation of outdoor classroom and development of environmental education programming, assess feasibility of building a low impact building to house an environmental learning centre.
- b. Continue to build partnerships with educators and institutions to develop curriculum for environmental learning centre.

2. Continue improvements to Kinsmen Ski and Snowboard Centre.

- a. Invite expressions of interest in developing a summer activity at the ski hill site that will extend use of the site while not impeding on the function of the ski hill;
- b. Design and construct washroom building in close proximity to Old Log Cabin.

3. Replace Swinging Bridge.

- a. Based on previous phase's assessment, replace swinging bridge with new structure complete with accessibility upgrades (if feasible).
- b. Develop picnic space at north end of the bridge.
- c. Create a trail connection from north landing to the River Trail.
- d. Design and install interpretive signage telling the history of the Park and the Swinging Bridge.

4. Provide additional parking.

- a. Provide additional low-impact single row perpendicular parking if it is required to meet demand. Include vegetative buffers where possible.

5. Enhance trails.

- a. Install low impact outhouses at appropriate intervals along major trails where appropriate. Structures should be appropriately sited so as not to take away from views of or have any negative impact on the natural environment.
- b. Restore the former Kiwanis bike trail south of Highway 55 to increase accessibility to the Park for cyclists.

Phase 5: Fulfillment (Years 9-10):

1. Construct Environmental Learning Centre on Western Upper Plain.

- a. Based on feasibility study, put out call for proposals for design and construction of environmental education centre, award contract, and open doors to public. Include public engagement in design process.

2. Evaluate.

- a. Evaluate success of Master Plan and determine next steps for continued success. Identify any elements of the Master Plan that have not been fulfilled, and determine if an action plan for their execution is required to complete the tasks.
- b. Continue to allocate funding to marketing and promotions to continue to build on increased park use.

8.3. Evaluation Process

Each project undertaken as part of this Master Plan must be scrutinized through a Development Review Process to ensure that it meets the following criteria prior to full implementation:

1. It meets the Goals and Objectives of the Plan as laid out in Section 3.0;
2. It is environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable.
 - a. Environmental sustainability:
 - Federal and Provincial standards for assessing environmental impacts are followed;
 - It fits any forest and wildfire management plans that are in place;
 - It follows best practices for resilience and adaptation to climate change factors; and
 - It does not conflict with any adjacent land uses.
 - b. Economic sustainability:
 - A full financial evaluation has been undertaken;
 - Partnerships and funding sources have been set;
 - Cost and revenues have been projected; and
 - There is sustained demand for the activity or amenity being proposed.
 - c. Social sustainability:
 - It promotes the general health and well-being of residents of Prince Albert and District
 - It is respectful of heritage values and where possible contributes to the education of the public; and
 - It presents activities that are inclusive and accessible.
3. Full public consultation, including with Indigenous communities, has been undertaken and concerns are addressed to a satisfactory level.
4. It adheres to the principles and policies of local plans such as the *Prince Albert District Official Community Plan*, the *Community Services Master Plan*, the *Municipal Cultural Action Plan*, and City of Prince Albert by-laws.
5. It follows the provincial and national standards in Section 4.1, and any other pertinent standards that may arise in the course of the implementation of this Master Plan.

8.4. Programs and Partnership Opportunities

The following is a list of potential partnerships and program support for projects within Little Red River Park:

- Prince Albert Historical Society;
- Prince Albert Indian and Métis Friendship Centre;
- Prince Albert Grand Council;
- Local First Nations: Wahpeton, Little Red River (Lac La Ronge), Sturgeon Lake, Kiskaciwan, Muskoday, One Arrow;
- Métis Nation Saskatchewan;
- Prince Albert Métis Women's Association;
- Prince Albert Multicultural Council;
- Prince Albert Tourism and Marketing Bureau;
- Prince Albert Wildlife Federation;
- Prince Albert Winter Festival Society;
- Prince Albert Historical Museum;
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic – Natural Resource Management, Forestry & Ecosystem Technology;
- University of Saskatchewan;
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans;
- Prince Albert Regional Economic Development Alliance;
- Ranch Ehrlo;
- Prince Albert & Area Teachers' Association;
- Make Prince Albert Beautiful;
- Summit Run;
- Department of Canadian Heritage;
- The National Trust;
- Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Industry;
- Sask Rivers School Division – Indigenous Perspectives Program;
- Bowbenders Archery Club;
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS);
- Ministry of Environment;
- Prince Albert Model Forest;
- First Nations University of Canada;
- Traditional Knowledge Keepers Committee (City of Prince Albert);
- Museum of Natural Sciences;
- Ministry of Corrections and Policing;



Photo credit: Francesco Paggiaro





Financial Analysis

9.1. Capital Development Budget Estimate

An order of magnitude budget estimate was prepared by the Consultant Team for each of the phases presented in Chapter 8.0. This costing is based upon similar construction projects, current market values, and consultation with pertinent local trades and suppliers. In each phase a contingency of 25% has been included. An estimate of design and engineering fees in the order has also been included for each phase. This fee has been excluded for any projects which might already include such fees, or where these fees would not be required. Likewise, fees have been included for consultation with Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

1.0 PHASE 1: Establishment (Years 1 - 2)	
A. Prerequisite Studies	\$350,000
B. Cosmopolitan Lodge Improvements	\$120,000
C. Kinsmen Ski & Snowboard Centre Improvements	\$155,000
D. Replacement of Outhouses	\$352,500
E. Enhanced Connectivity	\$400,000
F. Road Repairs	\$528,000
G. Trail Improvements	\$790,000
H. Rivercourse Cleanup	\$45,000
I. Marketing	\$100,000
J. Naming of Sites	\$5,000
Phase Subtotal:	\$2,845,500
25% Contingency:	\$711,375
Elders Fees:	\$56,910
Design & Engineering Fees:	\$231,800
PHASE 1 TOTAL ESTIMATE:	\$3,846,000

2.0 PHASE 2: Enhancement (Years 3 - 4)	
A.	Resources Management & Emergency Preparedness \$125,000
B.	Replacement of Hands Bridge \$400,000
C.	Cosmopolitan Lodge Upgrades \$722,000
D.	Kinsmen Ski & Snowboard Centre Upgrades \$300,000
E.	Parking Upgrades \$85,000
F.	Active Recreation Area \$570,000
G.	Addition of Trailheads and Seating \$80,000
H.	Sanitorium Site Development \$200,000
I.	Land-based Learning Initiatives \$171,000
J.	Low-impact Camping \$25,000
K.	Park Wayfinding System \$126,000
L.	Rivercourse Cleanup \$45,000
	Phase Subtotal: \$2,849,000
	25% Contingency: \$712,250
	Elders Fees: \$42,735
	Design & Engineering Fees: \$253,900
	PHASE 2 TOTAL ESTIMATE: \$3,858,000

3.0 PHASE 3: Continued Improvement (Years 5 - 6)	
A.	Swinging Bridge Replacement Feasibility \$25,000
B.	Private Access Road Decommissioning \$50,000
C.	Equipment Rental Service* \$50,000
D.	Kinsmen Ski & Snowboard Centre Improvements* \$400,000
E.	Picnic/Camp Site Enhancements \$145,000
F.	Active Recreation Area Phase 2 \$1,500,000
G.	Road Repairs \$150,000
	Phase Subtotal: \$2,320,000
	25% Contingency: \$580,000
	Elders Fees: \$23,200
	Design & Engineering Fees: \$219,500
	PHASE 3 TOTAL ESTIMATE: \$3,143,000

4.0 PHASE 4: Renewal (Years 5 - 6)	
A.	Kinsmen Ski & Snowboard Centre Improvements \$175,000
B.	Replacement of Swinging Bridge \$540,000
C.	Trail Enhancement \$125,000
	Phase Subtotal: \$840,000
	25% Contingency: \$210,000
	Elders Fees: \$8,400
	Design & Engineering Fees: \$81,500
	PHASE 4 TOTAL ESTIMATE: \$1,140,000

5.0 PHASE 5: Fulfillment (Years 9 - 10)	
A.	Environmental Learning Centre \$1,045,000
	Phase Subtotal: \$1,045,000
	25% Contingency: \$261,250
	Elders Fees: \$10,450
	Design & Engineering Fees: \$104,500
	PHASE 5 TOTAL ESTIMATE: \$1,421,000

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST OF IMPLEMENTATION	\$13,408,000
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* Costs may be shared depending on final governance structure

9.2. Operating Costs

Along with the development projects laid out in the Renewal Plan, it is important to take into account ongoing operating costs that will arise from implementation of these strategies. Without knowing the governance model that is to be employed, it is difficult to determine which of these will be applicable, but annual costs to be considered in City budgets include:

Staffing

- Park Manager;
- Park staff;
- Overnight staff (camping);
- Park Ranger(s) and/or security personnel.

Operations

- Maintenance;
- Groundskeeping;
- Replacement of infrastructure and equipment;

Promotions

- Marketing materials.

9.3. Potential Revenue Sources and Funding Programs

The following is a list of potential revenue sources for projects within Little Red River Park. This list is by no means exhaustive, and ongoing searches for new grants and revenue sources should be undertaken annually. Web links provided are current as of the date of publication.

Revenue From Park Activities

- Fees for use of Indigenous-specific ceremonial area;
- Pine Needle Festival partnership;
- Trail passes and guided hikes;
- Parking fees;
- User fees (though fees for park entry will deter lower income users);
- Various revenue sources from park activities;
- Sale of carbon offset credits.

Local Funding Sources

- Sponsorships;
- Service clubs: Rotary, Kiwanis, Kinsmen, Lions, Cosmopolitan;
- Pêhonân Parkway Board;
- Local foundations such as Prince Albert and Area Community Foundation;

Provincial Programs

- **Community Grant Program** (Saskatchewan Lotteries) – helps volunteer-operated, non-profit community organizations develop sport, culture and recreation programs. <https://www.sasklotteries.ca/about-us/community-grant-program.htm>;
- **Parks For All Action Grant** (Saskatchewan Parks & Recreation Association) – in support of the *Parks for All Action Plan*. <https://www.spra.sk.ca/funding/spra-grants/>;
- **Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Leadership Grant** (SaskCulture) – supports the sharing of cultural skills and knowledge to young people through participatory cultural activity with First Nations or Métis arts and culture leaders. <https://www.saskculture.ca/programs/funding-programs/grants/aboriginal-arts-and-cultural-leadership-grant>;
- **Métis Cultural Development Fund** (SaskCulture) – supports community-based cultural activities and initiatives that preserve, strengthen and transmit Métis culture and traditions. <https://www.saskculture.ca/programs/funding-programs/grants/metis-cultural-development-fund>;
- **Community Initiatives Fund** (SaskCulture) – provides grants to support programs and projects that focus on healthy growth and development of children and youth, individual and community wellbeing, or nonprofit and community leadership. <http://www.cifsask.org/>;
- Municipal Revenue Sharing Program.

Federal Programs

- **Canada Nature Fund** (Environment and Climate Change Canada) – supports the protection of Canada’s ecosystems, landscapes, and biodiversity—including species at risk. The Fund is available to not-for-profit and Indigenous organizations, provinces and territories, and others. <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/fund.html>;

- **Community-nominated priority places for species at risk** (part of Canada's Nature Fund) – supports multi-partner initiatives in priority places where there are opportunities to protect and recover species at risk and their habitat through multi-species and ecosystem-based conservation action. www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/fund/community-nominated-places-species-risk.html;
- **Enabling Accessibilities Fund** (Employment and Social Development Canada) – provides funding for eligible capital projects that increase accessibility for people with disabilities in Canadian communities and workplaces. www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/enabling-accessibility-fund.html;
- **Green Infrastructure programs** (Natural Resources Canada) – investment in commercial-scale technology demonstrations, deployment, community capacity building, and targeted research and development. <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/climate-change/green-infrastructure-programs/19780>;
- **Canada Cultural Spaces Fund** (Culture, History and Sport) – supports the improvement of physical conditions for arts, heritage, culture and creative innovation. www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/cultural-spaces-fund.html;
- **Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage** (Culture, History and Sport) – opportunities for local artists, artisans, heritage performers or specialists to be involved in their community through festivals, events and projects. It also allows local groups to commemorate their local history and heritage. www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/building-communities.html;
- **Commemorate Canada** (Culture, History and Sport) – provides funding to initiatives that commemorate and celebrate historical figures, places, events and accomplishments of national significance. www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/commemorate-canada.html;
- **Indigenous Languages and Cultures Program** (Culture, History and Sport) – The Indigenous Languages Component supports the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance, and strengthening of Indigenous languages through community-driven activities www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/aboriginal-peoples.html;
- **Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples** (Canada Council for the Arts) – acknowledges the cultural sovereignty of Indigenous peoples and respects the concepts of First Nations, Inuit and Métis self-determination. canadacouncil.ca/funding/grants/creating-knowing-sharing;

Charities, Non-Profit, NGO, and Private Sector Grants and Programs

- **Canadian Tire Jumpstart Accessibility Grants** – supports the capital costs of construction and renovation projects aimed at helping kids of all abilities enjoy sport and play. jumpstart.canadiantire.ca/pages/accessibility-grants;
- **TD Green Space Grant** – supports green infrastructure development, tree planting, forestry stewardship, and community green space expansion as a way to advance environmental and economic benefits toward a low-carbon economy. www.arborday.org/programs/TDGreenSpaceGrants/grant-information.cfm;
- **TD Canada Trust Friends of the Environment Foundation** – supports a wide range of environmental initiatives, with a primary focus on environmental education and green space programs. This grant was awarded in the past for riverbank stabilization in Little Red River Park. fef.td.com/funding/;
- **Cabela’s Outdoor Fund** - supports Canadian non-profit charities that support our 3 conservation pillars of advocacy, education, and conservation. www.cabelas.ca/pages/outdoorfund
- **Mountain Equipment Co-op’s Community Grants Program** – supports outdoor environmental education programming, education on ecologically sensitive areas, trails, skills-parks or backcountry shelters. www.mec.ca/en/explore/spring-and-fall-grants;
- **Co-op Community Spaces** – supports projects that improve the places Canadians meet, play, learn and share. www.co-op.crs/communityspaces/;
- **Saskatchewan Trails Association Funding Programs** Partnership Initiative Program, Members Grant Program, Charitable Status Program. sasktrails.ca/trail-builders/#funding;
- **Community Forward Fund** – supports housing, the arts, renewable energy, food and community spaces. communityforwardfund.ca/;
- **Green Municipal Fund** (Federation of Canadian Municipalities) - Funding available for studies, pilot projects, and capital projects. fcm.ca/en/programs/green-municipal-fund;
- **The McLean Foundation Grants** – supports arts, conservation, education, general health and welfare. www.mcleanfoundation.ca/;
- **Go Wild Community Grants** (World Wildlife Fund Canada) – supports projects to restore habitat, monitor species at risk or help Canadians connect with nature and take to protect our country’s diverse wildlife and varied ecosystems. Past grants have supported trails, youth education, mapping, and monitoring. www.wwf.ca/takeaction/gowild/.





Conclusion

Little Red River Park has inspired artists, authors, and photographers with its natural beauty. Soaring pines, set against open plains, sandy cliffs and meandering muddy waters have stirred the imaginations of countless visitors and inhabitants of this site throughout the centuries.

As much as this place inspires, there are dark points in the history of this place, when people were displaced and the nature was set to be bulldozed to make way for paved streets, when garbage was proposed to be used as fill, when sacred ground and the graves of ancestors were threatened with careless development.

The directions laid out in this Master Plan aim to ensure that both preservation and progress are thoughtfully carried out. **Listening is a key tool** to this process. All of the projects undertaken in this place must begin with listening, not just to the people, but the land, the water, and the living components of this ecosystem.

The body that governs Little Red River Park, whether it be the City of Prince Albert's Parks Department, a new conservancy, or a combination of different groups, must adhere to the guiding principles of **inclusivity, conservation, truth, reconciliation** and **public participation**. Building healthy relationships is key to building a bright future, and this is achieved through **learning, healing, and doing**.

The success of realizing this Master Plan will not be in whether everything presented in the Strategic Actions is completed within the ten-year timeframe. Instead it will be seen in the quality of the actions that are taken. If they stand up to the foundations of this Plan, then Little Red River Park will continue to be a success. And the artists of the future will continue to capture its beauty in sound and light.





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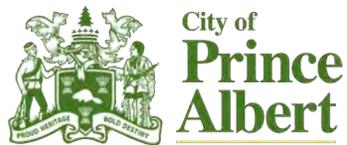
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