

River valley access gets a lift

Mechanized access to be built in downtown Edmonton

Citizens will soon have a new way to access the river valley from downtown Edmonton. City Council has approved the construction of the Mechanized River Valley Access project starting at 100 Street near the Hotel MacDonald and ending in the river valley trail system near the Low Level Bridge.



The Mechanized River Valley Access project is part of the City's River Valley Alliance projects. In 2013, the City of Edmonton received \$72.9-million in funding from the River Valley Alliance and the provincial and federal governments for five initiatives to increase access and connectivity within the river valley. A key priority for all the River Valley Alliance projects is to make one of Edmonton's most valuable assets more accessible for all citizens.

"The Mechanized River Valley Access project will address the challenges some citizens may face in accessing the river valley from Edmonton's downtown," says Rob Marchak, Director, Strategic Projects, City of Edmonton. "Our river valley offers Edmontonians and visitors unparalleled opportunities to connect to nature. This project means people with mobility challenges, parents with strollers and cyclists will have the same opportunity to access the trails from our downtown."

The project includes a new urban staircase with a mechanized lift (funicular), pedestrian bridge and outdoor elevator.

"The project is not just about connecting the top of the bank to the river valley. It is also about creating a new destination and attraction in our city," says Councillor Michael Walters, who also serves as a board member for River Valley Alliance. "The project will have a wide staircase with landings to offer people places to stop and enjoy the views. I think this is a once-in-a-lifetime enhancement to the city."

The Mechanized Access budget is \$24 million and is being funded by the River Valley Alliance, provincial and federal governments, and the City of Edmonton. Prior to beginning construction, the City must confirm if a funding extension will be granted from the funding partners. If a funding extension is granted, the City could begin construction as early as this summer.

For more information:

Visit edmonton.ca/rivervalleyprojects

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