

## Mechanized River Valley Access on time and on budget

September 22, 2016

Edmonton's iconic skyline is transforming as the Mechanized River Valley Access project begins to emerge from below the Hotel Macdonald. Construction on the project, which began in March 2016, is on schedule and on budget.

"Significant work has taken place over the past seven months, including pilings along Grierson Hill, and concrete foundations for the funicular, the elevator, the urban staircase, and the upper promontory," said Nat Nampi, Director of Facility Design and Construction. "With the foundations now in place, crews have recently installed the funicular rails and begun installing steel for the urban staircase."

In addition to ongoing work, two major project milestones will take place before the end of 2016. In October, steel will be installed for the pedestrian bridge over Grierson Hill Road. Grierson Hill Road will be closed for this work, and more information will be shared closer to when the work begins. The funicular cab is also expected to arrive by the end of the year. It is currently being manufactured in Switzerland.

As part of the City of Edmonton's Percent for Art Program, the Edmonton Arts Council also unveiled the project's interactive art piece, *Turbulent*, by artist Jill Anholt. The total commission for the art piece is \$150,000 and is inspired by the unique water patterns of the North Saskatchewan River.

"Jill Anholt's artworks inject imagination into urban settings," says Katherine Kerr, Edmonton Arts Council Public Art Director. "This is functional artwork, integrated into the existing North Saskatchewan river valley landscape and the new infrastructure, bringing both worlds together while offering an opportunity for Edmontonians to see and interact with their city and each other in new ways."

*Turbulent* will consist of thin, brightly-coloured metal ribbons that will float above concrete benches along the grass lawn north of the promenade. In addition to being a vibrant art piece, the ribbons will act as seating for pedestrians taking in river valley views.

"We are excited that Edmontonians can start to see the progress of this innovative, barrier-free system that will allow people to enjoy both our vibrant downtown and our amazing river valley within minutes," said Rob Marchak, Director of Urban Initiatives. "The Mechanized Access will be a beautiful addition to the downtown skyline and a uniquely accessible way to interact with the river valley."

### BACKGROUND

The Mechanized Access project will connect 100 Street near the Hotel Macdonald to the river valley trail system near the Low Level Bridge. The project includes a number of elements: a funicular; an urban staircase; a promenade with a grass lawn; a bridge; an elevator; and a river lookout. Construction is expected to be completed in fall 2017. It is one of five River Valley Alliance funded capital projects undertaken by the City of Edmonton. More information is included in a [fact sheet](#) or available on the [project webpage](#).

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### For more information:

Project webpage: [edmonton.ca/rivervalleyprojects](http://edmonton.ca/rivervalleyprojects)

B-roll video footage and images: <http://ow.ly/gBJL304onmX>

Art & site photos: [photos.edmonton.ca/Major-Projects-Development/River-Valley-Alliance/](http://photos.edmonton.ca/Major-Projects-Development/River-Valley-Alliance/)

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