

EDMONTON AND STRATHCONA COUNTY

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

PRESENTATION TO PRIORITIES COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 22, 2019



A Window of Opportunity

- Grant moneys available to the RVA from Provincial and Federal funds have an expiry date of December 2024.
- The RVA has approximately \$17 million dollars of uncommitted Provincial funds available, and must deploy these remaining funds by this deadline or risk having to return unused funds to the Provincial Government.
- RVA sees this as a window of opportunity for two shareholder members, City of Edmonton and Strathcona County, to share in the 1/3 cost to construct a footbridge now, rather than wait for the Phase II funding.
- We are asking Strathcona County to commit to ½ of 1/3 funding for this bridge, or approximately \$3.5 to 4 million dollars.



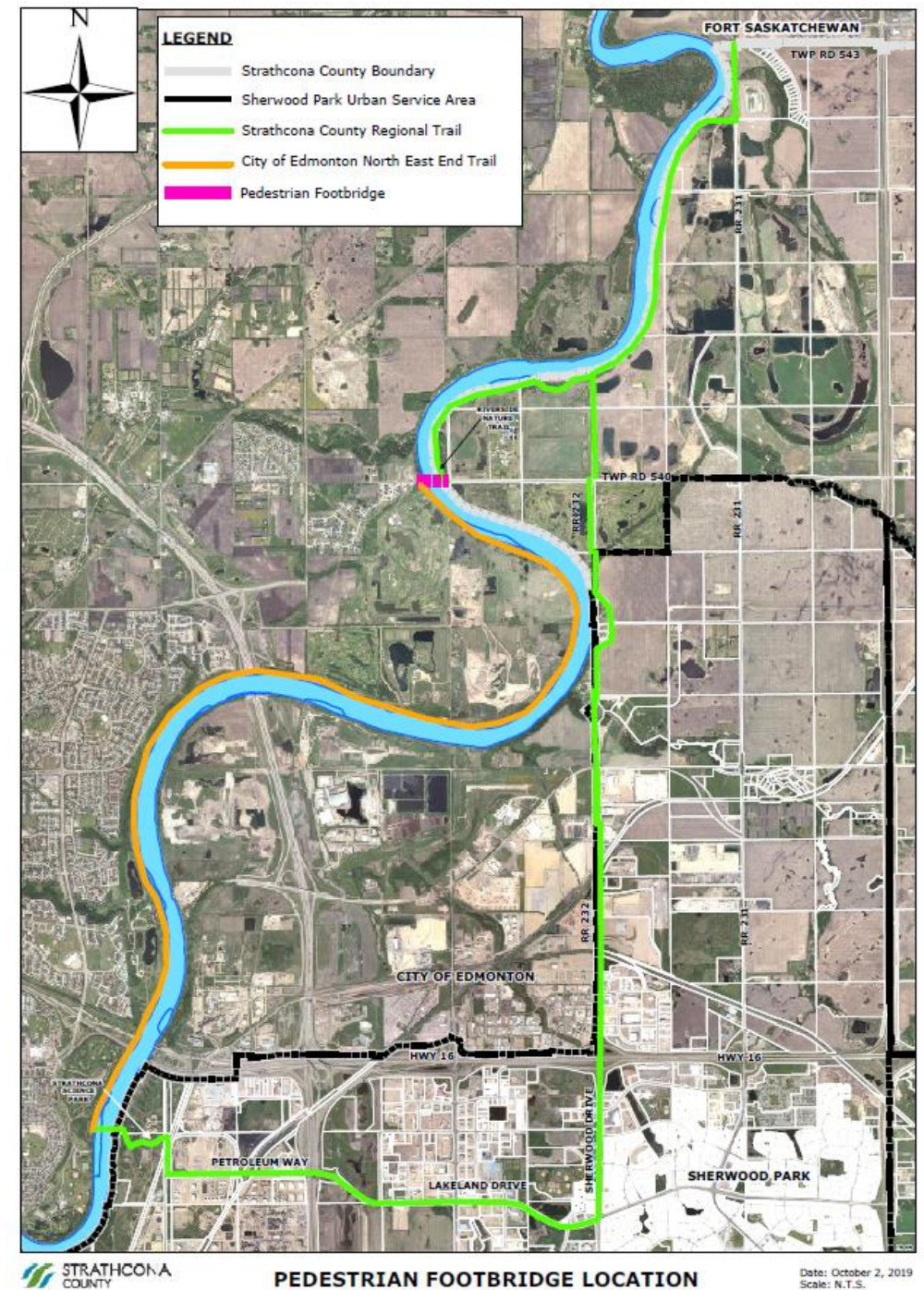
Why This Bridge, Why Now?

- In 2018 the RVA, City of Edmonton and Strathcona County initiated a feasibility study to explore a northeast Quarry Ridge-Strathcona County footbridge. The full report is to be completed in December 2019.
- In July 2019, the RVA Board resolved to “direct all non-committed capital funds to the Edmonton East End Trails to Strathcona County footbridge, subject to the City of Edmonton and Strathcona County Councils acceptance of their 1/3 cost of this bridge.”
- This bridge has always been in the RVAs 2007 *Plan of Action* approved by all seven shareholder municipalities.



Location

- On the Strathcona County side, the bridge would be located at the trailhead of Riverside Nature Trail at Township Road 540. This location would offer a more desirable route to reach the Edmonton side of the North Saskatchewan river.
- The current route to cross the North Saskatchewan river from Fort Saskatchewan / Strathcona County to Edmonton is along Range Road 232 (Sherwood Drive) into Sherwood Park, west along Lakeland Drive / Petroleum Way that eventually reaches the Strathcona Science Park and crosses over the Rundle Park Footbridge into Rundle Park.
- This new bridge would allow users a crossover option that follows the riverbank on both sides, from the Riverside Nature Trail on the Strathcona County side to the East End trails on the Edmonton side. The Alberta Capital Region Wastewater Commission is in support of this project and has offered to provide land for a staging area.







7011 N

55 m

145 m

70 m

10000

NORTH CANTON RIVER

Economic Benefit to Municipal Shareholders

- While no specific cost analyses have been completed at this stage, a cost in the range of \$20 to \$25 million is expected. As the RVA would fund 2/3 of this cost, or \$13.2 - \$16.5 million, the remaining 1/3 would be split between Edmonton and Strathcona County based a mutually agreed formula. Costs related to maintenance and upkeep would be a negotiated agreement separate from the capital contribution.
- **In essence both municipalities would obtain a \$24 million-dollar recreation amenity for approximately \$4 million, or 16¢ on the dollar.**



Social Benefit to Four Municipalities

With the addition of the Highway 15 footbridge connecting Sturgeon County to Fort Saskatchewan, four of the RVAs seven shareholders are positively impacted by this new amenity. Extrapolating census data, a total of ~225,000 residents would have direct and easy access to this bridge that will connect close to 70 kilometres of trails, from Fort Saskatchewan to west Anthony Henday bridge.

Sturgeon County	20,000
Fort Saskatchewan	25,000
Strathcona County*	100,000
City of Edmonton Ward 4*	<u>80,000</u>
	225,000

*These estimates do not include the expected population growth of approximately 70,000 residents in Edmonton's Horse Hill Area Structure Plan or future rural subdivisions in north Strathcona County.



Next Steps

December 2019- Completion of the Feasibility Study with the City of Edmonton and Strathcona County

The City of Edmonton will not be committing construction dollars to this project in 2019, but funds to complete Concept and Preliminary Design have been identified and approved by the City of Edmonton.

2020 - 2021 – Begin the concept, preliminary design, engagement and permitting stage for the pedestrian footbridge.



Conclusion

There are several factors that present a compelling argument that the funding of this bridge is in the best interest of Strathcona County to the benefit of their residents:

1. Given the time constraints of deploying the RVAs remaining capital dollars from the current Provincial and Federal grants, we need to act now.
2. Having to return money to the Provincial Government, in light of 2 extensions of our grant money, would seriously diminish our credibility as good stewards of taxpayer dollars. It would be difficult to acquire new grant money in this scenario.
3. Strathcona County gets a \$25 million-dollar recreation amenity for approximately \$4.1 million, or 16¢ on the dollar.
4. Long term growth in this area will offer new residents an active transportation amenity that will enhance their property value and their quality of life in an area relatively underserved.

*We ask that Strathcona County Council recognize the unique opportunity this project brings in achieving our mutual goal of connectivity and accessibility to metro Edmonton's river valley and fund their ½ of 1/3 portion of the bridge, approximately \$4.1 million.



Thank You
Questions?

