

Parkland County Stakeholder Engagement

Devonian Trail Link Development – Devonian Botanic Garden to Prospectors Point Day Use Area

The following comments were received at the open houses on January 5 2015 and January 7 2015. Additional feedback was received from 7 stakeholders following their review of the open house comments.

Comments have been grouped by common themes; responses to the collated comments are in red.

- Restrict access east of Imrie Property to prevent damage by off highway vehicles (OHV)
Requires gates along trail (N/S ROW from Tuckers Field to south subdivision) to restrict access to pedestrians only
Keep gate on road ROW (N/S) at Tuckers Field and Imrie Property
A gate for maintenance access and chicane (an opening with an offset to restrict vehicles) will be provided to restrict access for OHVs at the following locations:
 - from Range Road 262 to the Imrie Property
 - from Range Road 262 to Tuckers Field
 - from Banksiana Road to Tuckers Field
 - from Prospectors point to the Imrie Property Trail
- Add dog cleanup facilities
Signage will be provided at trail heads; owners will be requested to 'clean up after your pet'. Rest stops with amenities (bench, waste receptacle, and dog bag dispenser) will be provided at the Imrie Property, Tuckers Field and at the trail heads (Prospectors Point and Devonian Botanic Gardens).
- Residents asked to be kept up to date on construction scheduling and activities
Residents asked to be kept up to date on any further decisions, how the concerns will be addressed and construction scheduling and activities
The comments received from adjoining landowners at the public meetings and followup comments as well as resolutions will be posted on Parkland County website. The project page (www.parklandcounty.com/trails) will continue to be updated as the project progresses.
Tender drawings are currently being finalised for the section of trail connecting Prospectors Point to Banksiana Road. The intent is to tender the project in early spring 2015. Construction is planned for the summer of 2015 and possibly into 2016. The section of trail that would run along Banksiana Road to Highway 60 and along Highway 60 to the Gardens will occur as a second phase in 2016. Parkland County is currently exploring options with U of A that may allow us to use some of their neighbouring lands to reduce the use of ROW for the trail placement along this section of trail. New information will be posted on the County website as it comes available. Immediately adjacent residents will receive a mailout with a final schedule prior to commencement of construction. All construction is weather dependent so some flexibility as to dates should be expected.
- Preference for gravel/granular trail over asphalt – looks more natural
The trail connecting from Prospectors Point via the Imrie Property to Riverview Drive will have a granular surface (2.0m wide granular, secondary trail) and will follow the existing informal trail. From Riverview Drive to the Devonian Botanic Garden the trail will be asphalt (3 m wide hard surface, primary trail). The mix of surfaces will provide users with a variety of experiences and a high degree of accessibility. In addition, the use of asphalt will also make the trail less attractive to OHV use.

- Has a traffic study been completed? Response County : No
 Alberta Transportation collects traffic volumes on provincial highways. In 2013, 81,480 vehicles traveled Banksiana Road and 83,481 traveled Township Road 511 off Highway 60.
- How will screening of lots occur? Berms, planting?
 Loss of privacy
 People looking into lots/homes from trail – loss of privacy
 The retention of existing vegetation adjacent to the new trail will be prioritised and the established planting will act as a buffer and visual screen. Where an existing buffer is removed or no buffer exists, tree and shrub planting is proposed.
- Most of the residents polled are not against a trail in principle but agree that the trail design is aesthetically not pleasing, and due to the one way nature won't have many repeat users.
 Trail does not have a loop – not attractive for use
 Trail location is not aesthetic and does not conform to modern design practices – ugly (asphalt, built in straight line like a road) and no one will use – do not use road ROW
 The Devonian Botanic Garden and Prospectors Point attract totally different users
 This trail is being developed to extend the trail system for Parkland County residents and others who wish to enjoy a walk in the area. The trail will provide improved pedestrian and non-motorized wheeled user access and connections to Prospectors Point, the Imrie Property, Tuckers Field and the Devonian Botanic Garden. Viewpoint and rest areas will be provided in areas of interest. Signage will be provided at Prospectors Point, Devonian Botanic Garden and other points along the trail, showing where the trail connects and the return along the same trail. The trail alignment will provide users with a variety of experiences (Devonian Botanic Garden, Tuckers Field, Imrie Property, Prospectors Point and onwards to other RVA trails) and opportunities to move within the County in new ways. The Nature Conservancy of Canada recently informed Council of their plans to pursue the purchase of a section of land north of Tuckers Field and east of Narao Pines. If successful, they would look to develop a trail system on it which could link into the County trail project and provide another destination point and loop option.
 The trail meets the current standards of the River Valley Alliance and the municipalities that comprise this group. They are designed to provide a high degree of accessibility and expand the locations where pedestrians and cyclists have access to the amenities along and adjacent to the river valley as identified in the overall RVA plan.
- Why are there still no proper plans (prints) either during consultation or at the time where the county wants to go to bid
 Information boards of the Devonian Trail Link preliminary design package; River Valley Alliance Capital Project 2012-2016 Plan and frequently asked questions (FAQ) were on display at the open house. The plans provided information regarding: the trail alignment; options for trail placement within the alignment; design details relating to the trail clearance area; and associated trail amenities (benches, garbage cans, signage). The open house provided an opportunity for adjoining residents to provide input into the fine tuning of the trail alignment. The tender package, complete with detailed drawings, will consider the feedback received from stakeholders, previous studies, the River Valley Alliance's vision and overall benefits for Parkland County residents and visitors.
- Trail has no connection to the river valley for the next 15 to 20 years. By the time it would be connected, asphalt will need significant maintenance
 The Devonian Trail Link is one of the eighteen River Valley Alliance (RVA) Capital Projects for 2012-2016. The RVA goal is, over time, to connect the many parks, trails and other green spaces along the capital region into one continuous publicly accessible park. This trail links the Botanic

Garden, and lands adjacent to the trail, to Prospectors Point, a trail head along the North Saskatchewan River. Prospectors Point will connect to Voyageur Park, on the south side of the river, via the existing path on the Devonian Way North Saskatchewan River bridge crossing. The Town of Devon River Valley Trail System proposal includes a primary trail connecting Prospectors Point to Lions Campground and onwards towards Fort Saskatchewan. Construction of the Town of Devon River Valley Alliance Primary trail is planned for the summer of 2015, more details on this project can be found on the Town of Devon website.

- **What are expected user levels, were studies done? Response County: No**
Research as part of the River Valley Alliance Plan of Action indicated that there are over 10 million visits to the River Valley every year (Capital Region River Valley Park, 2007). The Capital region is expected to grow by 1.3% on average per year over the next 35 years (Capital Region Board, 2015). The Devonian Trail is one of the eighteen River Valley Alliance Capital Projects for 2012-2016 and will further support the River Valley Alliance vision '*to preserve, protect and enhance the river valley to create one of the largest river valley park systems for the year-round accessibility and enjoyment of its citizens and visitors*'.
- **A trail should be year round use**
We agree that trails should be used and enjoyed year round. There are many winter uses that could occur including cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking as well as Fat Tire Biking. In terms of the level of maintenance required to support winter uses, Parkland County will discuss winter uses and maintenance requirements with the Trail Stewardship Committee to be established in the future (see below for more detail). This will provide information to help us best manage this new trail system.
- **Connection over the Hwy 60 Bridge to Town of Devon is not pleasant and dangerous. Need a safe connection across river – e.g. footbridge**
The connection over Highway 60 Bridge may not be as aesthetically pleasing as having a separate dedicated foot bridge, but it does provide safe passage across. The walkway across the bridge is designed to Alberta Transportation standards and is connected to Prospectors Point on the Parkland County side and Voyageur Park on the Devon side by asphalt pathways from the bridge down into those respective park sites. The RVA Plan of Action does identify future bridge crossings in their plan that will address the need for a separate, aesthetically pleasing crossing for non-motorized users. However, those structures are not part of the River Valley Alliance 2012-16 Capital Project. They will be developed in the future subject to securing additional funding and land
- **The trail will require increased enforcement activities.**
Concerns with security – an increased number of people passing by homes/lots
Increased unsupervised or unpatrolled activity may happen in Tuckers Field
Concern with animal/dog trespassing with trail bringing in more pedestrian traffic
How will enforcement occur? – County has no funds for patrolling –past experience (trespass, pets on the loose, destruction of property/lands) has shown that the county was not able to effectively enforce
Do not want ATV/OHV activity due to significant past issues that finally led the county to build OHV/ATV access restrictions

Quads ruined Tuckers Field trails for pedestrians – needs rehabilitation, past experience showed that it is impossible to monitor ATV access
Asphalt is less attractive to OHV users

The trail will no doubt attract users from the numerous subdivisions in the area, as well as visitors from outside the area. Experience within other municipalities, as well as experience we have had with one of our main park sites in Parkland County, indicates that positive usage of the amenity tends to reduce the negative activities that occur. We see this trail system attracting many positive users to it. We do recognize the concerns area residents have and will be implementing a variety of measures to help monitor and support the proper usage and respect of the trail and area. These include a focussed enforcement program that will see our Peace Officers having a regular, active presence along the trail system. We are in the midst of setting up a new Bike Patrol unit that will provide a valuable tool for the County in patrolling this trail, as well as our other park areas. We also plan to set up a Trail Stewardship Program which will involve working closely with area residents and trail users. The intent is to have a program that puts more eyes on the trail and helps promote proper use and respect for the trail and area. Part of our signage program will educate trail users about the proper and appropriate use of the trail. In terms of a budget for these activities, Council was made aware of these operational costs prior to approving this project and supported what was presented.

OHV use in the area, particularly at Tuckers Field, was an issue in the past. Parkland County was made aware of the issues and worked with the residents in the area to develop solutions to these problems. These solutions were implemented by the County resulting in the issues being addressed. OHV use is not going to be allowed on the trail and we will enforce that restriction, just as we have on Tuckers Field. Parkland County has a lease on Tuckers Field and will be actively maintaining that area for passive recreational use, which does not include OHV's.

- Concern about the level of investment and the number of users
Concern about maintenance funding – county was not able to maintain Graminia trail. In addition road maintenance struggles to deliver timely service already.
Parkland County Council has approved this project for development. Council approved the project with an understanding of the level of annual operational funds required to maintain it.
- County did not undertake proper planning and consultation process – “ramming” an ill researched idea through – seemingly driven by a grant deadline rather than by trying to design a useful trail
Trail will not be used – no user study was undertaken, there are better options in the area
Received no feedback from past consultation. Why was this route selected respectively why is at the point of consultation with adjacent landowners still no plan available – nobody knows what is actually going to be built
County should start talking to two land owners about another alignment from Tuckers Field to the Botanic Garden – spend the money on a trail that has aesthetic value and will ultimately be used
Should have used *interest based negotiations* for consultation –county never contacted directly affected residents with proper planning documentation and responses identified during the earlier consultation. No opportunity for input and concerns have been ignored for over a year
Why not revisit trail alignment, asking that councillor Jensen take this issue back to council as consultation was not properly done and project seems ill conceived
Use reserves for trail not road ROW (go through reserves in subdivisions and Tuckers Field, not through ROW).
Develop trail 500 – 800 metres along south side of south subdivision (West 35 Estates) to connect to reserves and link to subdivision
Parkland County believes that the planning process undertaken was appropriate. Residents were kept informed of where things were at, what information was gathered and how it was being

used through the entire Concept Planning Phase. Residents were also informed on a regular basis as to how they could communicate opinions/concerns/issues with Council, as well as when information was being presented to Council. All information was shared regularly on our website.

We recognized the importance of residents living in the area and carried out numerous direct, addressed mail to the residents in addition to the general mail outs and road signage placed in the community to ensure they were informed of the project status and where information was available. Information regarding the alignments and trail details (what is going to be built) were included in the final report, as well as shared throughout the public process with residents.

Residents, including adjacent landowners, had the opportunity to discuss and share their concerns with the Consultants carrying out the Conceptual Planning, as well as County staff. When the project was presented to Council, the pros and cons with respect to each trail alignment, were identified and highlighted for Council. One of the alignment options did identify exploring the potential use of privately owned lands for trail development.

Council made their decision and directed Administration to move forward with the alignment along Banksiana Road. Parkland County indicated early on in the Conceptual Planning process that this trail was not going through subdivisions, but adjacent to them, as a pedestrian/cyclist connection. The ROW was utilized for this connection rather than the use of reserves directly within subdivisions – to reduce the introduction of trail users into the subdivisions.

We are exploring some options with the U of A along Banksiana Road and Highway 60 where they have land that may allow us to use less of the ROW for the trail placement. The 500-800 metres of trail development south of West 35 Subdivision that is shown on the River Valley Alliance Plan of Action is not part of this trail project.

- Consider this a trail to 'nowhere' similar to Graminia Road trail which was ultimately removed – waste of taxpayers money

The Devonian Trail project is a trail to somewhere. It connects the Devonian Botanic Garden, several County subdivisions, Tuckers Field, Prospectors Point, and the Imrie Property with an accessible trail. It also connects to the Town of Devon's River Valley Alliance Plan of Action activities. The Nature Conservancy of Canada recently informed Parkland County Council of their interest in purchasing a section of land north of Tuckers Field. If they are successful, they plan to develop a trail system there which the County Trail could link to. This provides another destination as well as a loop option.

- Residents made presentation to council in May 2014, council didn't take any time to investigate why two entire neighbourhoods had concerns. Seemed like a decision had been made already, despite there not being a proper plan that showed the implications at the time. Local councillor did not represent residents but rather her own opinion

Councillor Jensen to bring resident concerns back to council

Why did the council representative not contact local residents after they voiced concerns during the survey

Residents were informed regularly throughout the Conceptual Planning process as to how they could contact Council with any comments, opinions and concerns. As information was developed and/or came available during the course of the study, Dialog (the consultant) and County Administration shared all information, which included all comments received from the community with Council for their reference.

- Did not receive key to Tuckers Field gates for additional emergency egress after access was restricted due to ATV, despite petition proponent promised access and repeated requests directly to proponent by 3 Banksiana residents in Lots 13, 14 and 15.

The existing gate was placed there by the resident who leased the road allowance. The Road Allowance Lease is not being renewed. A new gate will be installed as part of this project which will allow non-motorized access to the area. The only vehicle access allowed will be for County Staff carrying out their maintenance and enforcement activities, as well as emergency vehicle access.

- Should the residents be represented on the Project Steering Committee. County staff response: No

The Project Steering Committee is comprised of the staffing and resources needed to carry out the activities necessary for the successful completion of the project. The committee is made up of County staff from several different Departments including Parks, Recreation and Culture, Engineering, Public Works and Planning. County representatives have been selected based on the fact that they are either: impacted by this project, or may have some responsibility for its development, operation or maintenance once completed. In addition we have representation from other agencies/organizations who own land that will be utilized for portions of this trail system. These include the Town of Devon; Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation; University of Alberta; and Alberta Transportation.

The adjacent landowners are being involved in the design process through targeted meetings arranged by County staff. This is their opportunity to provide input towards the final design of the trail.

Final decision around the trail design rests with Parkland County, who will work to mitigate the concerns/issues raised by adjacent landowners as much as possible.

Pending confirmation of Phase 2 alignment

- Minimize amount of trail along Hwy 60
- Provide guardrails/fencing to restrict ATV/OHV activity along Hwy 60
- How will a 4 m corridor be accommodated along Banksiana Road? There is insufficient room, to allow the promised buffers for property owners
- Reduced access from back of lots to Narao Pines due to grades and the potential need for a retaining wall if trail on north side of Banksiana Road. Cutting into hills, building retaining walls etc. will take away from the natural look the area currently has
- Lots within Narao Pines subdivision cannot have fencing due to restrictive covenant – how will views from trail be screened, trespass (pets and humans) be controlled?
- Some lots along Banksiana (road or subdivision?) have barbed wire fencing in disrepair
- Preference for yellow trail along Banksiana (south side) with screening of views into lots to the north as well as yellow trail through U of A lands (more scenic)
- Trail will not have repeat users as the noise levels along HWY 60 are extremely unpleasant
- No one will use trail along Hwy 60
- How will trail be constructed through wet area/wetland on corner of Hwy 60, in Tuckers field and along Banksiana Road? – Wetlands are becoming rare, water movement through area must continue
- Drainage issues at culvert under Banksiana Road at Hwy 60 – silted up or poorly draining and causes ponding
- Concern for safety of pedestrians along Banksiana due to high volume of fast moving traffic.
- Banksiana Road is currently posted at 70 and does not feel safe
- Concern for ditch drainage with trail location along Banksiana (north side)

- Concern with available area for trail between property line and edge of road along Banksiana
- Concern for grading of trail at road/entrance crossings
- Concern about ad hoc parking starting at Tuckers Field and patrolling/enforcement. Bollards or fencing were suggested to prevent
- Is there a possibility to phase the project
- Do not want a parking lot as part of project
- Concern for current garbage levels on Banksiana
- Concern for road snow clearing and trail conflicts – where would the snow go?
- What is the renewal timeline for Banksiana. Concern for increased garbage and dog litter
- Fencing and approach requested along private property if trail is placed alongside property

