

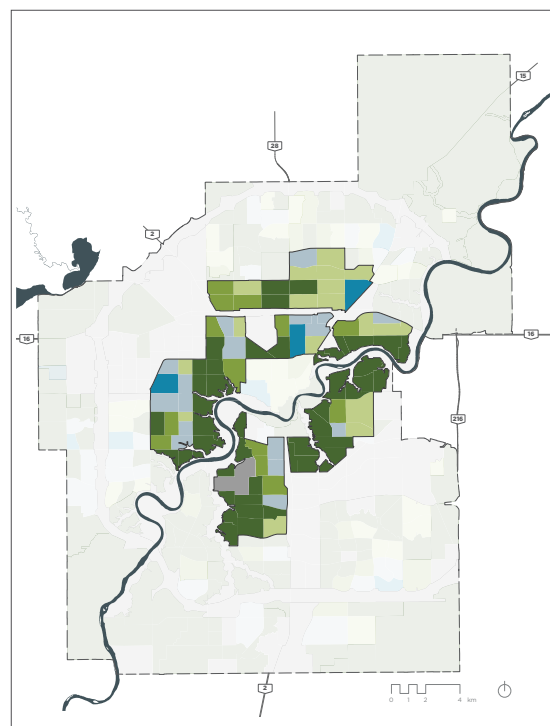
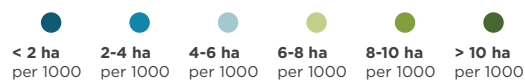
3.2.4 MATURE NEIGHBOURHOODS

3.2.4.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD OVERVIEW

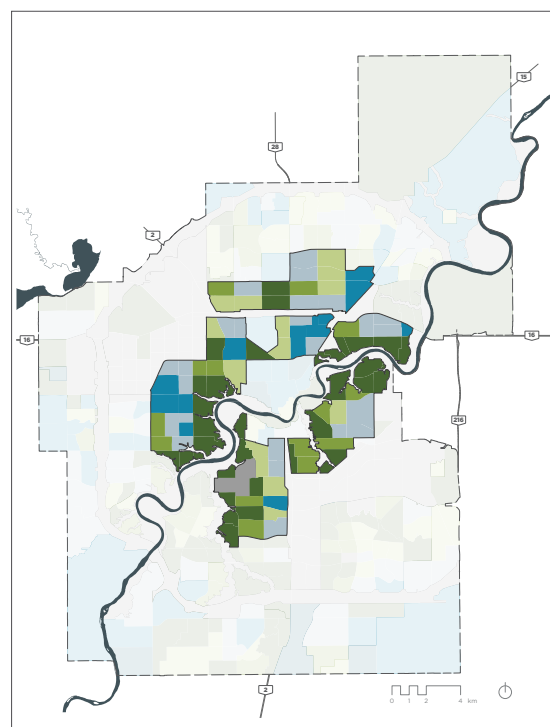
Mature neighbourhoods comprise older, primarily low-density neighbourhoods developed in the post-war era. There has been a significant population decline in some mature neighbourhoods over the past 40 years, resulting in some school sites being declared surplus and redeveloped. However, according to the figures provided in approved Area Redevelopment Plans and resulting from significant City infill initiatives, total populations are expected to increase by approximately 27%. A 2016 report to the Edmonton Public School Board projects that school-aged children and youth are projected to increase by around 10% (from 2014 populations) by 2029, although that growth is unevenly spread among different areas; some neighbourhoods are expected to grow significantly (e.g. Griesbach and Inglewood – the former targeted for transit-oriented redevelopment) while others continue to decline, leading to further potential school closures or surplus site declarations.

The demographic profile and economic status of the neighbourhoods vary considerably. Some Mature neighbourhoods comprise the lower end of the economic distribution of the city, leading to reduced capacity of community organizations to provide matching infrastructure and park development funds. Access to programs and amenities by youth and lower income families is therefore problematic, and City-led initiatives provide real benefit for increasing broad access to recreation and educational opportunities.

The area contains a small fraction of Civic Spaces but the highest number of the city's District Parks (27%). In general, multifunctional gathering spaces are rare, and the open space inventory is dominated by Pocket and Community Parks.



MAP 13: Mature Areas: 2017 Baseline
(All Open Spaces)



MAP 14: Mature Areas: Future Developments
(All Open Spaces)

3.2.4.2 ISSUES

Amount and Access to Open Space

- 1 Currently, there are 575 open spaces within the area, providing 8.0 hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 people.
- 2 Over 87% of the current population is within walking distance of a municipal park of some kind.
- 3 Additional accessible parkland in the adjacent River Valley is available to those living within 400 metres of River Valley access points. Currently, if accessible parkland adjacent to Mature neighbourhoods is included, 6.3 hectares of municipal parkland per 1,000 people is available. However, this is disproportionately distributed, favouring those living near the River Valley and Ravine System.
- 4 Few greenways are available across this area and although 118 Ave is a vibrant cultural destination, the pedestrian connectivity of parks, greenways and enhanced streetscapes is incomplete.
- 5 Access across the Yellowhead Corridor partitions these areas from the communities to the north, limiting commuter travel and reducing route options for active recreation.
- 6 High functioning Ecology spaces make up just 13.9% of all open spaces in Mature areas. Access to natural settings is scarce for residents of these neighbourhoods (only 32.4% of the population is within walking distance of these open spaces).

Quality and Functionality of Open Space

- 7 Only 2.6% of open spaces provide high function for all three themes.
- 8 Many parks in Mature areas were developed decades ago, and there are concerns regarding the quality and safety of the amenities they provide. As many are located within lower-income

METRIC	2017 Baseline*	Future**
Total Population	284,700	360,900
Provision — All Open Space		
Total number	575	—
Hectares (accessible) per 1,000 people	8.0	6.3
Provision — Municipal Parkland		
Total number	523	—
Hectares (accessible) per 1,000 people	6.3	5.0
High Function Open Spaces		
% of open spaces providing high Ecology function	13.9%	—
% of open spaces providing high Celebration function	12.9%	—
% of open spaces providing high Wellness function	12.5%	—
Access to High Function Open Spaces		
% of population within walking distance to high function Ecology spaces	32.4	—
% of population within walking distance to high function Celebration spaces	33.6	—
% of population within walking distance to high function Wellness spaces	38.0	—
Multifunctionality		
Total number providing high functionality for 3 themes	15	—
Total number providing high functionality for 2 themes	29	—
Total number providing high functionality for 1 theme	123	—

* 2017 baseline population from Edmonton Municipal Census 2016

** Approximated from approved (re)development plans and citywide projections

FIG. 12: Open Space Provision (Mature Areas)



neighbourhoods with high social vulnerability, long-term community funding of upkeep and maintenance poses challenges.

- 9 While the area hosts a wide variety of park types, the functionality of many of them is poor and provides limited options for activities within any given open space.
- 10 In some open spaces, aging infrastructure has surpassed its life cycle, requiring replacement. Other open spaces require more preventative maintenance to mitigate rapid deterioration.
- 11 Existing infrastructure is typically designed to accommodate neither year-round use nor diverse demographics and abilities. Such infrastructure requires adaptation and seasonal alterations.
- 12 Large, outdoor community gathering space is rare, and few opportunities for picnic and festival spaces exist, apart from larger, higher profile parks such as Borden or Coronation Park.
- 13 As demographics shift, the need for school sites has decreased, causing a need to repurpose these spaces into more functional forms.

Acquisition of Open Space

- 14 As the area currently has an adequate amount of open space, blanket acquisition of new lands throughout the ring of Mature neighbourhoods is not an appropriate provision strategy.
- 15 Targeted acquisition in underserved neighbourhoods may be necessary in cases where provision objectives are not being met.

3.2.4.3 PROVISION STRATEGIES

- a) Improve the quality and multifunctionality of parks. Many existing open spaces provide low functionality in all themes, and improvements may have great impact on the communities they serve. Improved active living and child-friendly spaces, community plazas, small designed ecological spaces, and co-location with community and recreation facilities should be considered for some parks.
- b) Retain existing public open spaces, parkland or otherwise. As the City implements infill initiatives to promote densification and as demographic regeneration occurs, a per capita provision may decrease. Sale or conversion to other land uses may appear desirable in the short term, but the long-term consequences are the permanent loss of open space from the City inventory.
- c) Land sale, together with swap or purchase of other strategic lands may be considered in some instances to rationalize the size and location of some open spaces.
- d) Select surplus school sites and other underused spaces may be repurposed into new community gathering, community garden or ecological spaces, with a focus on providing broader functionality to neighbourhoods.
- e) Encourage naturalization and Low Impact Development initiatives in underused open spaces to increase ecological functionality and mitigate flooding in Mature neighbourhoods.
- f) Improve green network connections throughout Mature neighbourhoods, especially to and from the River Valley and Ravine System.
- g) Maintain and expand multipurpose corridors along existing and future LRT lines, providing an ecological Greenway trail alignment together with transit.



- h) Improve connections to the south for communities situated north of the Yellowhead Corridor, and connect to the greenways that run to the east of Inglewood and Westmount. Pedestrian and active transportation routes through this area should be prioritized, to bolster the connection from the downtown core. In addition, there is potential for a well designed multifunctional ecological park in this area.

CASE STUDY: MATURE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Work to establish better connections into the River Valley parks, and improve community walkability by increased focus on pedestrian priority streets, plazas and community gathering spaces.

