

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

CREATING CONNECTIONS TO YOUR RIVER VALLEY



RIVER VALLEY
ALLIANCE



Prepared April 2019 by the River Valley Alliance

Design and layout by Arielle Demchuk

Additional photos by Jeff Szucsik, Keith Moore,
Brent Unterschultz and Nancy Critchley

2018 by the numbers

EPCOR RiverFest



2,400+
attendees

21 kilometres of new
trails



5 boat docks built
opening in 2019



**RIVER VALLEY
ALLIANCE**





MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Being a part of the River Valley Alliance is quite simply an opportunity to be part of something bigger—one of the largest metropolitan river valley park systems in the world.

The RVA, on behalf of its seven shareholders, coordinates the planning, funding and development of the trail system from Devon to Fort Saskatchewan. Through the RVA, municipalities can speak with a larger and unified regional voice to attract grant funding for larger region-building projects that would otherwise be unattainable.

The RVA is a shining example of regional collaboration that is highly successful. Through projects coordinated and funded through the RVA, we have over 70km of connected trail in the North Saskatchewan River Valley. We have just 30km to go (including 4 new pedestrian bridges) to achieve a fully connected trail from Devon to Fort Saskatchewan. The RVA has applied to Alberta Environment and Parks for grant funding that would be matched by the Government of Canada and our member municipalities to complete full connectivity.

At the RVA, our goals are much broader than simply completing and fully connecting the trail system—which will be a big accomplishment in itself. We want to harness the excitement of our residents and visitors to the North Saskatchewan River Valley who are discovering, using and gaining a greater appreciation of the true jewel that our river valley is.

Through improvements to signage and wayfinding, access and amenities, and celebrations of the river and river valley such as EPCOR RiverFest, the RVA will continue to foster responsible development of the river valley park system, consistent with the values of our municipal shareholders and the community at large.

Thank you to our shareholders, federal and provincial funders, Board, staff, land contributors and stakeholders for believing in this ambitious but achievable legacy-building vision that will benefit our region both now and in the many years to come.

GUY BRIDGEMAN
CHAIR



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2018 was my first year in the role of Executive Director, after having previously served as both Board Chair for the River Valley Alliance and on the organization's Advisory Committee.

Being a part of the hands-on work of the RVA in the Executive Director role this year has been truly exciting. Seeing our successes and continued momentum has made me even more appreciative of the hard work and commitment of our staff, Board, and partners in executing our vision of a connected river valley park system. And it's even further heightened my pride for both this initiative and this organization.

From the 21km of new trails that were opened in Strathcona County, to the completion of the East End Trails system from Hermitage Park to Quarry Ridge, to the announcement of an underslung pedestrian bridge

in conjunction with the twinning of the Hwy 15 bridge, to the five new completed boat docks opened for the 2019 season, to the over 2,200 people who paddled on the river at EPCOR RiverFest—we're making tangible strides in creating a connected and accessible river valley that can be enjoyed by all.

Only 30% is left to complete the regional connected trail system envisioned by our seven municipal shareholders in the 2007 Plan of Action. Most of this trail is in the southwest quadrant and will be the focal area of our efforts in 2019.

It's both exhilarating and humbling to see the Plan of Action come to life from a "boots on the ground" perspective. I'm looking forward to continuing to lead the organization in our journey as we head into the next phases of implementation.

BRENT COLLINGWOOD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

RIBBON CUTTINGS

Strathcona County Regional Trail

In September, Strathcona County residents and RVA stakeholders gathered together for the grand opening celebration of the new Strathcona County Regional Trail. This milestone marks the first time Strathcona County has been formally linked to the North Saskatchewan River Valley through public access points on County land.



Riverside Nature Trail Grand Opening

The Strathcona County Regional Trail portion is 22km long and connects the Strathcona Provincial Science Park to Fort Saskatchewan. Following the ceremony, attendees took part in a family play day with food and entertainment, activities for the kids, and trail walking.



East End Trails Grand Opening

East End Trails (Edmonton)

October brought together stakeholders and partners from Edmonton and area to officially open the completed East End Trails Project in Edmonton's northeast. The project added 16km of new asphalt and gravel trails to Edmonton's river valley trail system and includes a primary asphalt trail on the north side of the river from Hermitage Park to 167 Avenue.

The south side of the river features a secondary gravel trail connecting the Clover Bar Area to the Anthony Henday pedestrian bridge crossing. Taking place at the Fraser Ravine Lookout, guests at the ribbon cutting were treated to spectacular views of the North Saskatchewan River Valley decorated by the beautiful colours of the fall leaves.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA



In Spring 2019, the RVA launched a new modern website design with content intended to both excite people about the organization's work and provide them with information and resources to experience the river valley for themselves.

This included creating a new "Experience" section to house information to support using the river valley such as trail maps and apps, and information about off-leash river valley dog parks.

In addition, a new blog feature on the website's homepage provides updates on RVA's work with building trails, pedestrian bridges, and docks; how this work benefits citizens; and ideas for how to enjoy it.

In that same vein of promoting use and enjoyment of the river valley, social media content during the summer months showcased the riverfronts in the RVA's shareholder municipalities and provided tips for ways to get active these locations.

We are excited about the very real connections we are building through our social media channels, including getting to know the many talented local river valley photographers who are active on Instagram.



These photographers also graciously agreed to have their beautiful photos featured in the RVA's first-ever printed annual calendar that was gifted to stakeholders in December.

EPCOR RIVERFEST

Events are one strategy the RVA uses to not only raise awareness about its work to connect the North Saskatchewan River Valley, but to also educate and provide resources to citizens on the many ways they can get out there and connect to it themselves.



Launched in 2017, EPCOR RiverFest is an annual summer event designed to showcase in an experiential way how people can safely engage with the river valley on land and water by making it easy for them to do so.

It brings together local river valley outfitters, clubs, and businesses—as well as stakeholders and sponsors—over a shared love for the river valley. The event's signature activity is an organized float down the North Saskatchewan River in rafts and canoes after which participants disembark from their boats and take part in free river valley land activities, food, and entertainment, all while getting to know a broad mix of river valley-related exhibitors.

In 2018, the second-annual event brought together an unprecedented number of people and organizations to enjoy and appreciate the river and the river valley. While the events in Devon and Fort Saskatchewan were unfortunately cancelled due to unsafe weather conditions, nearly 2,400 attendees got connected with the river valley at the Edmonton event – including 2,200 paddlers on the river. This means the Edmonton event alone still put 700 more paddlers on the river than the previous year, and drew more people than all three events combined in 2017.



Many hands make great things happen, and EPCOR RiverFest would not be possible without the commitment of nearly 200 volunteers who did everything from inflating and launching rafts, to groundskeeping, to registration, to on-water safety.

The RVA is thrilled with the 2018 response and is extremely appreciative of the support and passion from local sponsors, outfitters, clubs, and paddle associations. We look forward to continuing to grow this event and its impact in the years to come.

2018 PROJECTS SUMMARY

In 2018, the majority of the projects remaining in the RVA's Phase I Capital Program were completed. These include:

- 21km of new trails opened along Range Road 262 in Strathcona County as part of the Strathcona County Regional Trail.
- Opening of the East End trail system connecting Hermitage Park to Quarry Ridge (16km of new trails)



Laurier Park boat dock in winter, opening in 2019

- Completed in 2018 and officially opening in 2019: five boat docks located at Whitemud Park, Laurier Park, Hawrelak Park, Dawson Park and Capilano Park. Capilano also received an upgrade to its power boat ramp.
- Announcement of a new underslung pedestrian bridge in conjunction with the twinning of Highway 15: Connecting Sturgeon County to the City of Fort Saskatchewan, this is a critical piece of infrastructure in achieving our goal of regional connectivity from Devon to Sturgeon County.

WHAT'S AHEAD

Focus on southwest quadrant

The southwest quadrant of trails is the RVA's highest priority for 2019–2022. There are only 30 km left in this quadrant to have full regional connectivity. Our goal is to complete this section of trail over the next three years. We are working closely with landowners along the top of bank to secure access through rights-of-way, easements, or whatever means appropriate.

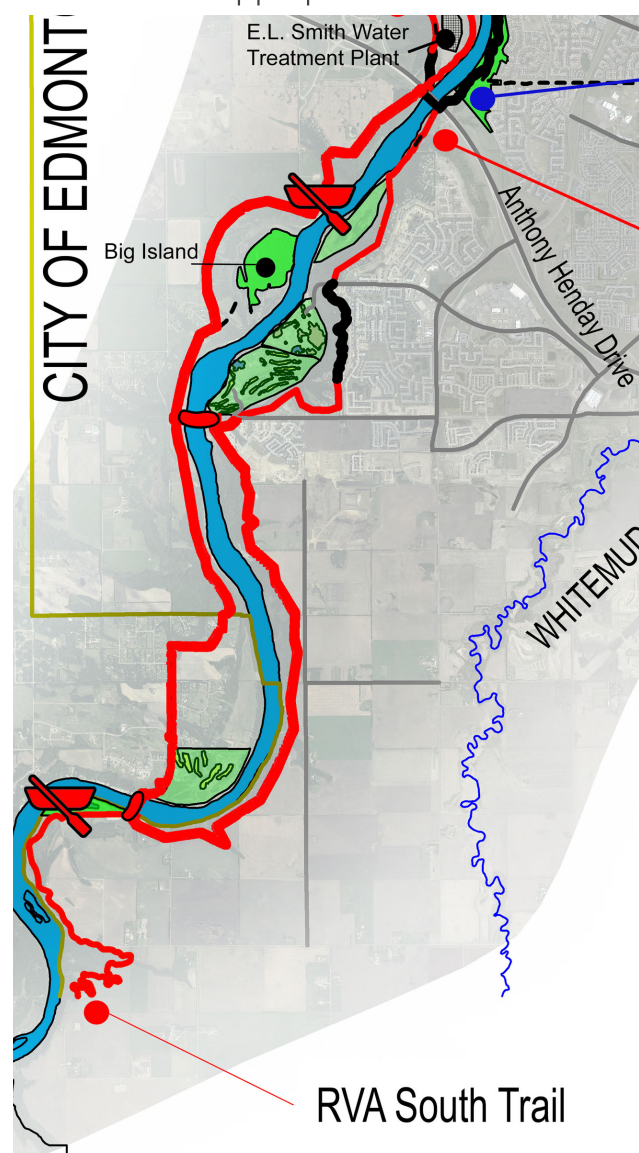
Pedestrian bridges and Edmonton trails

The following work is ongoing in 2019 to further the RVA's goal of a connected and accessible river valley trail system.

- Highway 15 twinning with pedestrian underslung bridge (completion 2021).
- Request for Proposal for a pedestrian bridge at Quarry Ridge that will connect east Edmonton to Strathcona County.
- Request for Proposal for a pedestrian bridge that will link Terwillegar Park with the E.L. Smith Water Treatment Plant and will connect neighbourhoods in west Edmonton to the river valley trails. This bridge is a vital river crossing and will enable a trail loop.
- Feasibility studies on trail connectivity from west Anthony Henday to Ellerslie Road.

Trail naming and marking

It has always been intended that the completed 100km connected trail system would be named and marked. A task force will explore and evaluate the path forward to execute this initiative.



GOVERNANCE AND STAFF

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair

Guy Bridgeman

Municipal Directors

Councillor Wayne Bokenfohr, Sturgeon County
Councillor Sarah Hamilton, City of Edmonton
Councillor Gordon Harris, City of Fort Saskatchewan
Councillor AnnLisa Jensen, Parkland County
Councillor Sandy Koroll, Town of Devon
Councillor Glen Lawrence, Strathcona County
Councillor Kelly Vandenberghe, Leduc County
Councillor Michael Walters, City of Edmonton

Directors At Large

Wendy Boje, Parkland County
Marcel Chichak, City of Edmonton
Michael Gardiner, City of Edmonton
Bob Horton, Strathcona County
Andrew Leach, City of Edmonton
John McGladdery, City of Fort Saskatchewan
Valerie Turner, Parkland County

COMMITTEES

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Wendy Boje, Committee Chair
Peter Faid
Andrew Leach
Guy Bridgeman, RVA Board Chair
Brent Collingwood, RVA Executive Director (ex officio)
Kristine Archibald, RVA Finance Manager (ex officio)

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Bob Horton, Committee Chair
Pat Butler
Marcel Chichak
Guy Bridgeman, RVA Board Chair
Brent Collingwood, RVA Executive Director (ex officio)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Michael Gardiner, Committee Chair
Mark McCrae
Guy Bridgeman, RVA Board Chair
Brent Collingwood, RVA Executive Director (ex officio)
Kristine Archibald, RVA Finance Manager (ex officio)

COMMITTEES CONTINUED

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Valerie Turner, Committee Chair, Parkland County

Kate Andres, City of Edmonton

James Cockburn, City of Fort Saskatchewan

Danielle Currie, City of Fort Saskatchewan

Shauna de Varennes, Sturgeon County

Margaret Elliott, Sturgeon County

Mike Evans, Parkland County

Jason Jama, Edmonton

Wendy Lickacz, Edmonton

Carol Moreno, Edmonton

Suzanne McAfee, Edmonton

Maëlle Piquée, Edmonton

Bill Reynolds, Strathcona County

Terry Yez, Leduc County



STAFF

Brent Collingwood, Executive Director

Kristine Archibald, Finance Manager

Connie Smart, Marketing and Communications Manager

Jennifer Ward, Administrative Coordinator

Arielle Demchuk, Communications Coordinator



SPECIAL THANKS

Phil Krysa, Principal, Architectural Works Inc

Ruth Stiksma, Corporate Support Group

Trevor Tessier, Strong Coffee Marketing

Shannon Troke, King and Company Chartered Accountants

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Shareholders of The River Valley Alliance

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The River Valley Alliance (the Corporation), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2018, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flow for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Corporation as at December 31, 2018, and the results of its operations and its cash flow for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with those requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Corporation's financial reporting process.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Independent Auditor's Report to the Shareholders of The River Valley Alliance *(continued)*

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

King + Company

Edmonton, AB
March 20, 2019

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS


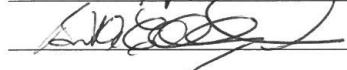
THE RIVER VALLEY ALLIANCE

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2018

	2018	2017
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 389,341	\$ 379,818
Accounts receivable (Note 2)	26,921	8,457
Building Canada Fund (BCF) claim receivable (Note 10)	1,286,443	2,332,428
Prepaid expenses	5,207	5,136
	<u>1,707,912</u>	<u>2,725,839</u>
RESTRICTED CASH AND INVESTMENTS (Notes 3, 10)	28,403,823	32,437,696
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)	8,664	14,439
	<u>\$ 30,120,399</u>	<u>\$ 35,177,974</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 34,090	\$ 22,307
Payable to municipal shareholders for capital project claims (Note 10)	2,572,886	4,664,855
	<u>2,606,976</u>	<u>4,687,162</u>
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PLAN OF ACTION (Notes 5, 10)	27,117,380	30,105,269
DEFERRED CAPITAL ASSET CONTRIBUTIONS (Note 6)	5,776	9,626
	<u>29,730,132</u>	<u>34,802,057</u>
NET ASSETS		
Share capital (Note 8)	7,000	7,000
Invested in capital assets	2,888	4,813
Unrestricted municipal shareholder assets	380,379	364,104
	<u>390,267</u>	<u>375,917</u>
	<u>\$ 30,120,399</u>	<u>\$ 35,177,974</u>

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

 Director
 Director

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

THE RIVER VALLEY ALLIANCE

Statement of Operations

Year Ended December 31, 2018

	2018	2017
REVENUE		
Contribution from Alberta Environment & Parks (AEP) grant (operations) (Note 5)	\$ 441,751	\$ 489,334
Contributions from municipal shareholders	240,000	220,000
Interest	4,969	3,234
Donations, sponsorships and other	4,464	8,185
Amortization of deferred capital asset contributions (Note 6)	3,850	3,850
	<u>695,034</u>	<u>724,603</u>
EXPENSES		
Salaries and benefits	552,429	560,861
General and administration	100,393	166,756
Communications and branding	11,708	1,796
Professional fees	9,738	9,738
Amortization of capital assets	5,775	5,775
RiverFest (recovery) (Note 7)	641	(8,396)
	<u>680,684</u>	<u>736,530</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	<u>14,350</u>	<u>(11,927)</u>
OTHER RESTRICTED REVENUE (EXPENSES)		
Capital Projects Matched by BCF		
Capital projects (Note 9)	(4,522,074)	(14,961,832)
Contribution from BCF (Note 5)	2,261,037	7,480,916
Contribution from AEP grant (Note 5)	2,261,037	7,480,916
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Non-Operating AEP Grant		
Preliminary design	(502,803)	(395,894)
Project oversight	(382,252)	(102,951)
Contribution from AEP grant (Note 5)	885,055	498,845
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$ 14,350</u>	<u>\$ (11,927)</u>

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

THE RIVER VALLEY ALLIANCE

Statement of Cash Flow

Year Ended December 31, 2018

	2018	2017
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash receipts from contributions by municipal shareholders	\$ 240,000	\$ 220,000
Cash receipts from other revenue	73,464	37,555
Cash receipts from unrestricted interest	4,969	5,274
Cash payments to suppliers and employees	(750,661)	(774,972)
Cash flows used by operating activities	(432,228)	(512,143)
FINANCING AND INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Redemption of restricted cash and investments, net	4,033,873	8,187,556
Contributions from BCF	3,307,022	7,822,044
Interest received from restricted cash and investments	599,954	622,667
Redemption of unrestricted interest-bearing deposit	-	200,000
Payments to municipal shareholders for capital projects	(7,499,098)	(16,142,934)
Cash flows from financing and investing activities	441,751	689,333
INCREASE IN CASH	9,523	177,190
CASH - BEGINNING OF YEAR	379,818	202,628
CASH - END OF YEAR	\$ 389,341	\$ 379,818

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

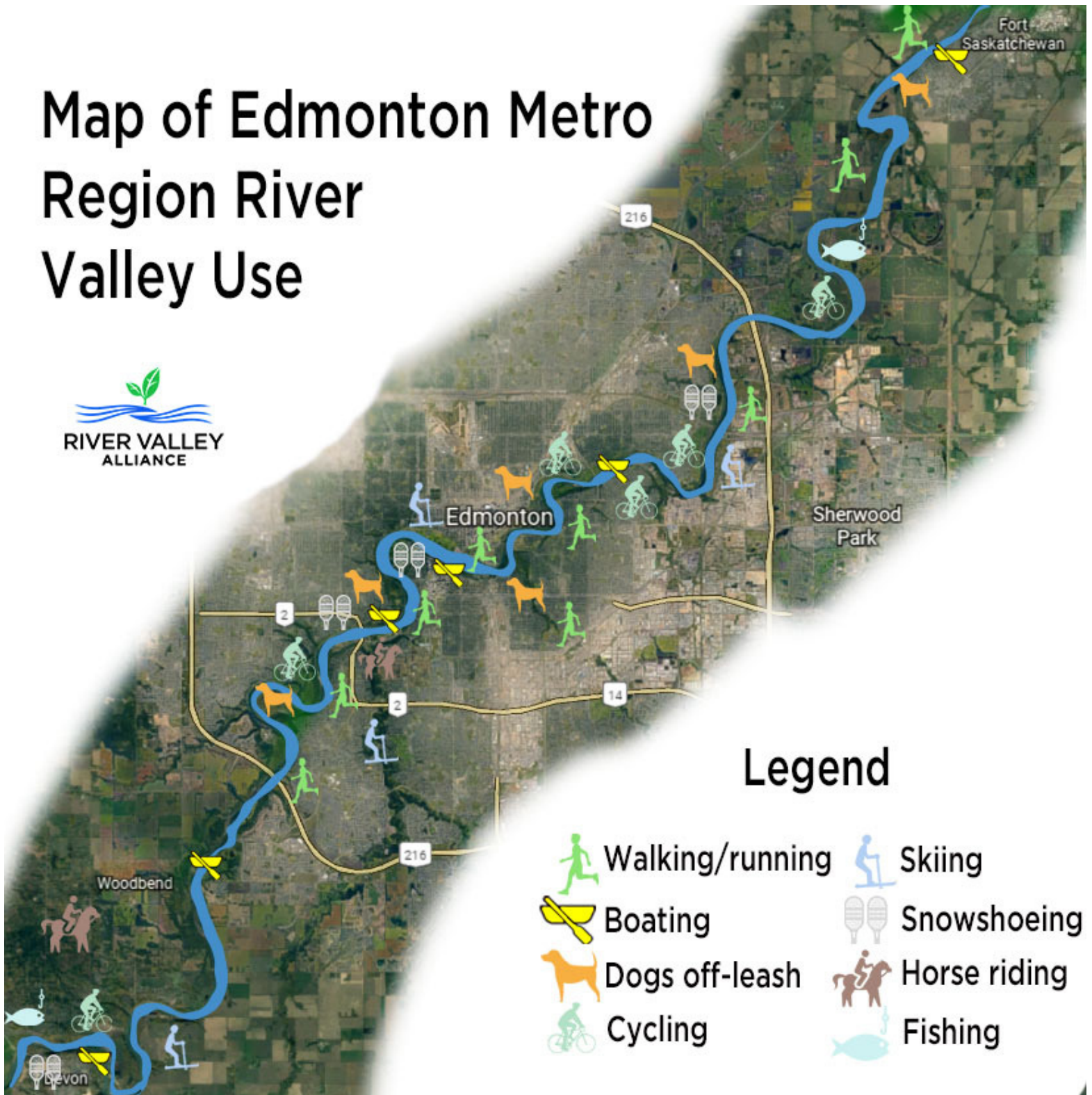
THE RIVER VALLEY ALLIANCE

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended December 31, 2018

	Invested in Capital Assets	Unrestricted Municipal Shareholder Assets	2018	2017
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 4,813	\$ 364,104	\$ 368,917	\$ 380,844
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(1,925)	16,275	14,350	(11,927)
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 2,888	\$ 380,379	\$ 383,267	\$ 368,917

Map of Edmonton Metro Region River Valley Use





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