



Hanson Ranch Wetland Improvements

Phase 3: What we Heard

September 2025

Project overview

The Hanson Ranch Wetlands Improvement project has two key components:

- 1: To upgrade the existing constructed wetland stormwater pond so it meets environmental compliance standards.
- 2: To engage with the community and gather their input on potential enhancements to the site's features and amenities, ensuring the final design reflects local needs and aspirations.

Engagement overview

Phase 3 engagement was open for input online between August 15 – August 29, 2025, with one pop-up engagement session held at the Holy Trinity Anglican Church on Sunday August 17, 2025. This was the design reveal phase, where the project team presented the design to the community, shared construction timing/impacts and rationale for the design choice.

Engagement summary

Community feedback on the Hanson Ranch Wetlands Improvement Project reflects a mix of concerns, support, and criticism.

Environmental concerns were prominent. Many worry that a reduction in open water will lead to weed overgrowth and negatively impact waterfowl, such as ducks and geese, which require space to land and take off. There are fears that the wetlands could dry up by early summer, turning into a "weed forest." Safety and logistics were also raised, including the need for emergency planning during road closures, additional fencing to prevent unauthorized access, and to ensure construction timelines and disruptions are communicated in a detailed and timely manner.

Despite these concerns, some residents expressed appreciation for preserving the area as a constructed wetland and maintaining its role as a natural habitat. The inclusion of an open classroom was well received, especially by those who value the wetlands as an educational resource for local schools. Suggestions were made to include educational signage throughout the site to highlight its environmental and sociological significance.

Additional requests included more garbage bins along pathways to address dog waste, paving the pathways, controlling access to informal trails, and improving weed management practices.

Please see the remainder of this report for a more detailed analysis of what we did, what we asked and what we heard.

Communications and Community Business Relations

The community was informed of Phase 3 engagement using a variety of communications tactics.

- Two bold signs in the area (pictured below)
- Postcards mailed to surrounding residents (pictured below)
- Door knocking of residences directly adjacent to constructed wetland
- Website updated with information
- Invite and information sent via project newsletter to subscribers
- Event communicated to the area Community Associations and Ward office

The Phase 3 in-person engagement session was attended by 65 people.

The online portal page for engagement had 145 visitors to the page and 14 contributions





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Phase 3 Engagement: Reveal & Preparation for Construction

Following our previous engagement last October, we've made progress in completing the design of the Hanson Ranch Wetland Improvements Project and have hired a contractor.

From August 15 to August 29 visit: engage.calgary.ca/hanson-ranch to learn how we have incorporated your feedback into the design features and to let us know what you think of the design!

Join us for our next pop up event to learn more about the design, construction timeline, impacts, and mitigations from the project team. The Hanson Ranch Wetland Improvements Team will be at:

Holy Trinity Anglican Church
18 Hidden Creek Road N.W.
Date: August 17 Time: 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Holy Trinity Anglican Church is not affiliated with the event.



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What we heard / What we did

Based on the input received in Phases 1 & 2, we presented a What We Heard/What We Did table on the project's portal page for Phase 3.

What We Heard / What We Did

Natural Look and Feel

What we heard: Most people prefer a natural look with native vegetation and no fencing. Some are concerned about maintenance vehicles using the access route.

What we did: We significantly revised the east end design by removing the pier lookout, fencing, and bike racks. This keeps a natural look with gravel trails to benches, while still allowing maintenance vehicle access as required.

Wildlife

What we heard: Some were concerned that infrastructure could reduce wildlife space, while others supported the current design. Overall, people want a balance between social features and preserving the wetlands habitat for wildlife.

What we did: We updated both social areas to include benches with back support and informal boulder seating under trees for shade. To reduce infrastructure, we removed the pier lookout, railing, and bike racks. Maintenance vehicle access is still required for upkeep.

Seating

What we heard: Benches with back support and boulder-style seating were most preferred. Log benches and built-in seating followed, while picnic tables and tree stumps were least favored.

What we did: Based on accessibility feedback, the proposed seating includes mainly benches with back support, along with informal boulder seating at the west end.

Inspiring ideas

What we heard: Some submissions suggested adding a walking platform within the constructed wetland area.

What we did: To provide space for wildlife, maintain a more natural aesthetic, and keep maintenance costs low, this submission was not developed for the final design.

Construction impacts

What we heard: Concerns about the loss of enjoyment and health benefits of the area, noise, dust, traffic and pathway impacts, and disruptions to wildlife were the main items.

What we did: Construction will impact the public in several ways. Please see our section below on "What to Expect During Construction – Impacts and Mitigations".

Amenities

What we heard: Water features, educational signage, and the pier lookout were generally well received. Informal gathering spaces or outdoor classrooms had some support, while bike racks were the least favoured.

What we did: To support a natural aesthetic, the pier lookout, railing, and bike racks were removed. Seating remains for viewing, water features will be included, and educational signage is still being considered. The west-end pathway connection to the regional trail has been improved.

Gathering space

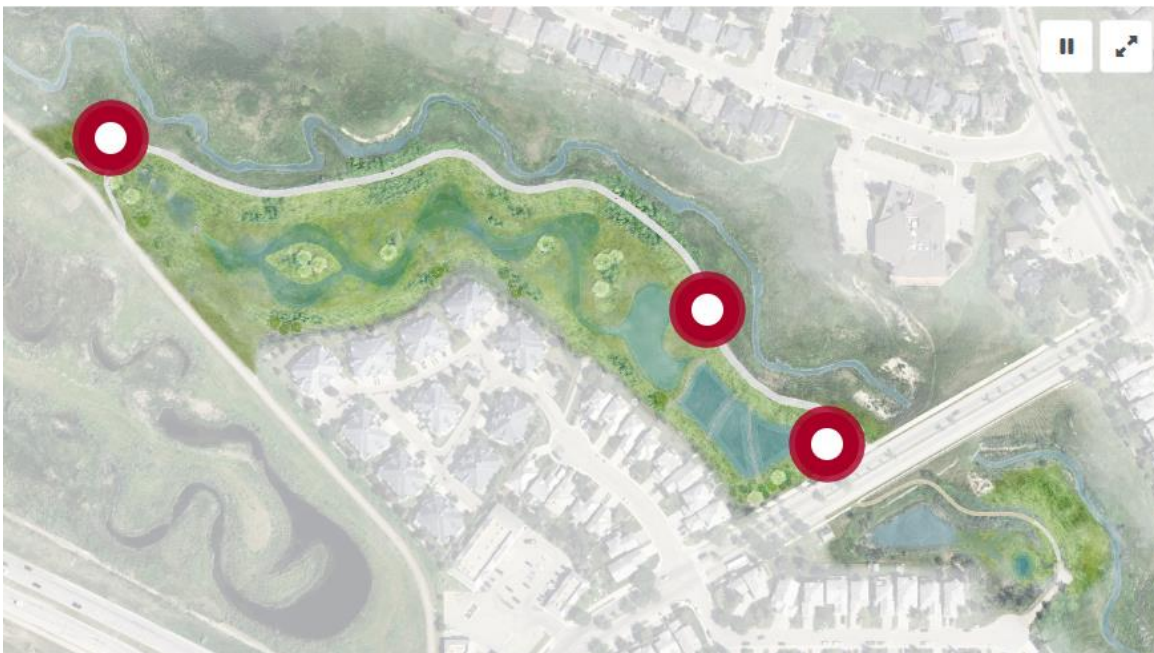
What we heard: Feedback was mixed, but many liked the idea of casual seating for group gatherings. The western area's design was seen as more natural, with gathering spaces located away from the main pathways.


What we did: The west end design was mostly kept, but the terraced seating was simplified to a single bench near the wetland due to concerns. The gathering space remains off the path, with added trees to enhance the natural feel and provide shade.

What we asked

Using a hotspot map, we presented the features and amenities design, and asked:


“What do you think of the final design?”






West area

This location will include accessible seating at key lookout points, an outdoor classroom, and a maintenance vehicle turnaround. This node will be framed by trees and natural vegetation.



Central area

This location is key to the wetlands function. Recirculation pipes from the main pool connect at pumps located here before directing water back to the forebay and polishing marshes. An accessible bench is also located here as a stopping point to look out at the wetland.



East area

This location will have a gravel trail tucked into the slope with benches. The area will have generous tree cover and native vegetation.

What We Heard / Summary of Input

Theme	Sample comment
Positive feedback	<p><i>“Looks awesome, it covers both wetlands, wildlife and the community.”</i></p> <p><i>“I am particularly pleased that an open classroom has been introduced into the final design as I know that community schools do utilize the wetlands for educational opportunities.”</i></p>
Concerns and criticisms	<p><i>“You are doing anything that isn't already there. Why are you taking out the paved pathway? Basically, there are NO improvements whatsoever!! Just reducing what is already there. I see no significant changes. I would like to see the actual outcome of the survey not your outcome. Where is this available? Very disappointed in this study!!!!”</i></p> <p><i>“My concerns are that there will not be enough open water. That the areas with water will dry up by late June / early</i></p>

	<p>July. Then the weeds will infiltrate. I imagine the ‘wetlands’ turning to a weed forest. Not enough open water and not enough expanse of open water: water birds don’t have enough room to take off and land.”</p>
<p>Requests and suggestions</p>	<p>“My only go forward point is to make sure there is plenty of garbage bins along the path for garbage and dog poop, as dog poop has been one of my concerns as I back onto the path and see plenty of poop bags along the path.”</p> <p>“Construction fencing – additional fencing is required between the creek and the houses on the Hidden Creek Road to discourage people from accessing the construction area from this direction.”</p>

In addition to the features and amenities design, we also presented a wetland habitat design:

Click on the flashing hotspot below that shows the different zones to improve the diversity of vegetation, animal habitat, and water quality.





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This map provided details of the following ways the diversity of vegetation, animal habitat, and water quality will be improved:

Upland Habitat Zone: Located above the high-water level, this zone will be characterized by native grasses and perennials. It will provide habitat for nesting birds and wildlife.

Polishing Marshes: Recirculated storm water will enter at the top of the tiered polishing marshes. As water travels down the tiers, it will be filtered and cleaned by the plant material.

Riparian Habitat Zone: This shoreline transition zone occurs just above the normal water line. It contributes to water quality improvement and soil stabilization. It also provides habitat for birds and semi-aquatic wildlife. Habitat features like cobble piles, brush piles, and snags will be built here as well.

Emergent Habitat Zone: Located below the normal water level, this zone has the most capacity to break down and sequester nutrients and contaminants. It provides important nesting habitat for birds and waterfowl.

Main Pool Storm water from the forebay and polishing marshes is directed here after being filtered and cleaned by the wetland.

Forebay Storm water collected from throughout the community is first directed here where sediment can be separated from the water.

South Cell Cleaned/treated water from the main wetland will be directed across Hidden Creek Drive to this south wetland cell before it is directed into West Nose Creek.

Bioengineering at areas where West Nose Creek has been realigned or in need of additional protection, bioengineering methods have been introduced. Plants and other natural materials will be utilized here to protect the slopes from erosion and degradation.



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Lastly, we presented a map on what to expect during construction: Impacts and mitigations. Providing the following details:

Traffic accommodation: We are developing a traffic management plan(s) which will aim to minimize disruption to the public while balancing the need for efficient project execution. We are doing our best to develop plans that limit the amount of travel in residential areas and to minimize road and lane closures. We will be maintaining two-way traffic on Hidden Creek Drive and people should expect alterations to lanes and traffic flow throughout construction.

Dust control: We will have dust mitigation controls in effect in areas close to homes in the event dust becomes an issue.

Noise and odours: There will be noise and diesel exhaust created from excavators, construction truck traffic, water pumps, generators and possibly from organic matter from the existing sediment.

Pathway closure: Due to the various stages of construction that factors in maintaining wildlife habitat, the pathway will be closed from approximately the end of August to spring 2027. Detour signage will be posted, including the alternate route map which will be posted on the project webpage once it is developed.

Community engagement: Our community business relations team will have periodic community engagement through regular liaison and check-ins with residents and businesses during construction.

Wildlife preservation: The project requires a Biophysical Impact Assessment (BIA) which is reviewed and approved under the City of Calgary's framework. The BIA has identified affected wildlife species and habitat, and we are applying their recommended efforts to help mitigate impacts.

Vibration monitoring: We will be using vibration monitoring machines in areas close to homes (less than 20 metres). This ensures vibration from construction is within the acceptable limit.

Next Steps

Engagement for the Hanson Ranch Wetlands Improvement project is now complete. Based on the feedback received throughout the three phases of engagement, and in line with technical, environmental, budgetary, and regulatory requirements – the project team is ready to proceed with upgrading the existing constructed wetland into a fully functioning stormwater pond that meets environmental compliance standards and improves the public realm features on the site. Construction will begin in September 2025 and will take approximately two years to complete. Ongoing updates regarding construction work can be found on the project's webpage [Hanson Ranch Wetland Improvements](#)



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Verbatim Comments

Verbatim comments presented here include all feedback, suggestions, comments and messages that were collected online and in-person through the engagement described in this report. All input has been reviewed and provided to Project Teams to be considered in decision making for the project.

Any personal identifying information has been removed from the verbatim comments presented here. Comments or portions of comments that contain profanity, or that are not in compliance with the [City's Respectful Workplace Policy](#) or [Online Tool Moderation Practice](#), have also been removed from participant submissions.

Wherever possible the remainder of the submissions remains. No other edits to the feedback have been made, and the verbatim comments are as received. As a result, some of the content in this verbatim record may still be considered offensive or distasteful to some readers.

Terrible, Terrible, Terrible.
"You are doing anything that isn't already there. Why are you taking out the paved pathway? Basically there are NO improvements whatsoever!! Just reducing what is already there. I see no significant changes.
I would like to see the actual outcome of the survey not your outcome. Where is this available?
Very disappointed in this study!!!!"
Lovely
In general, I think the addition of the berms breaks up the natural beauty of the pond and looks artificial and ugly. I would prefer a non-visible way of supporting the goals of the project.
Based on the City's track record, my main concern is the execution of the plan. My confidence level that the project will be delivered as presented at the engagement session is very, very low.
During the in-person engagement session on August 17, the detailed project plan was displayed in the room and I was told that it can be found on the project website. I couldn't find it on this or the project webpage.
Overall, I am pleased that the area will be maintained as a wetland, a natural habitat for both plants and wildlife. I had concerns with the initial plans that the concept leaned more towards a park environment and I felt that would do a disservice to the history of the wetlands as well as to the overall environment within our community of Hanson Ranch. I am particularly pleased that an open classroom has been introduced into the final design as I know that community schools do utilize the wetlands for educational opportunities. I urge the project team to find the funds within the budget to include educational signs throughout the entire wetlands as it has both environmental and sociological history that is important to share both with students and visitors. Thank you for sharing the final designs and I look forward to its completion.
looks awesome, it covers both wetlands, wildlife and the community. My only go forward point is to make sure there is plenty of garbage bins along the path for garbage and dog poop, as dog

poop has been one of my concerns as I back onto the path and see plenty of poop bags along the path.
My concerns are that there will not be enough open water. That the areas with water will dry up by late June / early July. Then the weeds will infiltrate. I imagine the 'wetlands' turning to a weed forest. Not enough open water and not enough expanse of open water: water birds don't have enough room to take off and land.
I would like updates on the start and end times of each phase where vibration and disruption will occur so to know what to expect a plan for. Ideally, this can be delivered in electronic format. I live on the back of the pond and would like to schedule another home inspection after a key time in the schedule, so a more detailed timeline would be appreciated.
Construction fencing – additional fencing is required between the creek and the houses on the Hidden Creek Road to discourage people from accessing the construction area from this direction.
Clean up overgrowth where benches are.
Noise fence visualization – how will it look?
Sheet pile wall – when are they scheduled to go in?
Add timeline to the website.
Concerned re: geese fledging inhibited by new water berms.
Emergency plan for evacuating Hanson Ranch during 2-4 months of road closure with concrete barricades on Hidden Creek Drive? Grass fires etc – everyone tries to exit by the same exit instead of closest.
More garbage bins along the pathways.
Western Blueflag Iris?
Pave the pathway
How can we keep people off goat trail?
Worried it will end up a dry pond and full of weeds.
Water area is getting smaller and smaller over the years.
Concerned that ducks and geese haven't enough landing zones.
Cells are not big enough for landing birds.
Spray weeds at nighttime when they are actively growing. Not when it is too late to do it.
More garbage bins.



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