



SOARING LANDS PRE-CONCEPT OPEN HOUSE ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

JUNE 2023

PREPARED FOR:

UA University of Alberta
Properties Trust

PREPARED BY:

DIALOG[®]

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
WHAT WE HEARD	2
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	6
NEXT STEPS	7



INTRODUCTION

The University of Alberta Properties Trust (UAPT) is preparing a conceptual master plan to guide the rezoning and subdivision of the Soaring Lands. The property is a 10-acre site located in the neighbourhood of Brander Gardens at 5440/5450 Whitemud Road.

This report summarizes the feedback received at the Pre-Concept Open House and through the online survey.

EVENT OVERVIEW

UAPT is in the earliest stages of exploring what is possible for the Soaring Lands property. This process includes consultation with the City, policy reviews, technical studies, and engagement with area residents.

The first engagement event, the Pre-Concept Open House, was held on Thursday, June 1, 2023. The event introduced UAPT and the Soaring Lands project, and asked for input to support the creation of a draft vision and feedback to inform the creation of the concepts for redevelopment.

Over 1500 post cards were delivered to all homes and residential units in Brander Gardens and 1300 homes and residential units in Ramsay Heights nearest to the site. Community league social media posts, paid advertisement and written article in Ragg-Times, road signs, and the UAPT website that were also used to advertise the event and invite residents. Over 90 people attended and 10 online survey responses were received.

SOARING LANDS
Pre-Concept Open House

Thursday, June 1, 2023
5:30 pm to 8:00 pm (Drop-In)
Brander Gardens School, Gymnasium
14865 56 Avenue NW

Join us at the pre-concept open house to learn about the project, share ideas, and give input on the draft vision for the Soaring Lands. Your feedback at the pre-concept event will be used to inform the creation of future draft concepts. Draft concepts will not be part of this pre-concept open house.

A second open house is planned for fall 2023 where you will be able to see draft concepts and provide feedback.

For more information about the project, visit and to complete an online survey
www.soaring.site

UA University of Alberta Properties Trust

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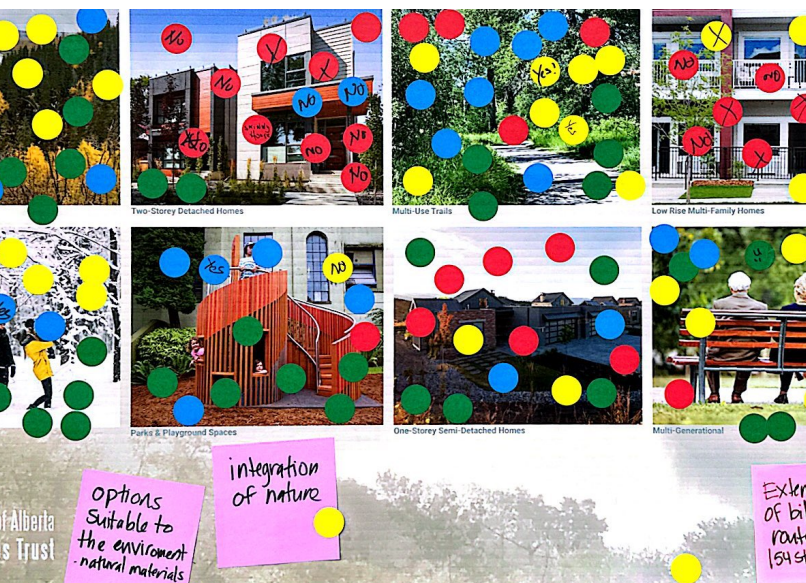


WHAT WE HEARD

Feedback was collected on boards and table maps via sticky notes and in conversation with event facilitators, and/or through the online survey responses. The comments received were reviewed, organized by topic, and qualitatively summarized into common themes. The following is a summary of what we heard from the community

What makes a great neighbourhood? Listed in order of frequency:

- River valley access and views
- Multi-use trails
- All-season design
- Sustainable features
- Multiple generations
- Parks and playground spaces
- One-storey detached homes
- Duplex or fourplex homes
- Two storey detached homes and low rise multi-family homes





What do you imagine is possible for development on the site?

Mix of Residential

- There is interest in residential development with a mix of housing types, including higher-end single family, duplexes, and medium density multi-family.
- There is low support for high-density developments, such as apartments and condominiums, as well as townhomes and “skinny” homes.

Retain Neighbourhood Character

- There is interest in maintaining and enhancing the character of Brander Gardens/ Ramsay Heights including larger lot properties, detached single-family homes, retention/integration of the natural features such as trees on the site, and addition of public access to the river valley via walking trails.
- Comments also included suggestions for architectural guidelines and a desire maintain the quiet nature of Whitemud Road.

Community Park & River Valley Access

- A flexible/multi-use community park with views and access to the river valley network was frequently mentioned as a desired amenity to be incorporated into the development.
- Other suggestions included tennis/pickle ball courts, spray park, dog park, skating rink, retreat centre, restaurant, yoga studio, and geothermal community greenhouse. Some ideas, such as an outdoor swimming pool and nordic spa, may not be possible for properties adjacent to the river valley per City plans and policies.

Views & Connections

- Building on the river valley access, comments indicated support for lookout points and multi-use trails, including along the river valley edge, and continuation of the 154 Street on-street bike route through the site.

Other

- Additional comments indicated lack of support for commercial/retail on the site, concern for traffic congestion at school pick/up drop-off times, questions about capacity of existing infrastructure, and a desire for a public lottery and first option for local residents to purchase.



How do you like to experience the river valley?

Connecting Trails & Green Space

- Walking, hiking, biking, and running along existing trails, using the nearby footbridge and dog parks, boating, paddle boarding, birding, and generally enjoying nature were commonly mentioned as ways in which residents experience the river valley.

Other

- A comment was shared regarding consideration of sight lines to the Soaring Lands from top-of-bank properties across the river to the west.

What kind of homes would you like to see built at Soaring?

A mix of low to medium density single family

- A variety of home types were suggested, ranging from estate homes to detached and semi-detached single-family homes (bungalow and two-storey) to maintain consistency with the homes already on Whitemud Road and support a mix of life stages. Independent living senior's housing was frequently mentioned to support a multi-generational community and aging in place opportunities.
- Like the responses to the question of what could be possible on the site, low density, low rise on larger lots is supported over high density, high rise, or small lot infill development.

Other

- One suggestion included a hospice and a few comments were related to a preferred architectural style or a desire to keep the property undeveloped.



What type of public space would you like to see built at Soaring?

Access to Nature

- Suggestions included a park, natural areas and access to nature, connection to the river valley (via stairs and to tie into the existing trail network), walkways along the top-of-bank with a look-out area and benches (ex. Woodward Crescent across the river), low impact development that works with the existing topography and trees.

Community Gathering

- Emphasis in the comments was on public space for community use with ideas for amenities including a playground, multi-purpose open area, spray park, decorative elements such as a fountain (ex. Alexander Circle), café, restaurant, picnic tables, and community garden to serve the local area.

Other

- One comment suggested keeping the existing fence as a reference to the former property. Another identified the opportunity to honour the Indigenous history of the area.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following is a summary of the frequently asked questions from the pre-concept open house and the responses provided.

What is the University of Alberta Property Trust?

The University of Alberta Property Trust (UAPT) was formed by the University of Alberta to lead the development or redevelopment of lands deemed by the University as not central to its academic mission of teaching and research. Net revenues generated by UAPT are distributed back to the University of Alberta, contributing to its long-term sustainability.

When will concepts be available to the community?

The Pre-Concept Open House was an opportunity for the community to provide input that will be used to prepare a draft vision and create draft concepts. A second public open house is planned for fall 2023.

Will existing traffic congestion around the schools, and on 53 Avenue and Riverbend Road become worse with new development in the area?

A Traffic Impact Assessment is one of the technical studies required by the City of Edmonton as part of an application for rezoning. Additional technical studies relevant to traffic may be required and will be determined through consultation with City Administration.

Have the geotechnical conditions on the site been investigated?

A geotechnical study was completed to determine the existing conditions and identify the top-of-bank line, urban development line, and structure development line which will inform the redevelopment concept for the Soaring Lands.

What is the City of Edmonton's involvement in the project?

The Soaring Lands project is being led by the University of Alberta Property Trust who has been entrusted by the University of Alberta to redevelop the property. Rezoning and subdivision approval from the City of Edmonton is required prior to beginning development on the site.

When will construction begin?

Site development is not anticipated to begin until 2025, at the earliest.

How can I get more information about the Soaring Lands property?

Project updates will be shared on the website: www.soaring.site.



NEXT STEPS

UAPT is in the earliest stages of exploring what is possible for redevelopment on the Soaring Lands property. The development concept will be based on a vision and guiding principles, City of Edmonton plans and policies, the outcome of technical studies, and market conditions.

Public feedback from the Pre-Concept Open House, along with input from other stakeholders and best practices will inform the design of draft concepts for the Soaring Lands. Draft concepts will be shared at the next public engagement event which is planned for Fall 2023.

Please visit the project website www.soaring.site for project updates or to contact the project team at feedback@soaring.site for more information.

PROJECT TIMELINE



Thank you for your interest and participation in the project!



Email: feedback@soaring.site

Website: www.soaring.site

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