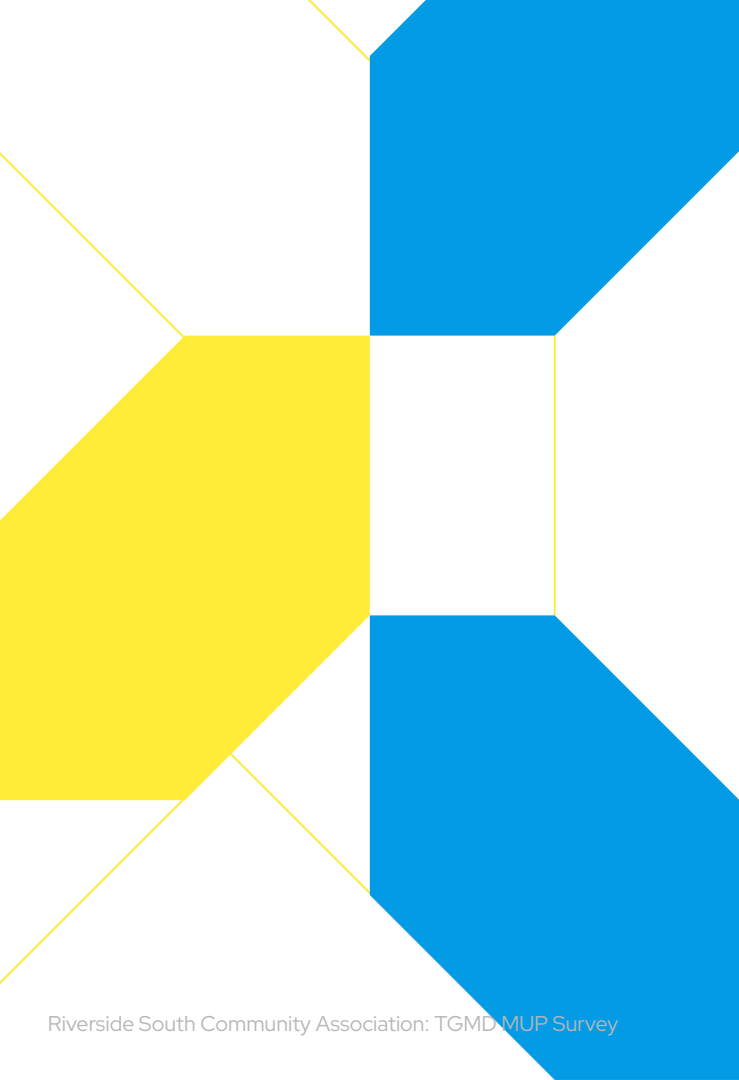




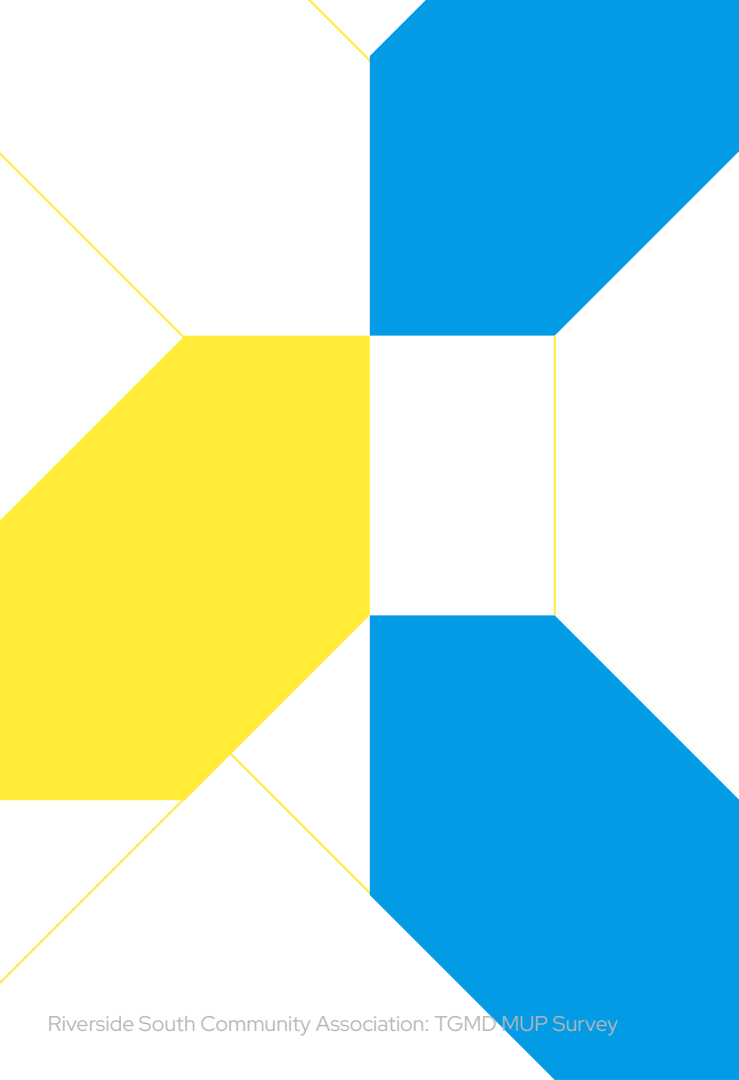
Thomas Gamble Municipal Drain Mixed-Use Pathway Community Survey Results



Background

In late May 2026, a swath of trees and vegetation disappeared from the streets and woodlots located along the Thomas Gamble Municipal Drain in Riverside South. Residents with properties adjacent to the Drain received only about a weeks' notice.

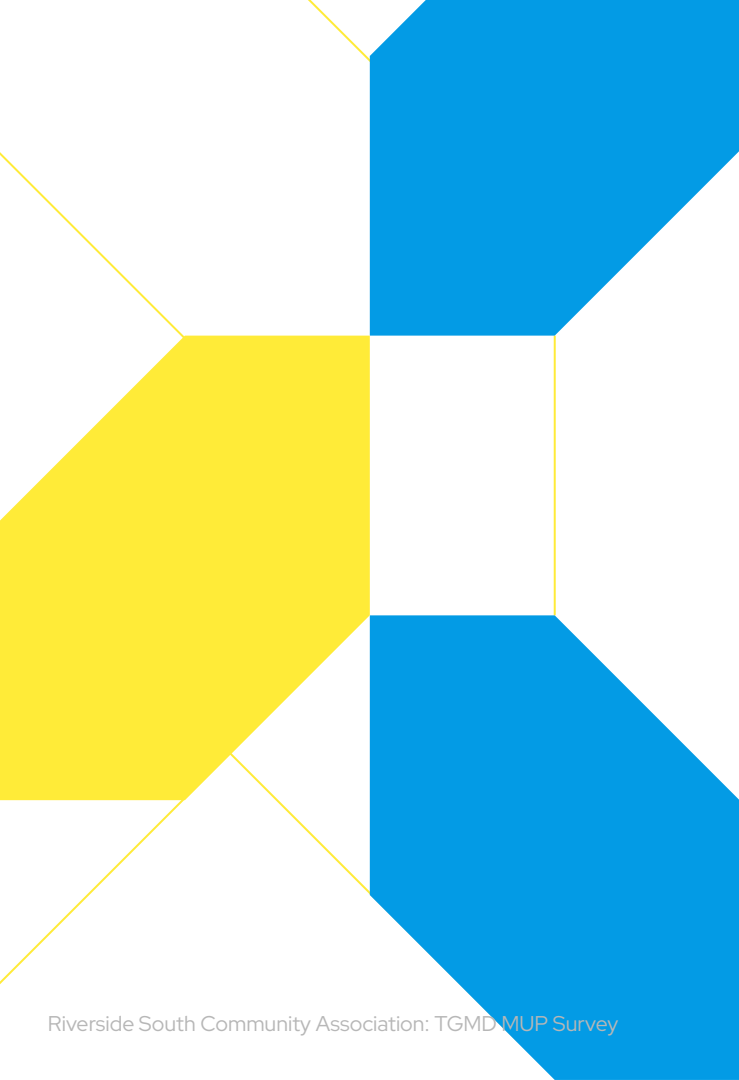
The city later communicated that maintenance work is being conducted on the drain through a contract regulated under the Ontario Drainage Act.



Project Details

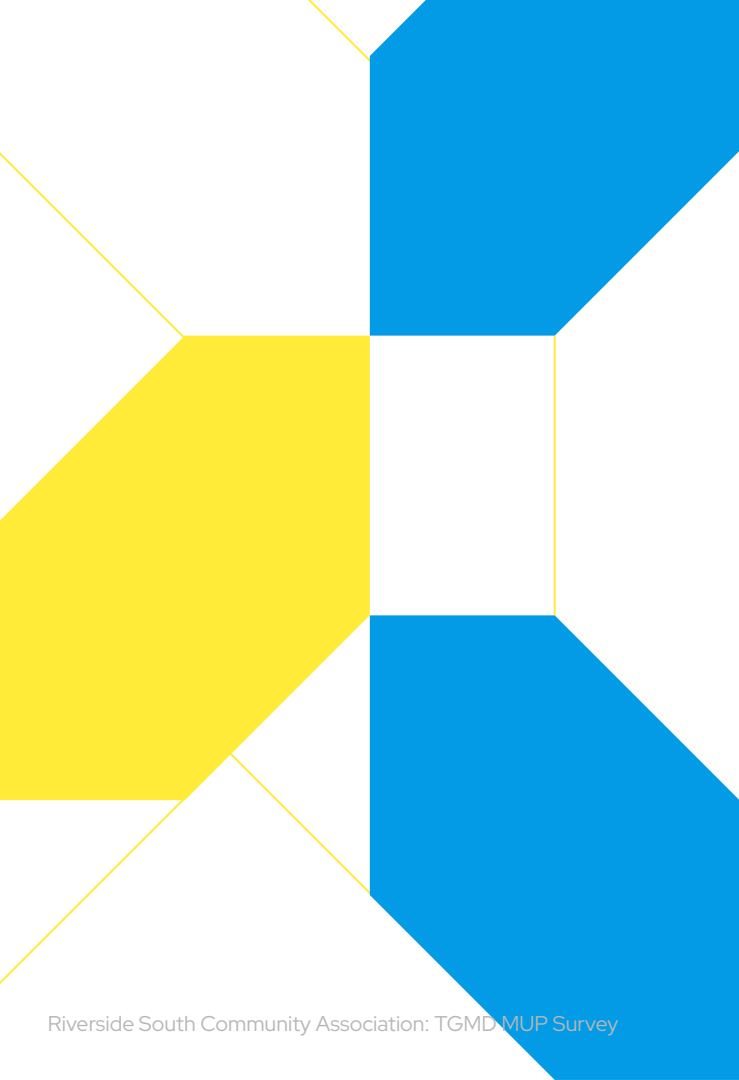
A page on [Engage Ottawa](#) now contains many details on the project. The engineering report found there was submitted to the city's Rural and Agricultural Affairs committee in October 2024.

Details of the drain widening plan can be found in the Thomas Gamble Municipal Drain Presentation.



Maintenance Facts

- Has not happened in 50 years, normally required every 15-30 years
- Drain has flat or negative slope in some places, creating standing water and breeding grounds for mosquitoes
- Goal is to improve capacity and prevent water from pooling, drain will be widened in parts to 12.5m



Maintenance Facts, cont'd

- Expected to return to a “naturalized state” within a year, trees filled back in over a few more years.
- Mature trees and those containing bird nests are preserved as often as possible
- City of Ottawa is not covering the cost of this maintenance project; it is paid by developers and rural landowners
- Similar work will be conducted again in 2-5 decades as required



Survey

The RSCA ran a survey asking community members what they would like to see done from here, with a focus on a planned mixed-use pathway that would require similar vegetation removal to install.

We received 238 responses, 233 of whom live or work in Riverside South.



69.8%

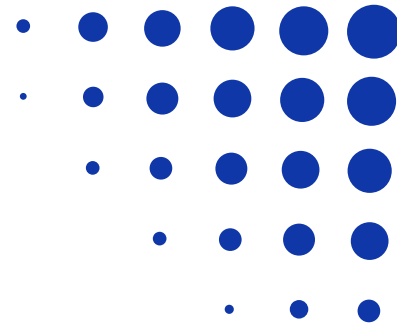
of respondents were very or somewhat concerned
about the loss of vegetation along the municipal drain

9.9% were not concerned

74.5%

were very or somewhat concerned about the
communication from the city

7.3% were not concerned



88.8%

of Riverside South locals would like to see
the mixed-use pathway installed immediately,
while vegetation has already been cleared.



78.1%

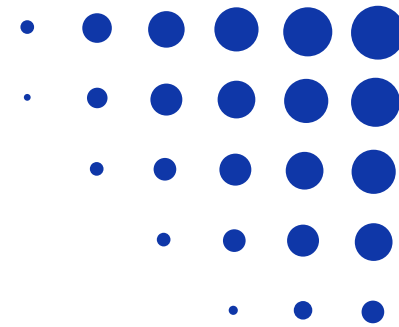
of respondents would use the mixed-use pathway **at least weekly**

12.0% of respondents said they would not use the MUP

81.1%

of respondents would also like to see a **pedestrian bridge** installed at Memorial Grove

6.7% of future MUP users said they would not use this bridge



57.1%

of residents living near the Municipal Drain would welcome the MUP

immediate neighbours made up 18.0% of respondents

(42 people living on Wildmint, Giant Cedars, Sandy Forest, Markdale, Memorial Grove, and Mt. Nebo)

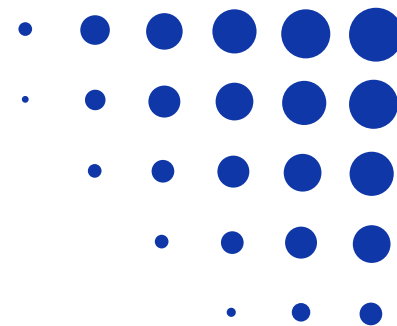


52.4%

of Riverside South locals are not worried about
the condition of the Wildmint Square pedestrian bridge

15.3% of all respondents are very concerned about it, and
23.1% of immediate neighbours are very concerned

Among Councillor Desroches's proposals, most people surveyed just want to see the vegetation replanted.



79.2%

would most like to see enhanced replanting within the corridor

- ☀️ 57.3% want additional naturalization and ecological improvements,
- ☀️ 50.5% would like a better four-season pedestrian bridge,
- ☀️ 36.5% are interested in enhanced habitats like birdhouses & bat boxes, and
- ☀️ only 24.5% would prioritize offset tree planting elsewhere in Riverside South

Environment

Many concerns raised were environmental, about the loss of tree canopy and habitat

“Hopefully there is a focus on native plants and restoration. Not just dropping sedge grass and calling it remediation ”

“The clearing of the trees is absolutely awful”

“Disappointed that SO much of the forest on the south side of Earl Armstrong is being cut down. It’s incredibly disappointing and should be revisited. ”

“Please keep as much natural forest as possible. Thank you!”

“Do better than what they did at the little creek by the school where they decimated the trees and wildlife habitats. I take daily walks and was horrified to see the damages done. They could have used a smaller backhoe ”

“Naturalization without replanting proper native plants, is an invitation for invasive species to take hold. We are losing habitat every day, we can’t afford to lose more.”

Communication

Residents were also quite disappointed with the project communication

"While I understand that the drain work is needed, it was very poorly communicated to residents which caused anger, confusion and misinformation to be spread. "

"The work on the Thomas Gamble drain was very poorly communicated and misleading. We are devastated by the destruction behind our house. It will take years before there is any vegetative regeneration."

"The lack of proper consultation or information on the extent of the clear cutting and drain extension is unacceptable, especially for those of us who back onto the wooded lot."

"Extremely disappointed with the lack of communication regarding this project. Hundreds of mature trees were clear cut and a giant mess has been made starting on Wildmint. Hopefully trees will be planted and the city will take care of them until they are established to replace the ones that were taken down."

"Unless I missed something in the mail, I'm shocked by how poor the communication was with the community about this work. I realize that storm drains are very important for the safety of homes in the area, but clearcutting in today's environment seems irresponsible and I was shocked to see the removal of mature trees in this area which it is already lacking. Mature trees protect against erosion, maintain cooler temperatures in the area, and provide habitat, not to mention provide enjoyment for those who enjoy the outdoors."

MUP Excitement

Residents are eager to see
an improvement to the
local trail network

"We need to prioritize more paths and greenery on the south side of Earl Armstrong asap"

"The overall connectivity of the community through MUPs needs to be improved. I look forward to bike paths being implemented whenever new construction is under way to grow the network so that more people are encouraged to walk or bike."

"The MUP should absolutely be completed as drawn in the decades old RSS planning documents."

"This is small but important step to improving safe cycling routes in Riverside South."

"We need better paths and paved in the community for bikes etc"

"Why not a multi use path that connects Limebank station to Bowesville station? Cycling on Earl Armstrong east of Limebank is extremely dangerous."

"The new subdivision south of Earl Armstrong does very little to contribute to the community. Everyone touts the trails in RSS, but they exist almost explicitly in the original development. If the builders want to use the trails as a "selling" point, than an additional network should be incorporated in the new build. This trunk/multi use path will allow that to be connected."

Thank You

Your engagement with this project will help ensure city communication and suburban stormwater management practices evolve in a way that respects our community.

Learn more on the [Engage Ottawa page](#) for this project.

Text comments and raw data from the survey have been shared with city staff and Councillor Desroches.



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