

A Reimagined Future

North Maple Regional Park Master Plan

Volume 1 2026

NMRP VAUGHAN 2

Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that the City of Vaughan is situated in the Territory and Treaty 13 lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and the Haudenosaunee. The City of Vaughan is currently home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit people today. As representatives of the people of the City of Vaughan, we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and live in this territory.

North Maple Regional Park Master Plan

Volume 1 2026

Prepared by

O2 Planning and Design

NMRP VAUGHAN O2

Acknowledgments and Contributions

The North Maple Regional Park Master Plan represents a collaborative effort. A special thanks to City of Vaughan Council and staff, professional consultants, community members and many interested contributors.

Your expertise, insights and commitment are an integral part of this journey and the development of North Maple Regional Park.

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- City of Toronto
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- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Age-Friendly Vaughan Advisory Committee
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- York Major Holdings Inc.

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Technical Volumes

Volume 2: Landfill Restoration Engineering
Volume 3: Civil Engineering
Volume 4: Transportation
Volume 5: Cultural Heritage Research Report
Volume 6: Ecological Framework Plan
Volume 7: Business Plan
Volume 8: Management and Operations Plan

Executive Summary



Rendering of future realized vision

Imagine standing at the highest point of what was once North America's third largest landfill, now gazing across 900 acres of rolling meadows, restored wetlands, and emerging forests.

This is North Maple Regional Park—a testament to the power of community vision, environmental stewardship, and the remarkable ability of nature to heal.

The Park's Past

North Maple Regional Park tells an extraordinary story of transformation. Located in the City of Vaughan on the Oak Ridges Moraine—one of the most ecologically significant landforms in southern Ontario and a vital source of clean water for the region—the park sits at the headwaters of the Don River. For thousands of years, Indigenous peoples gathered at these headwaters, hunting, fishing, and caring for the land. European settlers arrived in the 1800s, clearing forests for farmland and building stone houses, one of which still exists today.

By the mid-20th century, the landscape had shifted again—first to sand and gravel extraction in the 1950s (known then as the Avondale Lands), then to waste disposal as the Vaughan Township Landfill Site opened in 1965 and the Keele Valley Landfill Site opened in 1983. Today, the park's 900 acres are formed by a collection of contiguous land parcels that include the former landfill sites, adjacent woodlots and valley lands, and a frontage along Keele Street—each carrying its own layered history of use and change. But this story does not end with waste. It begins anew with the passionate advocacy of residents who refused to accept that their community's legacy would be defined by a landfill. Led by Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. (the Committee of Associations to Restore Environmental Safety, established in 1988) neighbours organized, protested, and dreamed of something better. Through years of sustained advocacy, community voices helped secure the landfill's closure in 2002, and their vision began to become a reality: transform this scarred landscape into a magnificent public park for future generations.

The Park Today

Today, visitors can already enjoy winding trails alongside wetlands and forests, sports fields, and many other amenities that serve as a gathering place for the community.

But this is only the beginning. Over the coming decades, the park is planned to evolve into a nationally significant destination guided by three core principles: **restore** the land through ecological renewal, **engage** the community through shared learning and cultural celebration, and invite everyone to **play** in spaces designed for discovery, recreation, and wonder.

Our Master Plan

As you explore the Master Plan, you'll discover how a community's determination, combined with environmental science and innovative design, is creating something unprecedented. From the Indigenous stories that anchor our connection to the past, to the observation tower that will offer breathtaking views, every element has been carefully planned to honour both the land's complex history and its promising future.

Welcome to North Maple Regional Park, where every trail tells a story of transformation, and every visit connects you to the ongoing journey from waste to wonder.

The Master Plan at a Glance

Park Vision

Create a signature park focused on activities related to restoring nature, sharing culture, promoting active living and building community.

Overarching Purpose

The Master Plan will guide the ongoing transformation of 900 acres into an extraordinary destination that restores the land, engages the community, and invites everyone to play.

What's in the Master Plan

Volume 1: Overarching Master Plan

Key Strategies: Core approaches for specific topics

Technical Volumes: Seven volumes with detailed plans, guidelines, and requirements to support future design and implementation

Guiding Pillars

Restore

Ecological and cultural restoration are at the heart of the vision for The park. The park promotes biodiversity, climate resilience, environmental awareness and education.

Engage

The park will connect and build community. It is the legacy of a group of Vaughan residents determined to reclaim the former landfill sites into a place of culture, social gathering, learning and nature exploration for all.

Play

The park will inspire fun and curiosity year-round. Immersed in nature, the park is a place for passive and active recreation for all with diverse opportunities for play and learning from playgrounds to sports facilities, interpretive walks and trail networks.

The Story of North Maple Regional Park

Time immemorial	1800s-2002	1988-2026	2026 and Beyond
Indigenous Presence	**Settlement & Industry**	**Advocacy & Creation**	**Transformation & Legacy**
Indigenous peoples gathered at the headwaters and cared for the land	European settlement, sand and gravel extraction, major landfill operations	Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. advocates for landfill closure, catalyzing park creation	Master Plan guides transformation into a landmark destination park

How to Read The Master Plan

Volume 1: Grounded in Story and Place

North Maple Regional Park has a compelling story of transformation that weaves together themes of ecology, industry, culture, advocacy and community. The Master Plan is a document that reflects the journey of this special place, the process that led to the park today and a 25-year picture of the future. To capture and communicate this vision, **Volume 1** is a main overarching document crafted with storytelling, vision and key strategies.

Welcome to North Maple Regional Park

In this chapter, learn about the park site, the history, the park today and the unique partners and stakeholders that connect to the site and the project.

Restore, Engage and Play

In these chapters, start by reading a visionary story of the future and a "day in the life". Learn about programs, activities and site amenities that reflect the intent behind each pillar.

Movement and Circulation

This chapter is about getting to and around the park. It includes strategies for arrival, vehicle circulation, parking and non-vehicle circulation, including trail networks and multi-modal travel.

Park Experience

To support park development, a network of functional site systems is needed. This chapter includes key strategies for materiality, signage and wayfinding, park structures and buildings, lighting and water.

The Future

This chapter focuses on phasing, implementation, business planning and costing, governance and management and operations of the park.

Look for me!

Throughout the Master Plan, there are repeated elements and callout boxes:



Key Strategies

Core approaches to achieve master plan goals and pillars



Public Engagement

Learn about public feedback and how it was integrated.

Volumes 2-8: Technical Guidelines and Knowledge Base

To provide the specific details and clear direction needed to implement the vision in Volume 1, the Master Plan includes seven more volumes (Volumes 2-8). These technical volumes provide design guidelines and a basis of design for civil engineering, transportation, ecology, cultural heritage, business and management and operations.

Some Technical Volumes are confidential and may be provided upon request to qualified parties. For inquiries, email nmrp@vaughan.ca.



Welcome to North Maple Regional Park



Conceptual rendering of central activity area with conservatory, gardens, and sports pavilion

Introduction



Park sports fields, pavilion and parking lot

At 364 hectares (900 acres) North Maple Regional Park is Vaughan's most ambitious park development to date—a 900-acre landscape transformation spanning former landfill sites, significant ecological features, and heritage properties.

This chapter provides essential context for understanding the site's complexity and opportunity.

The park's story extends beyond natural features. North Maple Regional Park is larger than Toronto's High Park and comparable to New York's Central Park. Its position on the Oak Ridges Moraine at the headwaters of the Don River gives it regional ecological significance. It encompasses a complex history of agricultural settlement, industrial extraction, landfill operations, and community-led environmental advocacy that ultimately secured closure and restoration.

The Master Plan integrates this diverse context—from regulatory requirements for two separately-managed closed landfills and coordination with the other governmental authorities, to connections adjacent residential communities and future transit-oriented development. Throughout the following chapter, these contextual elements inform specific design strategies, ensuring the park serves both ecological restoration and community recreation goals.

The Existing Site

The park consists of various land parcels that encompass diverse ecological, cultural, recreational, and infrastructural elements shaped by both natural geography and decades of human intervention.

Park Size Comparison



High Park - Toronto
161 hectares (398 acres)



Central Park - New York
341 hectares (843 acres)



NMRP - Vaughan
364 hectares (900 acres)

Oak Ridges Moraine

The park is part of the Oak Ridges Moraine, a significant natural feature and source of water for the region. It is home to thousands of unique species and provides clean water that flows into nearby watersheds and rivers.

160 km
from Trent River to Niagara Escarpment

1,000+
unique plant species

1,900 sq km
of land across Southern Ontario

65 rivers
connect within the Don River Watershed

Key Site Features

Vaughan's most ambitious park currently has:

- Significant ecological features
- Heritage building
- Sports fields and amenities
- Parking, a pavilion and washrooms
- Open space and pathway system

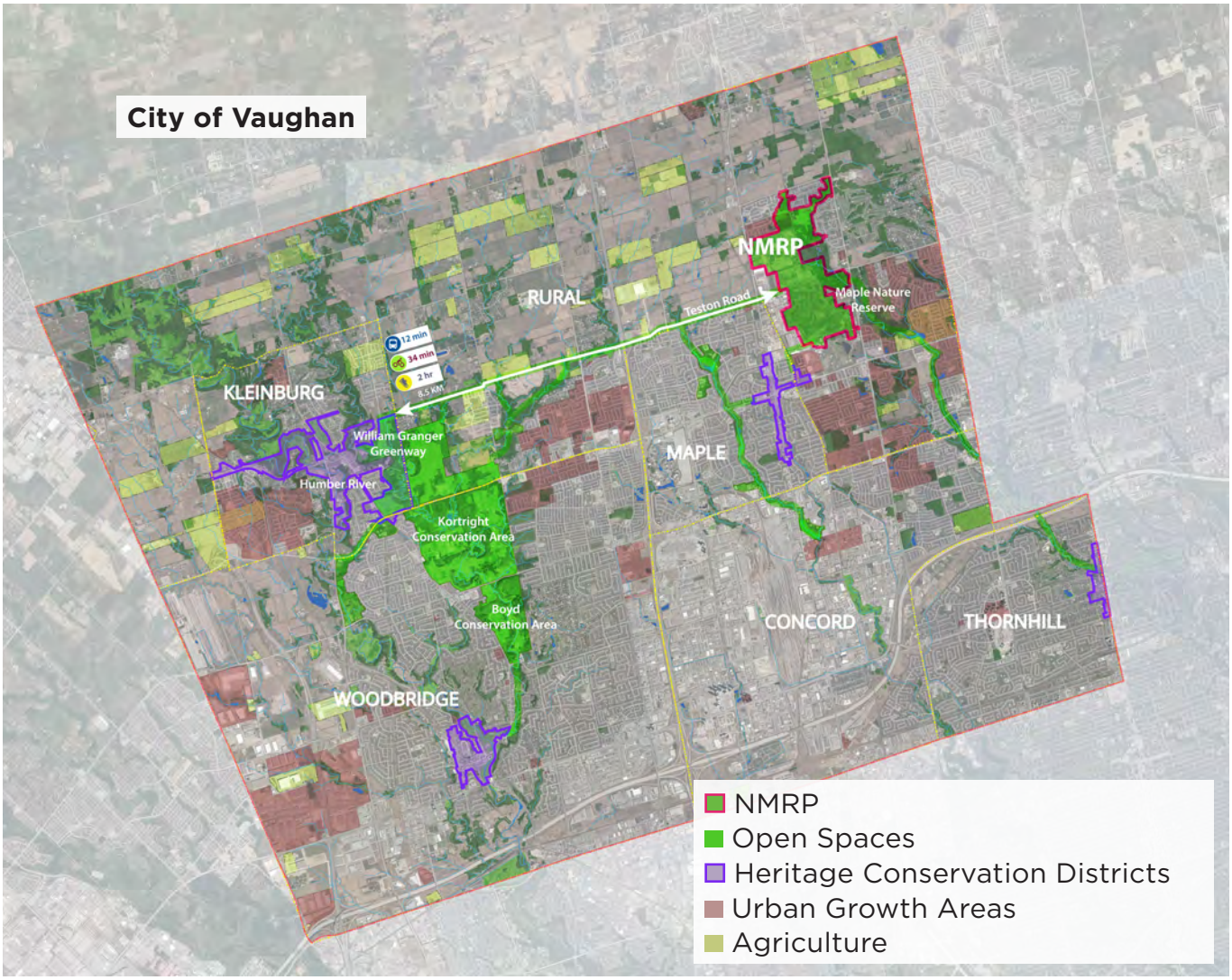
Park Components



- Vegetated Areas
  87 hectares (216 acres)
- Open Space
  81 hectares (200 acres)
- Former Landfills (currently closed to public)
  196 hectares (484 acres)

364 hectares (900 acres)

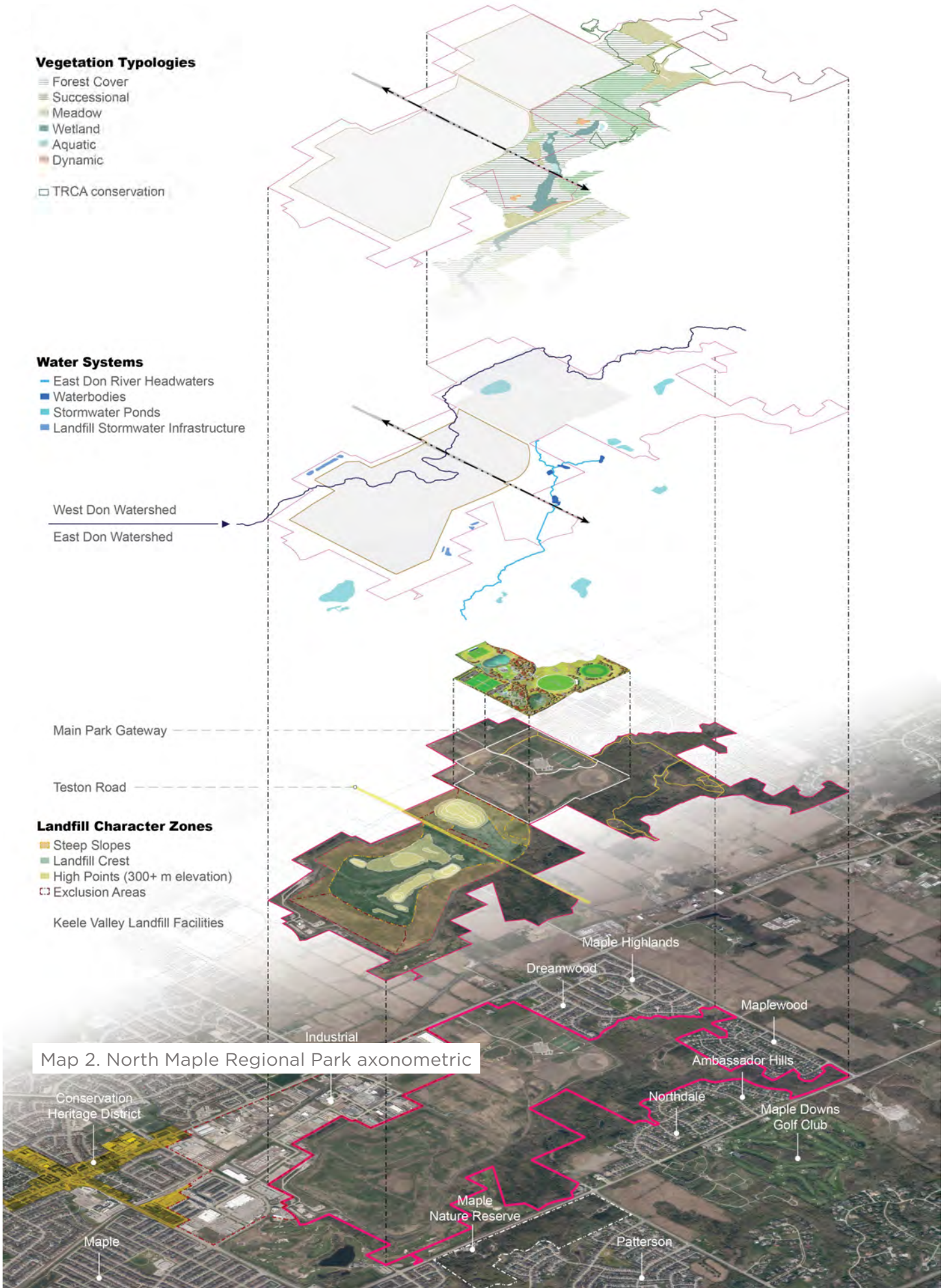
Urban Context



Map 1. City Map: Land use types

North Maple Regional Park will have a profound affect on the City of Vaughan, beyond park boundaries. The site will be a foundational component of the city, guiding social, economic and environmental objectives, while also, preserving valuable ecosystems.

Understanding the context at a broader scale provides a better sense of how the design of the park should be woven into the existing urban and environmental fabric of Vaughan and, more importantly, highlights new possibilities. Looking through this city-scaled lens informs park design and situates the site within a larger frame. This not only improves the experience of the park, but it also leverages the park's influence as a springboard for future opportunities and projects.



Map 2. North Maple Regional Park axonometric

Site History

North Maple Regional Park is a unique site shaped as much by people as by land.

The landscape of North Maple Regional Park has been shaped by natural and human forces over thousands of years. Situated on the Oak Ridges Moraine at the headwaters of the Don River, the site carries deep ecological and cultural significance that long predates European settlement.



Protected Oak Ridges Moraine



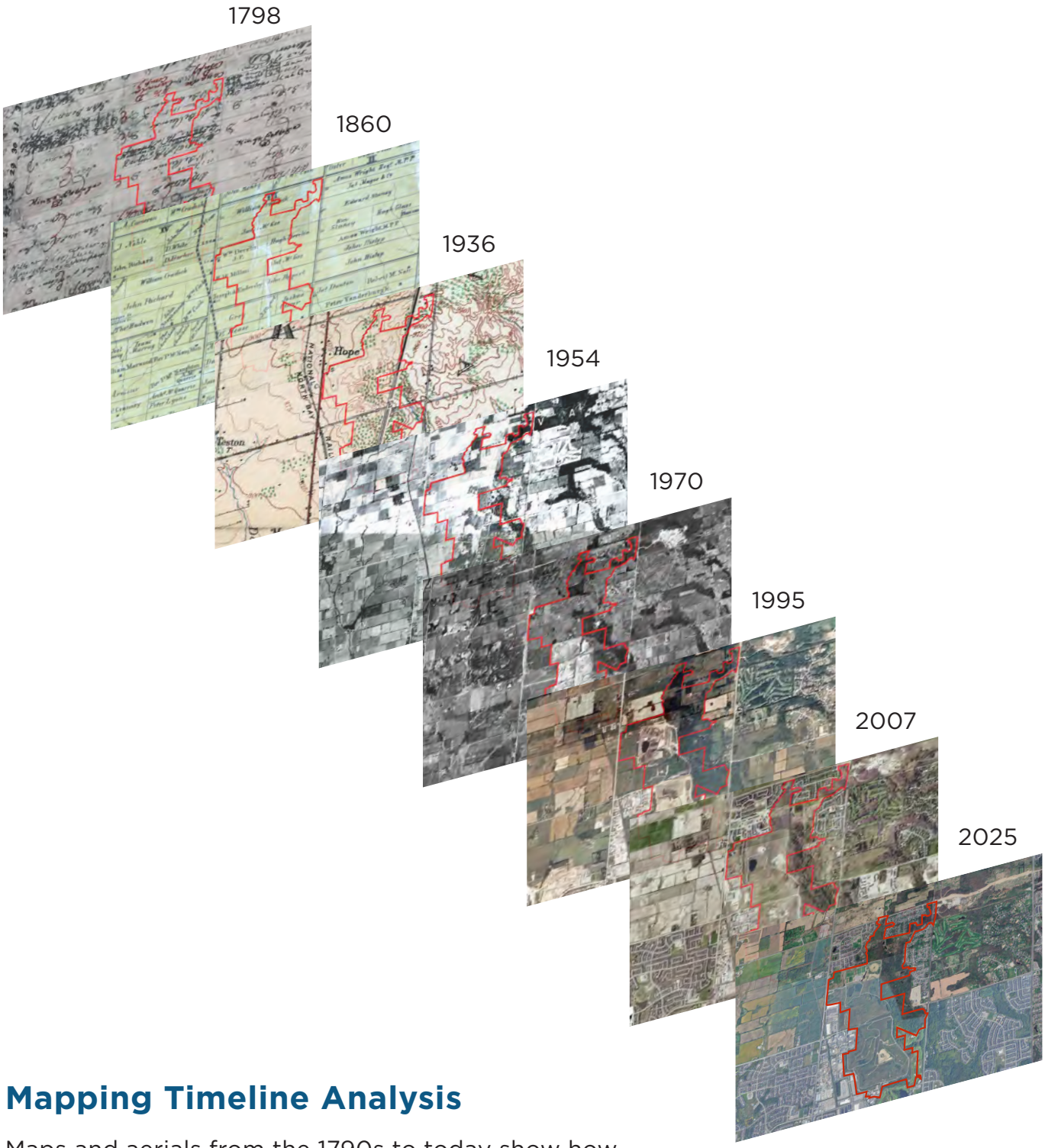
Archaeological digs conducted from earth 19th century to present day

Following deglaciation around 11,000 BCE, Indigenous peoples inhabited the region, hunting, fishing, and gathering across a dynamic post-glacial landscape. This presence is evidenced by the Hope Site, a late Iroquoian village dating to circa 1400–1450 CE, where 13 longhouses and thousands of artifacts were uncovered just north of the current park.

Following British acquisition of Vaughan Township lands from the Mississaugas in 1787, European settlers cleared land for agriculture. By the 1837 census, all lots within the study area were occupied, supporting farming operations producing wheat, livestock, fruit, and timber. Community institutions, including Hope Methodist Church and Hope School, took root through the mid-1800s. A tangible remnant of this era survives in the Devlin/ Cook House at 11151 Keele Street, a two-storey Georgian fieldstone farmhouse built circa 1852–1859, recognized under the Ontario Heritage Act and associated with two prominent early settler families who contributed to founding local schools, churches, and the Maple Women's Institute.



Devlin/Cook House, 11151 Keele Street, Heritage Property



Series of historical mappings

Mapping Timeline Analysis

Maps and aerials from the 1790s to today show how human activity reshaped this landscape. Farming, roads, and railways enabled later industrial uses, including gravel pits and landfills, followed by residential growth.

After landfill closure driven by community activism, large-scale remediation in the early 2000s transformed disturbed land into rolling hills, trails, sports fields, and a publicly accessible community park.

Historical Periods



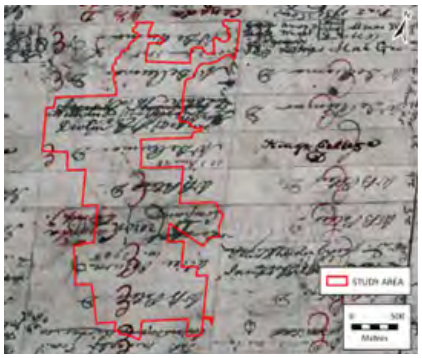
11,000 - 13,000 years ago,
Paleo Period



3,000 - 11,000 years ago,
Archaic Period



600 - 3,000 years ago,
Woodland Period



1600 - 1800
Post-Contact Period



1800 - 1840
European Settlement



1860 - 1950
Agricultural Landscape



1950 - 2000
A New Era Begins
on the Landscape



2001 - 2026 Vision for North Maple Regional Park

Park Timeline

Time immemorial

Indigenous village settlements surround East Branch of the Don River.

1600-1790

British government acquire the area of Vaughan Township from the Mississaugas in 1787.

1800-1950

Agricultural use producing crops, cattle, sheep, and pigs.

1950s

Increased immigration after WWII resulting in suburban development and population growth.

1950-1960

Sand and gravel extraction in south site active until replaced by landfills in 1960s.

1960-1990

Significant parcels of the site were used for landfill waste disposal.

1988

Vaughan Committee of Associations to Restore Environmental Safety (C.A.R.E.S.) is established.

1996-2000s

City of Vaughan established. Fastest growing municipality in Canada from 1996-2006.

2000-2010

Avondale Lands used for Keele Valley Landfill Site base liner and cover material, then leaf and yard waste composting.

2002

Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. advocates for landfill closure; Keele Valley Landfill Site closes.

2003-2013

NMRP concept created, leading to signature park as culture and recreation destination.

2018

Phase 1 construction complete including sports fields, pavilion, temporary trails and parking.

2021

The City honours contributions of Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. to the park, naming the park's main road as Vaughan CARES Way.

2022-2025

Major improvements and expansion of park trails including restoration, paving, site furnishings and programming.

Present

The City is advancing a comprehensive community engagement and master planning process for the entire site as park development continues.

Indigenous Presence

North Maple Regional Park sits within a landscape with deep Indigenous roots. Acknowledging the First Nations whose histories, cultures, and ongoing ties shape this territory is fundamental to the park's planning, design, and programming.

North Maple Regional Park sits within a landscape shaped by over 10,000 years of Indigenous presence. The archaeological records reveals former First Nations village sites found throughout the area, many still resting beneath the ground.



Map 3. The Toronto Carrying Place map



Huron-Wendat Daily Life, painting by Lewis Parker, 1968-1974

The Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas of the Credit are among the peoples with deep and enduring ties to this territory. They had a meaningful living relationship with the land, expressed through agriculture, trade, governance, and care of the land. The Toronto Carrying Place was one of the longest portage routes in North America, at 45 km long. The exact route of the trail remains unknown due to erasure, which is why the acknowledgment and narrative drawings are critical in portraying this legacy.

The Huron-Wendat Nation are an ancient Iroquoian people whose ancestral territory, Nionwentsïo, meaning "our beautiful land", extended across what is now southern Ontario and beyond. Agricultural practices including planting, tending, and harvesting crops influences their diet and travel patterns which have been archaeologically documented in the broader region, reflecting sophisticated systems of land management, community organization, and ecological knowledge.

The park will integrate Indigenous voices, traditional knowledge and oral histories as primary sources in the development of interpretive programming. Indigenous peoples are storytellers of land, history, relationships and resilience. Design and interpretive themes that reflect these truths are meaningful steps towards reconciliation.

Guided by Indigenous Voices

Engaging Indigenous communities is a vital part of shaping the future of North Maple Regional Park. These conversations reflect a commitment to building respectful relationships, honouring Indigenous knowledge, and ensuring the voices of First Nations are meaningfully included in planning decisions. By listening and learning, we create opportunities for collaboration that strengthen the cultural, environmental and social value of the park now and for generations to come.

Engagement Process

Engagement sessions with First Nations focused on how the park could reflect Indigenous knowledge and values. Participants shared teachings, asked questions about the park plans, and offered guidance on ecological restoration approaches, cultural connections to the land, and opportunities for ceremony and community gathering. Suggestions included incorporating Indigenous elements into signage, wayfinding, public art, interpretive panels, community gardens, and playground design.

Indigenous Voices

Throughout the Master Plan, look for this callout to see opportunities for integrating Indigenous knowledge and perspectives.

Ongoing Commitment

Meaningful Indigenous engagement is an ongoing process that will continue throughout the park's development and beyond. To see opportunities for Indigenous storytelling, refer to **Interpretive Themes and Stories** section within the **Engage** chapter.

Learnings and Reflections

Land & Ecology

- Restore the land to resemble pre-settlement Southern Ontario
- Protect rivers and natural habitats for native fish and wildlife
- Plant native species with care

Cultural Relationship to the Land & Knowledge Systems

- Land is kin, not a resource—we should be caretakers, not stewards
- Bloodline flows through water
- Future materials and storytelling will take time to develop

Wellbeing, Community, & Ceremony

- Nature offers calm and healing, even in the city
- The event lawn would be ideal for hosting ceremonies

Recent History

A Resilient Park

The lands that now form North Maple Regional Park have undergone one of the most remarkable environmental transformations in the Greater Toronto Area. From industrial degradation to community-led restoration, the park's recent history reflects the power of sustained advocacy and collective vision.

Beginning in the 1950s, known as the Avondale Lands, sand and gravel extraction reshaped much of the study area. As pits were exhausted, they gave way to landfill operations: the Vaughan Township Landfill Site opened in 1965 and closed in 1984, followed by the Keele Valley Landfill Site, which began operations in 1983 and was once the largest landfill in Canada. For surrounding communities, the environmental and public health toll was significant.









Keele Valley Landfill photographs (1989, Images courtesy of the City of Vaughan Archives, Office of the City Clerk, City of Vaughan)

In 1988, residents formed Vaughan C.A.R.E.S., the Committee of Associations to Restore Environmental Safety, a grassroots coalition that united neighbours, environmental groups, and ratepayers in opposition to landfill expansion and its impacts on the Don River watershed. Through years of public hearings, demonstrations, and sustained policy advocacy, Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. helped secure the landfill's closure in 2002, marking a pivotal moment in community-led environmental action.

What followed was an extraordinary transformation. Phase 1 of park development launched between 2013 and 2016, with construction of soccer fields, a pavilion, parking, and trails beginning in 2017. Phase 2, beginning in 2022, expanded the vision further, remediating former landfill lands, restoring natural systems, and redefining the landscape as an accessible, ecologically-rich regional park. The recognition of Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. through commemorative naming and interpretive storytelling within the park ensures that this legacy of citizen stewardship remains embedded in the park's identity for generations to come.





Keele Valley Landfill Site Closure, Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. (2002 Images courtesy of the City of Vaughan Archives, Office of the City Clerk, City of Vaughan)



Community Advisory Committee Hikeshop (November 2025)



Wetland restoration (2025)



Wildlife habitat structures (2025)

Park Identity & Exploration

Evolution of Place

Building on its original inception, today's long-term vision stayed true to its roots—to create a special place where recreation, culture and nature meet.

Originally, lands subject to the Maple Valley Plan (2000, Official Plan Amendment #535) was formed from a collection of individual initiatives to develop and enhance parcels of land in north Vaughan consisting of open space, former landfills and environmentally sensitive areas.

This plan and implementation strategy established a framework to start this long-term "healing process" to rehabilitate and integrate this area into the Vaughan community after so many years of damage and negative environmental impacts caused from former uses.

Formed from a series of vision statements addressing a variety of major themes—parks and open space, environmental stewardship, leisure and recreation, education and interpretation, community integration and accessibility and land use options—the purpose and main objectives were to:

- Transform this entire area into a destination that responds to and complements the surrounding character of the site;
- Develop a park with unique and recognizable character which fosters creativity, imagination and exploration; and
- Develop a balanced park which offers both active and passive uses for enjoyment of all ages and abilities; recognizing the city's growing population and multicultural demographic.

Early iterations of planning have since evolved to become what is known today as the expanded vision, which is more representative of the park's greater purpose—to create a signature park focused on activities related to restoring nature, sharing culture, promoting active living and building community, whose development is guided by the three pillars of **Restore**, **Engage** and **Play.**

The Park Today

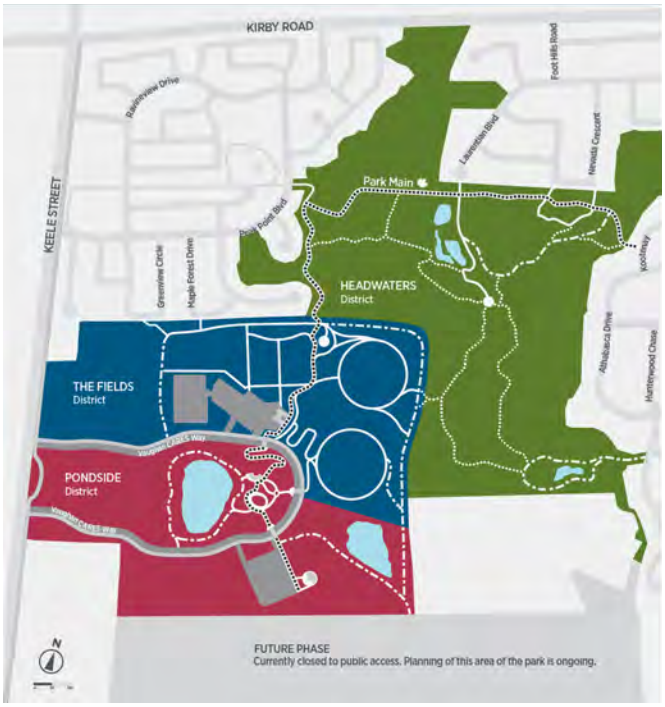
In 2026, over 80 hectares (200 acres) of parkland is open to the public featuring many existing amenities and others planned for construction.

Set to be one of Canada's largest urban parks, the first three park districts are being introduced to support top level wayfinding in the park and to identify the character of emerging key areas.

- **The Fields District** consists of a pavilion, cricket grounds, soccer fields, a sports dome and the major event and multi-use lawn, Woodside Green.
- **Headwaters District** is located in the most northern area of the park, that includes trails and existing woodlots. It is home to the headwaters of the Don River.
- **Pondside District** is a natural oasis and family recreation area around the park's largest pond and provincially significant wetlands. It features a nature playground, water play areas, a skate trail in the winter, the Grand Pavilion for large group gatherings, and a walking trail around the pond.

The park has a dedicated North Maple Regional Park Program team comprised of members from Facilities and Parks Delivery and the Parks, Forestry, Horticulture and Operations departments. They are responsible for the ongoing planning, development, management and operations of the park.

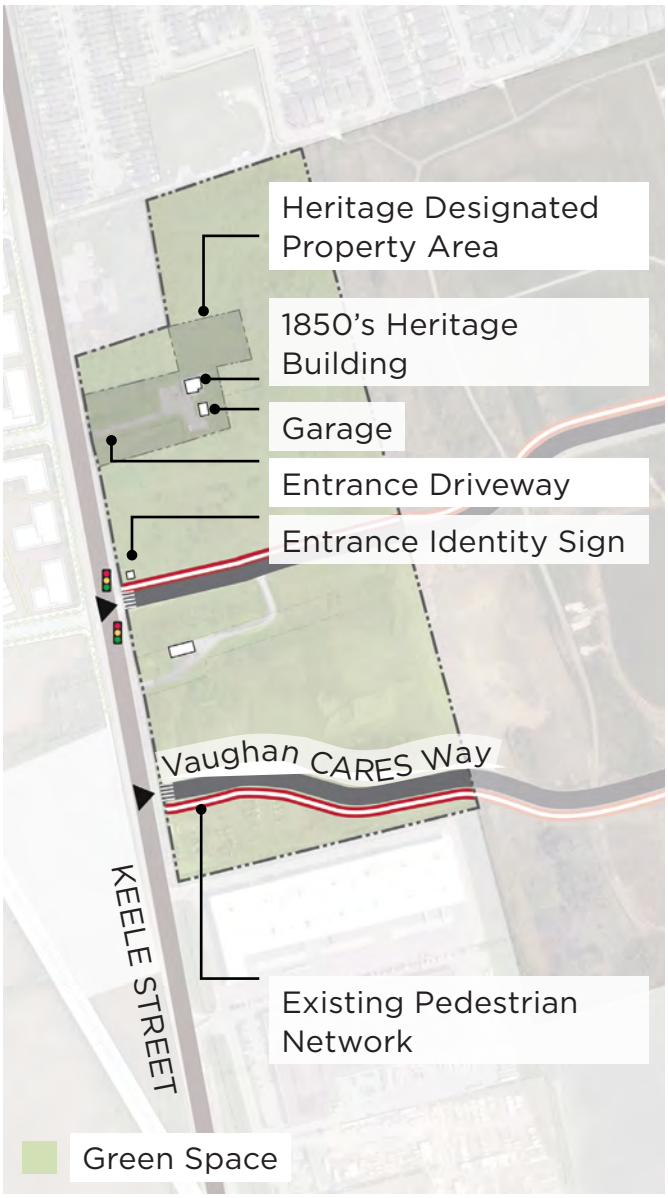
The current management and operations approach will evolve as the park matures and grows. For more information, refer to the Management and Operations section within **The Future** chapter, and **Technical Volume 8: Management and Operations Plan**.



Map 4. Park wayfinding districts naming and identity (2026)

The Gateway to the Park

The park's Keele Street frontage presents a unique opportunity to blend private sector innovation with public parkland values.



Map 5. Key existing features of the Public-Private Partnership lands (2026)

Understanding the site: Keele Street Frontage

As the gateway to the park, the Keele Street Frontage creates the first impression for visitors and sets the tone for their park experience. Exploring public-private partnership opportunities at this location can help define the urban edge, providing unique program and amenity that define the park edge and provide a transition zone from residential and industrial areas. Development in this zone is planned for the short to medium term (0-10 years). For guidance on the arrival experience at the park, refer to the Edges and Arrival section in **Movement and Circulation.**

Public-Private Partnerships

A public-private partnership is a collaborative arrangement between the government and the private sector to develop, finance, and operate infrastructure or services. At the park, public-private partnership lands offer an opportunity to leverage private sector expertise and investment while the City maintains ownership of parkland and control over the park's vision. This model allows the City to deliver high-quality amenities and services that complement and enhance the park experience without compromising the public nature of the space. For more information, refer to the Public-Private Partnership Opportunities section within **The Future** chapter.



Park entrance and Keele Street frontage

Working Together



Keele Street entrance signage

The successful development and long-term stewardship of North Maple Regional Park depends on a collaborative network of governmental authorities, regulatory agencies, and adjacent stakeholders, each with distinct roles and interests in this transformative 900-acre landscape.

Primary Ownership and Government Jurisdiction

North Maple Regional Park represents a complex partnership of governmental and community stakeholders working to transform former industrial lands into a signature destination.

The primary landowner and jurisdictional authority is the **City of Vaughan**, which manages the park as part of its municipal parks system. However, the park's development requires ongoing coordination with **York Region**, particularly regarding the planned Teston Road extension—a future four-lane transportation corridor that will bisect the property between Keele Street and Dufferin Street, requiring careful integration of pedestrian crossings and multi-use pathways.

Landfill Legacy and Regulatory Oversight

The park's unique history with the south areas as former landfill sites adds jurisdictional complexity. The southern portion encompasses the former Keele Valley Landfill Site (KVLS), while the northern section includes the former Vaughan Township Landfill Site (VTLS). Both facilities require ongoing environmental monitoring and maintenance, with the **Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks** (MECP) maintaining regulatory oversight through Environmental Compliance Approvals. The **City of Toronto** retains ownership of certain systems, particularly the landfill gas control system and the Teston Purge Well System, which necessitates continued access arrangements.

Environmental Stewardship

As the headwaters of the Don River's east branch, the park falls within the jurisdiction of the **Toronto and Region Conservation Authority** (TRCA), which has conducted ecological land classification studies and maintains ongoing involvement in watershed management and environmental protection. The TRCA has jurisdiction over the forested areas and the wetlands within the park. The park's location within the Upper East Don subwatershed and its position on the Oak Ridges Moraine—a critical groundwater recharge area spanning 160 km across southern Ontario—underscore its regional ecological significance and the collaborative stewardship required among multiple agencies.

Public-Private Partners

These partnerships can be explored anywhere in the park and potentially for any proposed amenity. The area along Keele Street has been identified for potential public-private partnerships, where specialized operators in nature-based tourism, sustainable hospitality, or heritage-focused recreation may develop park-serving amenities while the City retains ownership and control over the vision and operations.

Adjacent Properties and Surrounding Context

The broader surrounding context includes established residential communities to the north and northeast (Maple Highlands, Maplewood, Ambassador Hills), remnant agricultural lands along portions of Keele Street, and commercial and industrial properties to the south. The Eagle's Nest golf course lies to the southeast along Dufferin Street. These diverse neighbours—ranging from planned transit-oriented development to established neighborhoods and recreational facilities—influence park programming, access strategies, and connectivity planning.

Immediately west across Keele Street, the Block 27 Secondary Plan area represents a significant planned community development featuring the proposed **Kirby GO Transit Hub** as a local centre. This mixed-use development will include mid-rise residential buildings (up to 12 storeys), low-rise residential areas, community facilities, schools, integrated retail and commercial uses, parks and a multi-use recreational trail system (including the Vaughan Super Trail).



Achieving the Vision



Conceptual rendering of a birds-eye view looking south across North Maple Regional Park, depicting the Master Plan vision

Purpose of the Master Plan

Overarching Purpose

The North Maple Regional Park Master Plan will guide the ongoing transformation of the park into an extraordinary destination that restores the land, engages the community, and invites everyone to play.

The North Maple Regional Park Master Plan (Master Plan) will serve as a roadmap for the park's ongoing and long-term development, programming, and management for the next few decades. The Master Plan is a tool for the City of Vaughan to deliver the vision, pillars and goals shared on the next two pages.

The purpose of the Master Plan is to:

- Provide the **overall framework for park programming, design, and activation**. It includes various zones for different activities, sports, and festivals/events in the park.
- **Integrate ongoing project components** in conjunction with other City initiatives to advance priorities identified within the Master Plan.
- Include detailed **schematic design solutions for priority projects** within each of the key zones.
- Establish a **comprehensive phasing and implementation plan** that considers adjacent development timelines, as well as the phasing of infrastructure upgrades based on financial feasibility and land availability.
- Include **creative and innovative** solutions, engineering, technology, sustainable design approach, and recommendations.
- Consider the technical needs, and monitoring and protection of existing infrastructure on the former **landfill sites**.
- Tell the **story** of the park and inform the community with history and decisions about the park's future.

Strategic Direction of the Master Plan

Park Vision

To create a signature park focused on activities related to restoring nature, sharing culture, promoting active living and building community.

Park Pillars

The Master Plan is supported by three guiding pillars: **Restore, Engage, and Play.** Ecological restoration through the enhanced forests, ponds, wetlands, and meadows is the driving force behind the vision for the park.

The park is envisioned as both a natural oasis and an active hub for the community, designed to welcome people of all ages and abilities, all year round.

As Vaughan continues to grow around this 900-acre site, the park will become a signature natural and cultural asset, serving current and future generations.

Restore

Ecological and cultural restoration are at the heart of the park vision. The park promotes biodiversity, climate resilience, environmental awareness and education.

Engage

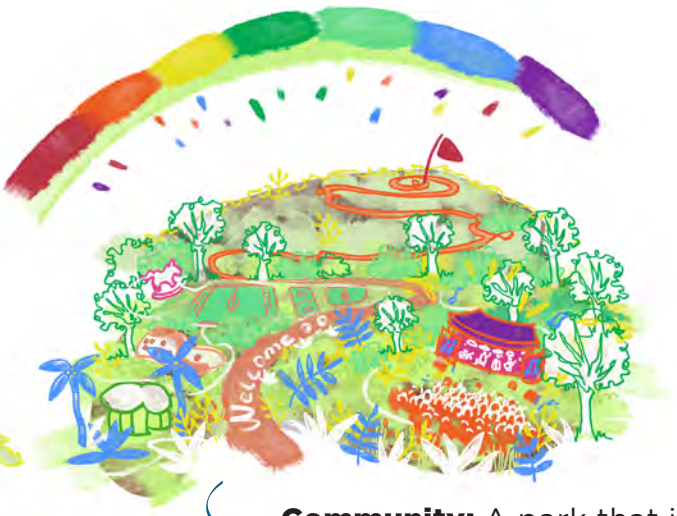
The park will connect and build community. It is the legacy of a group of Vaughan residents determined to reclaim the former landfill sites into a place of culture, social gathering, learning and nature exploration for all.

Play

The park will inspire fun and curiosity year-round. Immersed in nature, the park is a place for passive and active recreation for all, with diverse opportunities for play and learning from playgrounds to sports facilities, interpretive walks and trail networks.



Park Goals



Community: A park that is **responsive** to city needs



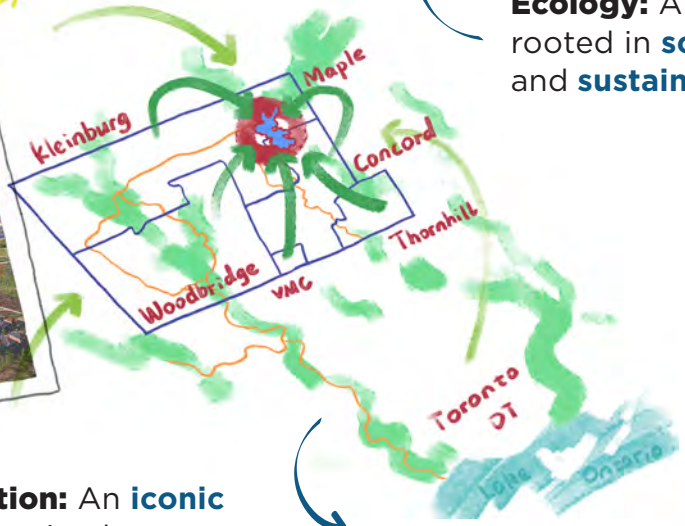
Nature: A park designed with **everything in nature**



Ecology: A park rooted in **science** and **sustainability**

Engage: A park to engage with **diverse spaces** and **landscapes**





Destination: An **iconic park** organized as a unified space

Connection: A park that **connects communities**, the city, and the region

Master Plan Process

In December 2023, the City initiated a process to develop a master plan to help guide the park's development into a major destination, while protecting and strengthening its natural features.

The Master Plan guides the decision-making process for the site's ongoing and long-term development, programming, and level of service and management.

The City of Vaughan and O2 Planning and Design worked collaboratively to develop the Master Plan over six phases. The project included engagement with City Council and staff, subject matter experts, and multiple City committees, including the Program Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, Community Advisory Committee, Age Friendly Advisory Committee, and Accessibility Advisory Committee. External engagement included key stakeholders, Indigenous First Nations, and the general public.

For a full list of the contributors, refer to the Acknowledgments and Contributions on pages 6-7.

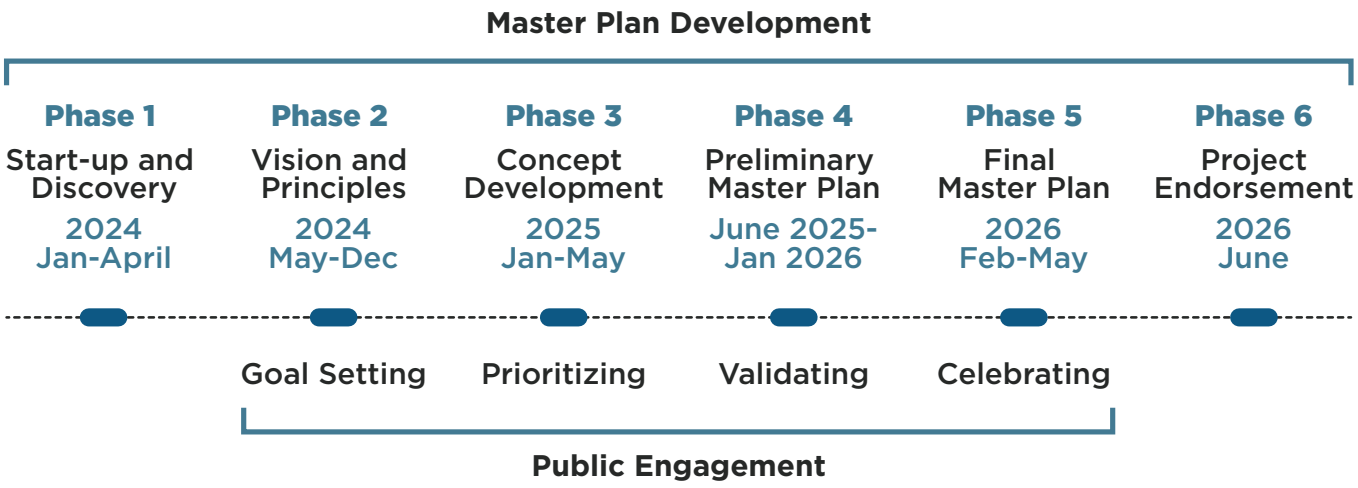
Public Engagement

Three rounds of public engagement were conducted for the Master Plan development, tackling the following progressive themes:

- Vision and Principles
- Concept Development
- Preliminary Master Plan
- Celebration

For a more detailed summary of public engagement, refer to the **What We Heard Reports**.

Project Timeline



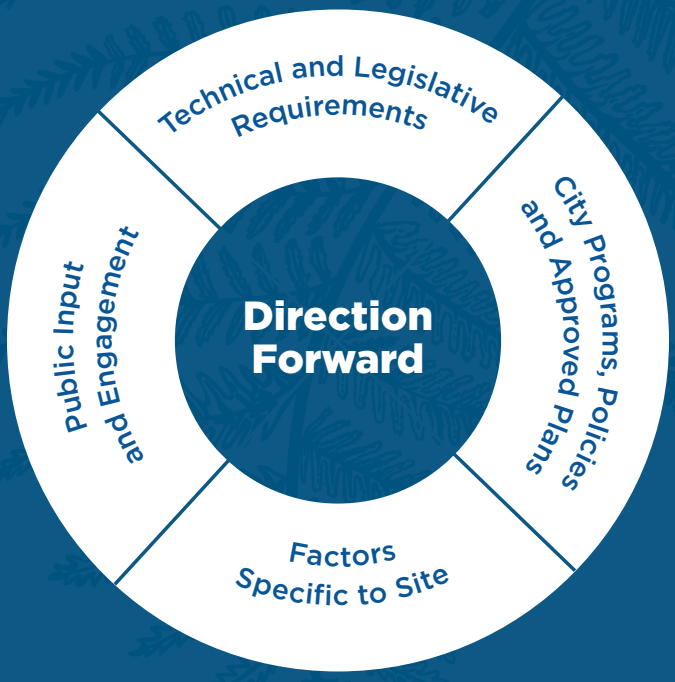
Public Engagement Summary

Purpose

Community input plays a vital role in shaping the Master Plan that will lead to the development of a dynamic, sustainable and welcoming destination for generations to come.

A variety of engagement methods were used to ensure that a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Some engagement activities were tailored to a specific audience, while others were designed to engage the broader public.

Foundation



Principles

These principles were designed to ensure the project team's engagement approach was intentional and thoughtful.

Informative

Build awareness of the Master Plan project and the park itself as a place of pride for the city.

Accessible

Be responsive to the community's engagement preferences and meet people where they are.

Inclusive

Lower barriers to participation and invite a diversity of voices and perspectives to the table.

Diverse

Invite feedback from various interested parties, ensuring that a range of lived experiences is represented in the development of the Master Plan.

Forward

Gather feedback to inform the next phases of work in the master planning process and to shape a legacy park for generations to come.

Public Engagement Process

The Master Plan was shaped by extensive engagement with over 2,500 community members, stakeholders and interested parties.

Objective and Phases

The objective of engagement was to raise awareness about the park while collecting input on the vision, values, and guiding principles to establish a strong foundation, gather community feedback on park concepts and proposed programs within the park, and understand the successes and shortcomings of each draft Master Plan.

Three public engagement phases were hosted:

- **Our Foundations: Vision and Principles** (Jul 2024-Jan 2025) To validate and refine the vision and guiding principles of the Park and to generate interest and build awareness
- **Finding Our Way Forward: Concept Development** (Jan-May 2025) To gather input and feedback from the community on preferred programs
- **Shaping Our Park: Preliminary Master Plan** (Nov-Dec 2025) To validate and gather community feedback on the draft Master Plan

How we Engaged

15 Pop Ups
1,124 people engaged

3 Online Surveys
871 survey responses

Advisory Committee
27 community members

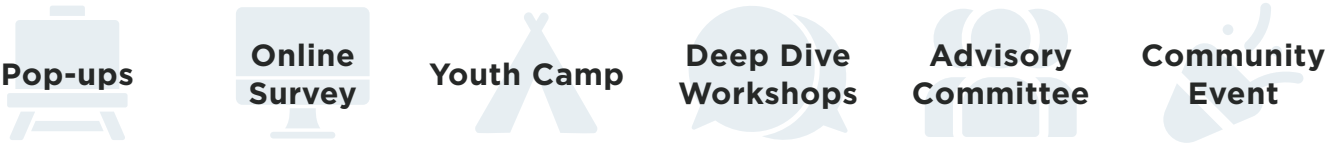
Youth Camps and Pop-Ups
238 youth engaged

Workshops, Hikeshops and More
35 participants

Community Event
150 participants

Timeline of Engagement Events

Across the next three pages, this line will showcase the various pop-up events, youth summer camp, deep dive workshops and online surveys done.



Our Foundations

(July 2024-January 2025)

Park Vision

To create a signature park focused on activities related to restoring nature, sharing culture, promoting active living and building community. Participants helped vailidate and shape a vision statement that set the foundation for the Master Plan.

Desired Amenities and Programs

By most number of mentions

Restore

Amenities

141 accessible trails

110 calm natural areas

Programs

187 wildlife protection

126 nature walks

Engage

Amenities

97 farmers' market

94 boardwalk

Programs

86 community festivals

70 outdoor movie nights

Play

Amenities

94 ice rinks

81 outdoor pool

Timeline of Engagement Events



Finding Our Way Forward

(January-May 2025)

Preferred Park Concept

Participants preferred the amenities of the recreation-focused concept with the nature-focused concept as a backdrop.

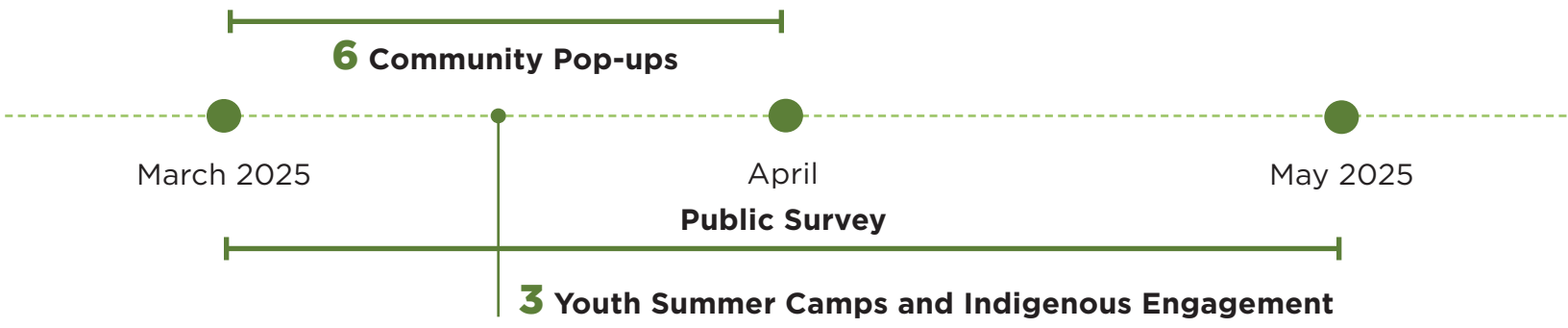
They envision the park as a multifaceted destination blending nature, recreation, and community engagement.

Key Themes

Desired elements for the park:

- Eco-Tourism and Education
- Sports and Recreation Infrastructure
- Natural Retreats
- Food and Social Amenities
- Robust Trail Network

Timeline of Engagement Events



Shaping Our Park

(November-December 2025)

Thoughts on the Master Plan

Successfully uphold the three guiding principles of Restore, Engage and Play.

They believe that the design of the plan properly balanced the priorities outlined in each of the guiding principles.

Key Themes

Community feedback supported several recurring ideas.

- Enthusiasm for a landmark park
- Protecting ecological integrity
- Diverse, year-round recreation and amenities
- Authentic Indigenous placekeeping and collaboration
- Proactive accessibility and inclusive design
- Practical infrastructure for access, comfort and safety

Timeline of Engagement Events



From Conversation to Caretaking

The vision for North Maple Regional Park has been shaped by the voices of this community.

Over 2,500 people participated across pop-ups, workshops, surveys, and conversations, sharing what they value, what they hope for, and what the land means to them. That input is woven throughout this Master Plan as a foundation.

Through engagement with five First Nations, we learned that the land is kin, a relative to be honoured, and that our role here is one of caretaking. We heard that restoration is meaningful only when rooted in Indigenous knowledge and values; that plants have purpose beyond aesthetics; that water carries memory. Placekeeping, teaching, and ceremony belong in this park alongside trails and playing fields.

Together, public and Indigenous voices have shaped a park that is ecological and cultural, active and contemplative, local and ancestral. Engagement is ongoing. As the park grows, so too will the relationships that guide it.







Public engagement for the park

Stay Connected

Visit **vaughan.ca/NMRP** for project updates, construction milestones, upcoming events, to sign up for communications, and for ways to get involved.

Overall Illustrative Plan and Park Zones

Overall Illustrative Plan

The **Overall Illustrative Plan** is the main site plan that will guide all future park development. As evident in the Overall Illustrative Plan (refer to map 6), the park has diverse areas and land use types with ecological, historical, social and infrastructure features and considerations. The site is divided into four **Park Zones**, which provide a framework for understanding the site's existing features, organizing park development and programming intensity.

Park Zones

Zone 1: Park Frontage

The Keele Street Frontage serves as the park's welcoming gateway, blending ecological values with cultural heritage. Under consideration for development through a public-private partnership, potential projects include a recreational facility, wellness centre and gardens, or a creative cultural hub. Key projects include nature-based tourism facilities, a protected heritage house, and sustainable commercial development.

Zone 2: Central Activity

The Central Activity zone is envisioned as a focus for active recreation, where proposed development and future amenities support movement, play, and social interaction. While active uses are prioritized, the zone is carefully balanced with nature-based features and ecological conservation, ensuring that recreational facilities, gathering spaces, and circulation networks are thoughtfully integrated with the surrounding landscape and existing infrastructure.

Zone 3: Natural Area & Nevada Park

The northeast Natural Area and Nevada Park conserves the park's ecological treasures—mature forests, wetlands, and Don River headwaters. Low-impact features include wetland boardwalks, a treetop canopy walk, wildlife lookouts, a nature-focused playground, and mountain biking trails.

Zone 4: Landfill Restoration

The Landfill Restoration sites transform former waste sites into rolling grassland mounds offering panoramic views, hilltop lookouts, diverse trails and pathways, winter activities, and stargazing. Before the public can access the closed landfill sites, the City must complete regulatory approvals and safety requirements.

The intent of the Overall Illustrative Plan is to focus public use and park development in Zone 2: Central Activity Zone and Zone 1: Keele Street Frontage, public-private partnership lands. This protects and conserves the existing natural areas and allows for the ecological restoration of the landfill sites.

To learn more about the approach for the Master Plan's site design, refer to the **Green Corridors** section in the **Restore Chapter**. The Overall Illustrative Plan demonstrates the ultimate, long-term build out of the park; for **Phasing and Implementation**, refer to **The Future.**

Zone 1:
Keele Street Frontage

Zone 2:
Central Activity Zone

Zone 3:
Natural Area & Nevada Park

Zone 4:
Landfill Restoration



Map 6. Overall illustrative plan and park zones

Zone 1: Park Frontage



Map 7. Zone 1 illustrative plan

Zone 2: Central Activity



Map 8. Zone 2 illustrative plan

A Glimpse of the Future



Central Activity Zone 2: Picnic areas, lawns, and conservatory



Central Activity Zone 2: Conservatory, gardens, and sports pavilion

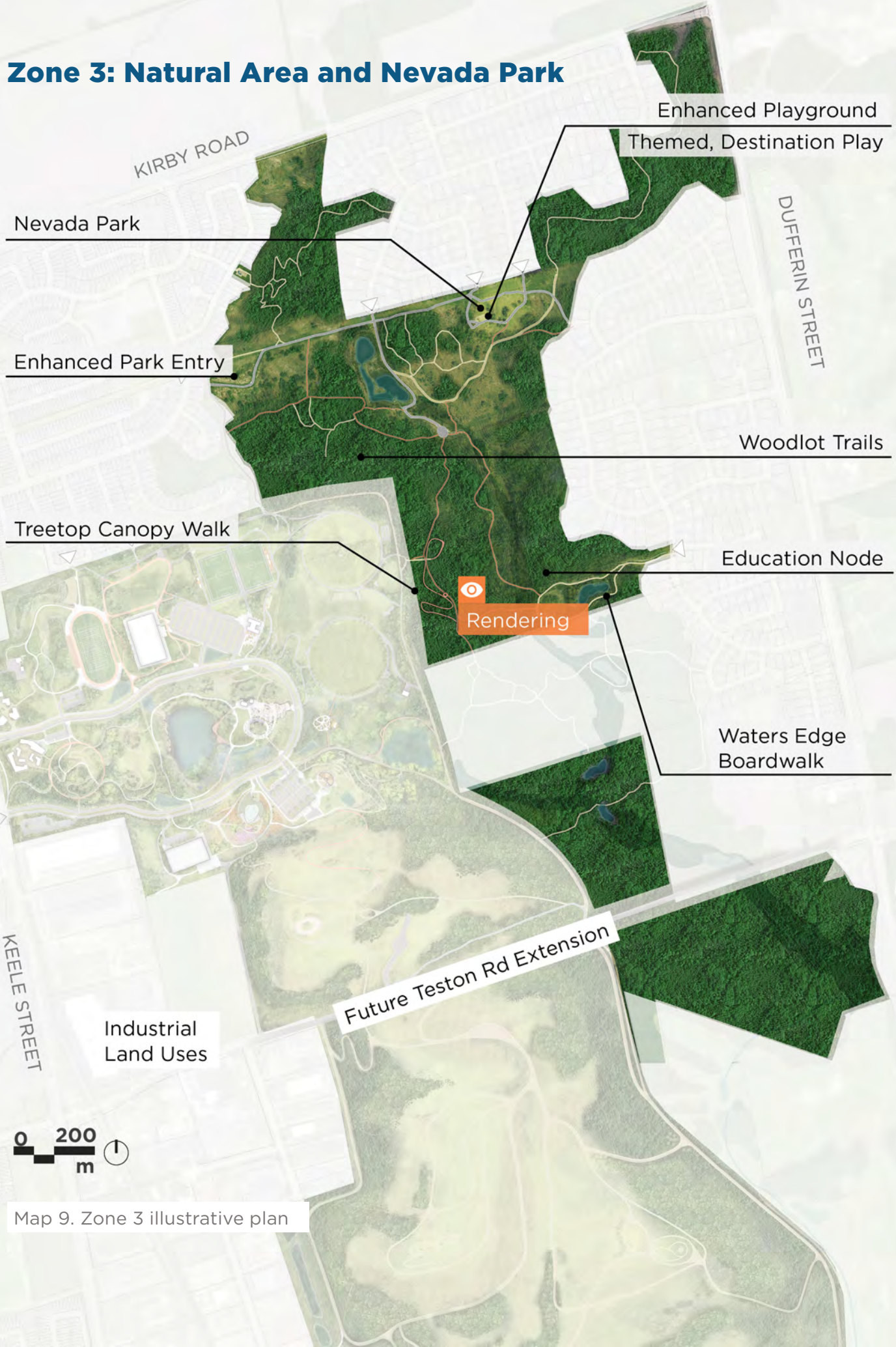


Central Activity Zone 2: Eco-island, pavilions, hillside gardens, wetland boardwalk



Central Activity Zone 2: Restored wetland, boardwalks, interpretive trails, conservatory and hillside gardens

Zone 3: Natural Area and Nevada Park



Map 9. Zone 3 illustrative plan

A Glimpse of the Future



Natural Area Zone 3: Treetop canopy walk near the Headwaters of the Don River

Zone 4: Landfill Restoration



Map 10. Zone 4 illustrative plan

A Glimpse of the Future



Landfill Zone 4: Hillslide and hillside gardens; central activity zone: conservatory and gardens



Landfill Zone 4: Hilltop lookout, with in the background: hillslide and hillside gardens; central activity zone: conservatory and gardens

Challenges and Opportunities

The Master Plan process revealed multiple themes and challenges interwoven across the site, including the regulatory complexity of closed landfill sites, the large scale of the park, the diversity of uses planned, the balancing of community needs with the park vision, the phasing, and the Central Activity Zone's spatial constraints.

Diversity of Uses

The diversity of interest holders and stakeholder requests created discussion about the type of park the park should become. The three guiding pillars (Restore, Engage, Play) are harmonious in theory but reveal challenges in balancing ecological restoration with recreational programming; passive or active recreation; as well as becoming a regional destination or community-focused amenity.

The Master Plan resolves the diversity of uses by defining programming intensity across the site, which was validated through public engagement. Public feedback confirmed the preferred top site programs for each area of the park and validated that the approach successfully upholds the Restore, Engage, and Play pillars.



Event lawn and natural areas (2025)

Regulatory Complexity of Closed Landfill Sites

There are multiple landfill sites within the park boundary: one is managed by the City of Vaughan and the other by the City of Toronto; each requires separate Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks approvals.

Environmental control systems—landfill gas extraction, leachate collection, purge wells—must operate for decades (some 200 years), requiring protected access that conflicts with public programming. The complexity of two separately-owned closed landfills under different regulatory approvals created uncertainty for the Master Plan. It wasn't possible to definitively specify when the landfill sites can open to the public and when early ecological restoration can begin.

To mitigate this challenge, the Master Plan aims to provide a clear summary of technical approval requirements, so that decision makers without landfill expertise can direct projects and clearly understand the important factors for progress. For more details, refer to the **Landfill Restoration** section in the **Restore** chapter. The landfill sites have potential to be catalytic projects for the site. For details and next steps, refer to the **Catalytic Projects** section in **The Future** chapter.

Overall Park Scale

At 900 acres, the park's massive scale prompted questions such as: How do visitors reach destinations over 2 km from parking? How does the park serve people with mobility limitations alongside active recreation users? Where should parking be located without contradicting ecological restoration goals? The Master Plan addresses scale challenges through a hierarchical circulation system: Vaughan Super Trail (3-4 m multi-use asphalt), secondary networks for mobility-challenged users, tertiary nature trails, and mountain active trails. Dispersed parking lots (rather than consolidated parking) limit impacts while serving different amenities.

For more details, refer to the Non-Vehicle Circulation section in the **Movement and Circulation** chapter.

Balancing Needs

The extraordinary size of the park compared to other Vaughan parks also created some expectation that the park may be able to accommodate growing recreational needs in Vaughan such as pools or more standard sports amenities. But the vision for North Maple Regional Park is a unique destination offering experiences impossible elsewhere. To manage expectations, the plan articulates the park's unique role through three guiding principles (Restore, Engage, Play) and emphasizes signature destination amenities leveraging distinctive site features—landfill topography, Oak Ridges Moraine ecology, Don River headwaters—rather than providing typical municipal programs and facilities that can be located elsewhere.

Central Activity Zone Spatial and Technical Constraints

The Central Activity Zone presented site design constraints requiring spatial problem-solving. The design layout for future site amenities was limited by existing site grading, the adjacent residential neighbourhood (possible noise concerns), and existing site amenities and infrastructure. By mapping the desired buffers and ecologically significant boundaries (such as wildlife corridors and turtle habitats near the pond), the project team was able to locate more intensive site amenities (such as the sports stadium and parking lots) elsewhere in the zone.

An integrated design process explored multiple spatial configurations, testing each against site constraints. Public engagement materials presented two distinct layouts—nature-focused, arboretum-centered versus recreation-focused, sports dome-centered—allowing the public to see different spatial arrangements and intensity levels. Public engagement materials also focused specifically on validating the integrated balance through targeted surveys. Public feedback confirmed the final design successfully "strikes the right balance."

Long-Term Phasing and Adaptability

The Master Plan has a 25+ year implementation timeline. This creates a challenge in providing firm design direction today while accommodating unpredictable future conditions. Demographics, recreational trends, climate impacts, technology, municipal budgets, regional infrastructure (Teston Road, GO stations), neighboring development, and political priorities will all shift dramatically over the Master Plan's timeline.

To mitigate this challenge, there are two approaches. First, the Master Plan establishes a framework for periodic review and updates every 5-10 years. Second, the future governance approach in **The Future** chapter includes Adaptive Site Management as a guiding principle, which directs the management of the park to be responsive to current site conditions.

Green Corridors

The Master Plan site design is flexible to adapt to future requirements of the park. When considering spatial arrangement of facilities or amenities during the detailed design phase, Green Corridors Key Strategies in the **Restore** chapter include maintaining the integrity of ecological corridors, integrating functional ecology, and protecting and enhancing drainage corridors.

Your Park, Your Story



Site photo of families strolling (2024)

The next chapter of NMRP will be shaped by you!

North Maple Regional Park traces back to the 1980s, when Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. began organizing against the environmental impacts of the landfills. That advocacy led to the landfill's closure in 2002. Over three rounds of public engagement, more than 2,500 participants shaped this Master Plan. The park's future will depend on that same sustained involvement.

Visit the park. Bring your family and friends and explore the park. The simple act of visiting this park shows this place matters.

Volunteer. Join a guided walk along an interpretive trail. Remove invasive species and litter from a wetland edge. Plant native seedlings in a pocket forest. The park's future volunteer program will offer opportunities to care for the land.

Share your voice. The Master Plan's future projects will include public consultation. Future engagement will continue to shape the park's programming, amenities, and character.

Partner with the City. As the park grows, new avenues for partnership, sponsorship and giving will emerge. Every contribution helps sustain the vibrancy, ecological health, inclusive programming, and high-quality maintenance that make a great park endure.

Stay Connected

Visit **vaughan.ca/NMRP** for project updates, construction milestones, upcoming events, to sign up for communications, and for ways to get involved.



Restore

What was once Canada's largest landfill is transforming into a thriving mosaic of meadows, wetlands, and forests—and you are invited to experience this remarkable healing firsthand.

If you stand at the highest point of the park, you will witness one of the most ambitious ecological restoration projects in Canadian history. Wander through wellness gardens designed to restore native plants and calm the mind. Slow down and immerse yourself in the sights, sounds, and scents of nature's return as you walk the woodland routes and the grassland hills. Explore the trails along the Don River headwaters where critical aquatic habitat is being rebuilt and watch the streams come back to life with fish, turtles, and aquatic species.



Conceptual rendering of restored wetland and boardwalk in Central Activity Zone 2

Discover how careful planning brings ecosystems back to life. Native grasses and wildflowers stabilize slopes and attract various butterflies and birds. Wetlands filter water and provide sanctuary for frogs and nesting birds. Carefully planted thickets offer food and shelter for wildlife corridors. Every restored meadow, planted tree, and protected pond tells a story of patient, deliberate work to heal the land.

This is restoration you can touch, smell, and participate in—proving that even our deepest environmental wounds can mend when science, community commitment, and nature's resilience work together.

A Day in the Park: Restore

Sample visitor routes

Love exploring the outdoors? Start the day by venturing into the restored landfill area to admire the views from the hilltop lookout. At noon, enjoy a packed lunch in the picnic area and take an afternoon hike to immerse yourself in the nature and wildlife.



Key Strategies

Natural Heritage Inventory

Overarching Strategy

Protect existing natural features and ecologies by enhancing biodiversity, sustainability, and climate resilience throughout the landscape. The park sits within the Oak Ridges Moraine, a landform shaped by retreating glaciers. The Moraine's porous geology filters and stores precipitation, supplying clean drinking water to surrounding watersheds—including the Don River, whose headwaters originate within the park. Protecting these natural systems is both a local and regional priority.



Strategies

Protect existing natural features

Honour the restoration and Species at Risk (SAR) compensation work that has already been completed, with special attention to the Don River Headwaters and the park's role within the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Connect local and regional ecologies

Connect natural features both onsite and within the larger landscape wherever possible and incorporate vegetated buffers between human land uses and natural features.

Apply assisted recovery to ecological systems

Prioritize novel species plantings to bolster biodiversity, ecosystem resilience, and wildlife habitat values, including habitat features or structures where appropriate, such as basking logs, bird-perch standing snags, or bat boxes.

Transition landfill areas into nature park

Integrate the landscape into the larger site concept and expected future land uses (e.g. integration of plantings with existing and future trails) and incorporate invasive species removal/management.









Oak Ridges Moraine

This area is characterized by rolling hills, kettle lakes, and a mix of forests that play a crucial role as a groundwater recharge area, helping to regulate water flow, prevent floods, and sustain rivers and lakes.

The park is dedicated to celebrating and safeguarding these natural features within a sustainable and ecologically rich park that coexists harmoniously with its urban surroundings.

Indigenous Connections: Culture and Ecology

Stretching approximately 160 km, the Oak Ridges Moraine is an important cultural asset for the Mississauga, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee (Five Nations Iroquois), and Anishinaabeg (Algonquin) nations, whose heritage was intrinsically tied to the ecologies of the land through hunting, travel, and trading for thousands of years.



Donald Chetien, “The Hummingbird” (Nenookaasi), YR Experience Trail Marker Project, Vaughan.

Don River Headwaters

The park is located within the Upper East Don River sub-watershed, a tributary of the Don River watershed. These headwaters originate on the Oak Ridges Moraine and form the upstream source of the Don River system, which flows south through the Greater Toronto Area to Lake Ontario. Headwater areas like this play an important role in sustaining water quality, groundwater-fed flows, and connected natural habitats throughout the watershed.

Much of the Don River begins underground, emerging from cold groundwater seeps on the Oak Ridges Moraine that help keep flows steady and water cool year-round. Among all Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) watersheds, the Oak Ridges Moraine has the highest quality groundwater.



38 km

Don River Headwaters to Lake Ontario

515

Native Plant Species

135

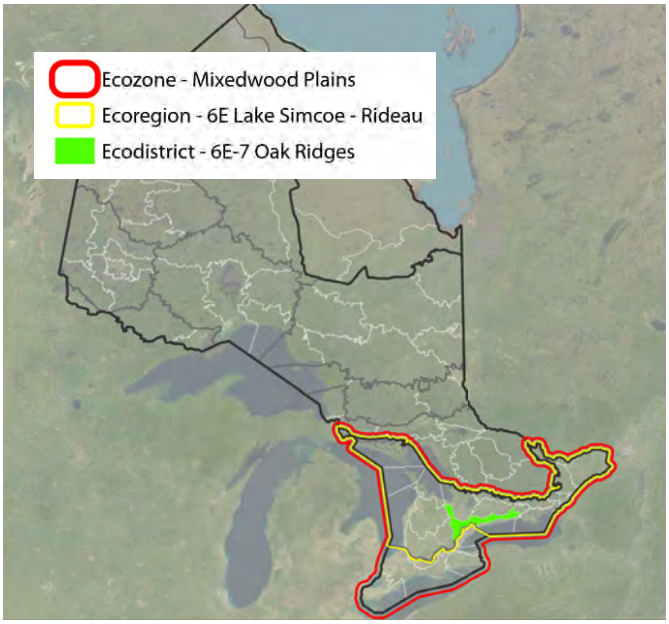
Animal Species

43%

of streambanks are forested



Ecological Land Classification



Provincial context - NMRP Master Plan



Provincial context - NMRP Master Plan

Ecozone - Mixedwood Plains
Ecoregion - 6E Lake Simcoe - Rideau
Ecodistrict - 6E-7 Oak Ridges
North Maple Regional Park (NMRP)

Provincial Context

The Ecological Land Classification (ELC) system categorizes ecosystems in Ontario based on function, composition, and structure. Ecozones, Ecoregions, and Ecodistricts comprise this system.

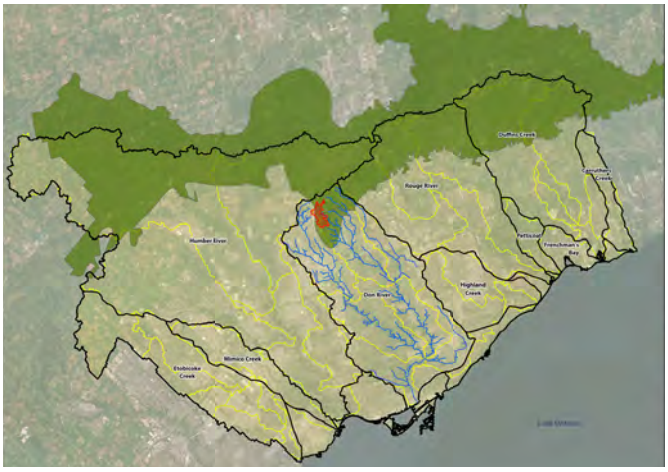
The park site is within the Mixedwood Plains Ecozone, Ecoregion 6E (Lake Simcoe-Rideau) within Ecodistrict 6E-7 (Oak Ridges).

Mixedwood Plains Ecozone

Ecozones (red on the maps 1A and 1B) represent the largest ELC units, defined by climate patterns and underlying bedrock. Ontario has three ecozones: the Hudson Bay Lowlands, the Ontario Shield, and the Mixedwood Plains. Encompassing 175,963 sq km, the Mixedwood Plains ecozone lies in southern Ontario along the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Its mild climate makes it the most populous and prosperous terrestrial ecozone.

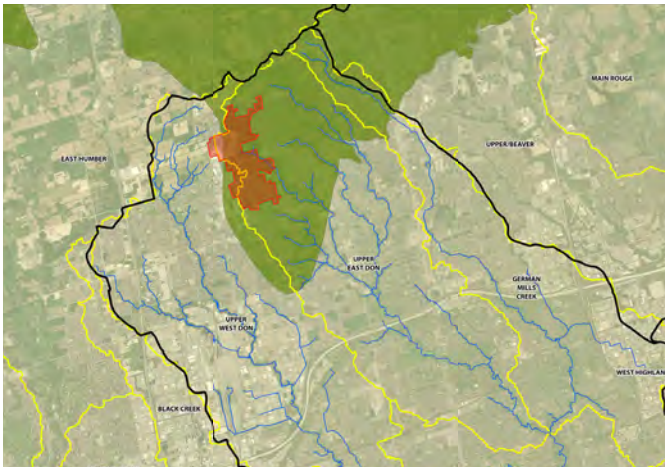
Lake Simcoe-Rideau Ecoregion

This ecoregion, within the Mixedwood Plains Ecozone, extends from Lake Huron to the Ottawa River. It features deciduous and mixed forests, with over 50% of its land used for agriculture



Regional context - NMRP Master Plan

MNRF Watercourse [1]
Permanent
Intermittent
TRCA Watersheds [2]
TRCA Subwatersheds [2]
Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
NMRP Site Boundary [3]



Regional context - NMRP Master Plan

MNRF Watercourse [1]
Permanent
Intermittent
TRCA Watersheds [2]
TRCA Subwatersheds [2]
Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
NMRP Site Boundary [3]

Oak Ridges Ecodistrict

Covering almost 70% of the Lake Simcoe-Rideau Ecoregion, this ecodistrict includes Orangeville to Hilton. It covers 400,000 ha with over 50% converted to cropland and boasts the Oak Ridges Moraine, a prominent natural heritage feature and important ecological landform.

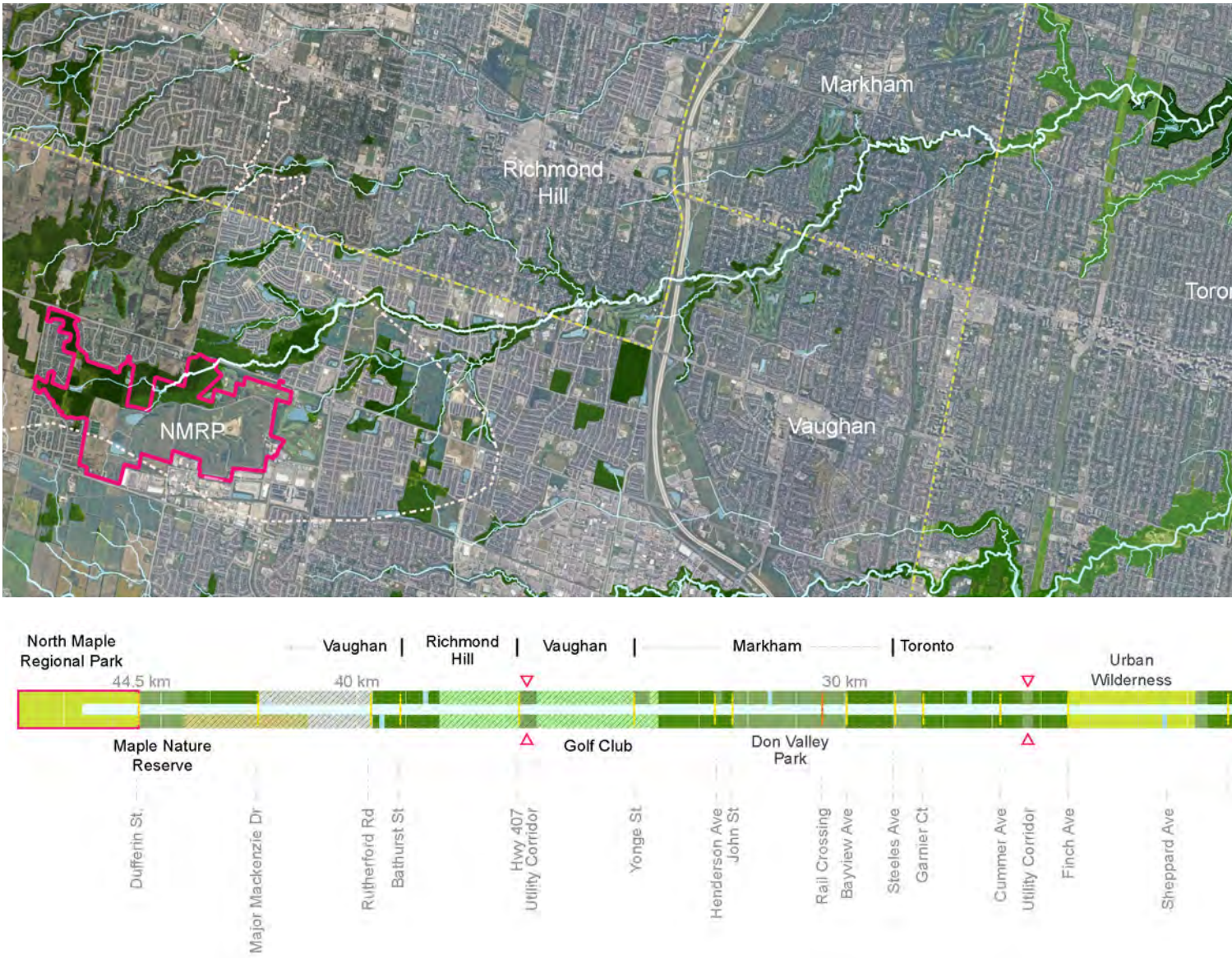
Deciduous forests dominate the area that is forested and include species such as sugar and red maple, American beech, and species of oak, birch, and ash. Some forests on the moraine even qualify to being designated as old growth ranging between 150 to over 300 years old. Eastern white pine, eastern hemlock, and spruce species may also be found in mix-forest areas, and eastern-white-cedar dominated swamps in cooler, wetter sites are not uncommon. Kettle wetlands formed by glacial activity from approximately 12,000–13,000 years ago are unique to this region and rare elsewhere in southern Ontario. This geological development has formed bog and fen wetland complexes all along the moraine.

Site Specific ELC

Portions of the study area were previously surveyed for Ecological Land Classification (ELC) methodology for southern Ontario in 2016 by Dougan Ecology and in 2024 by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).

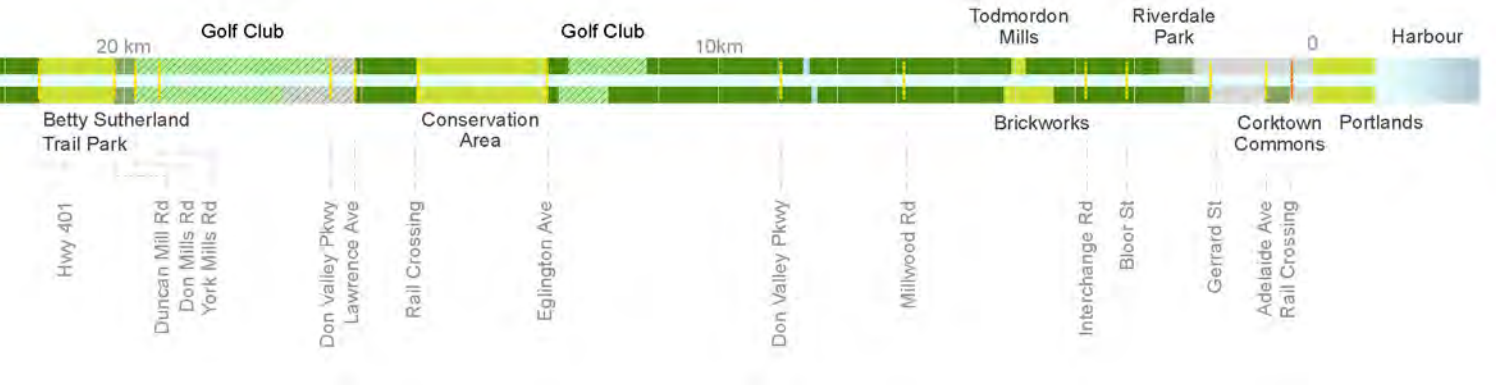
Connecting the Headwaters to the Port Lands

Map 11. Regional water connections



The park sits at the headwaters of the East Don River with the Don River watershed system. The current work being done at North Maple Regional Park corresponds directly with the naturalization efforts at the mouth of the Don. Linking these restoration projects from source to mouth is an important chapter in the story of the region's relationship with its natural systems. The site is also identified as a major link between important parks and open spaces within Vaughan's Greenspace Strategic Plan. The park will serve as an essential gateway, linking Vaughan's broader greenspace network by facilitating north-south connections through natural heritage and ravine areas, as well as east-west connections for multi-use recreational trails and pathways. Identifying this link provides a deeper understanding of this area.

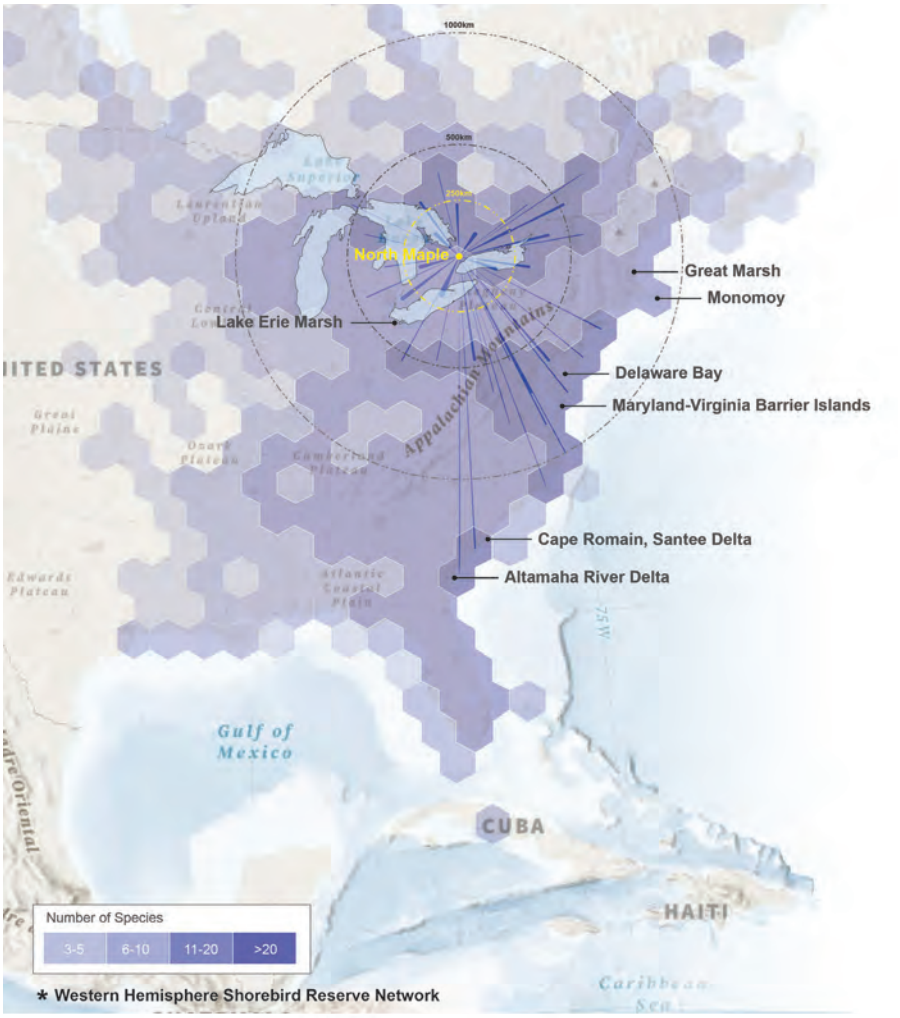


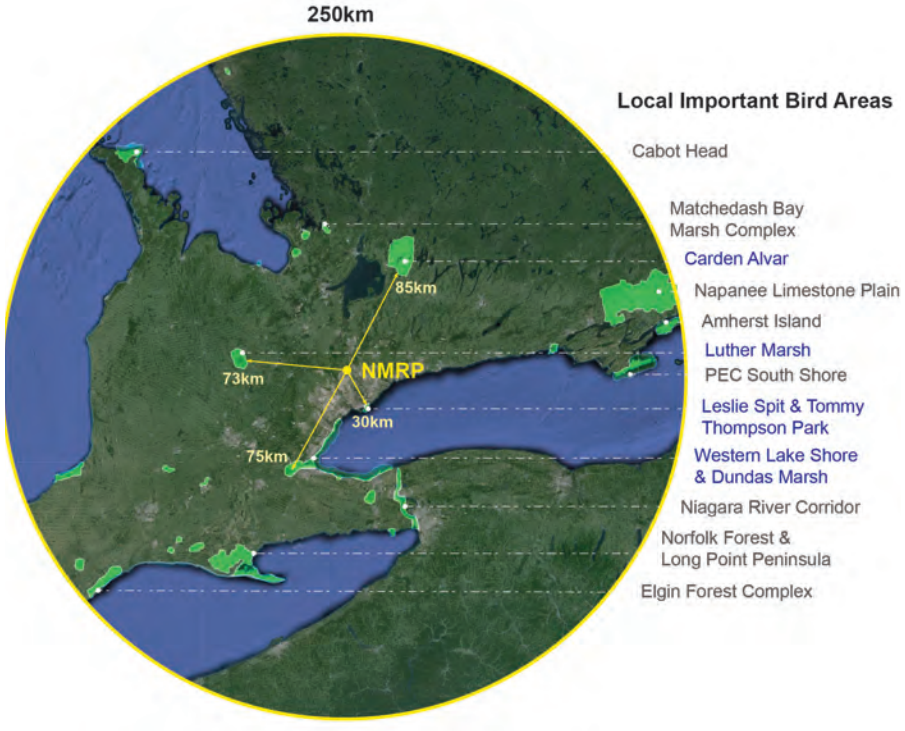


- Places
- Public Parks
- Don Valley Parklands
- Golf Club
- Inaccessable / Private
- Urban Edge
- Rural Agriculture
- Tributary
- Rail Crossing
- Road Crossing

1.4 million

Residents live in the Don River Watershed





Bird Migration and Seasonal Habitat Mapping

Super-Regional Context

North Maple Regional Park is situated within important migration flyways, creating opportunities for the site to incorporate habitat that embeds the park into an existing network of bi-annual stopover sites for migratory birds. This not only improves linkages to a larger ecological system, but also becomes a unique, seasonal programming element for the park.

Some of the landscapes that currently support this network are:



Carden Alvar

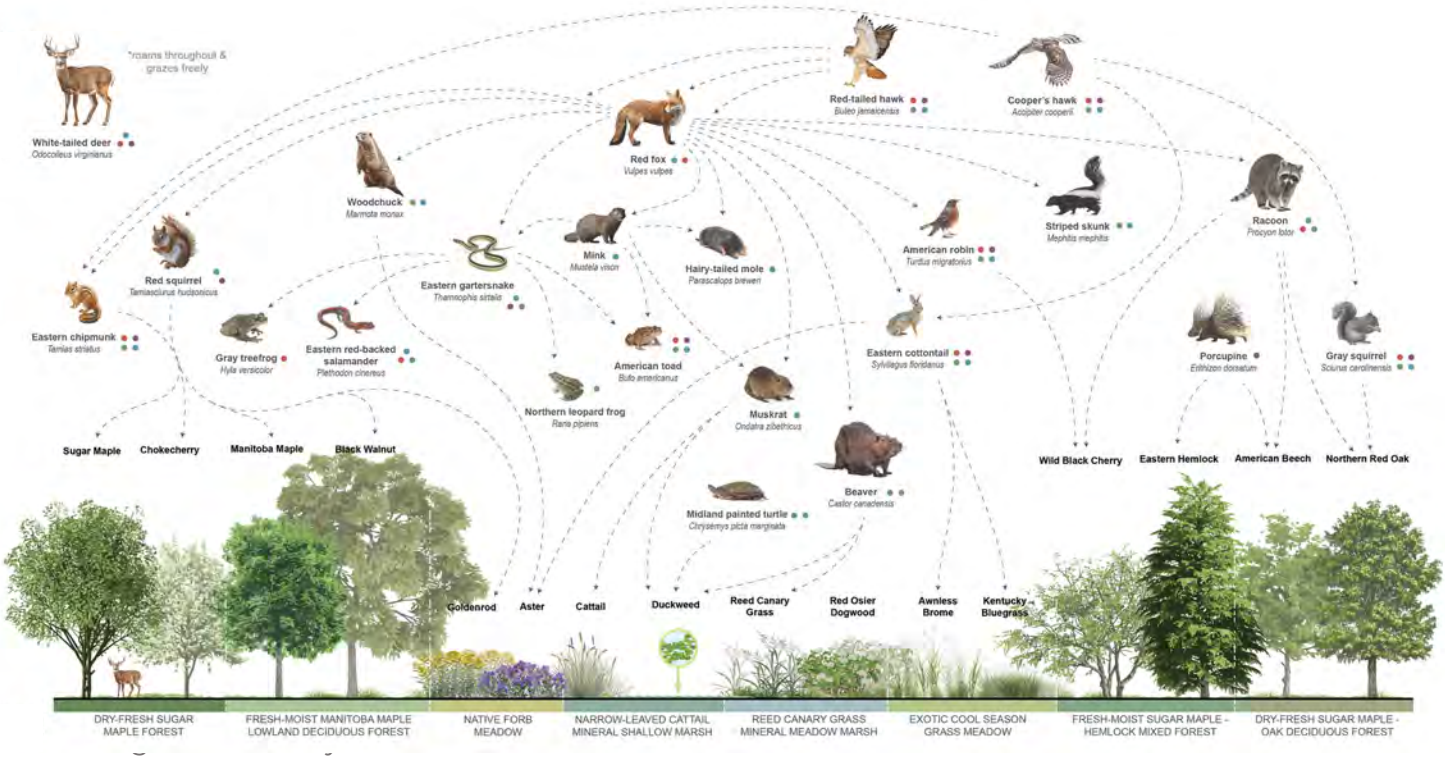


Leslie Spit



Dundas Marsh

Ecological Framework Plan & Habitat



Ecological Network

Understanding the rich ecological networks of the park guides the placement of strategic site interventions that enhance and strengthen the long-term sustainability of the environment, positioning the park as a vital ecological driver within one of Canada's most urbanized watersheds. To protect Species at Risk (SAR) and Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH), enhancements within the park include: improving the size and quality of forest edges that interface with the park, improving the size and quality of grassland and meadow habitat for birds and pollinators, and enhancing wetlands to improve habitat size, quality, and linkage to connect adjacent natural areas.

Restoration and SAR habitat works involving the mitigation of environmental impacts of capping, monitoring, and developing the site have been ongoing. Key initiatives include restoration of wetland and meadow habitats to support bobolink and eastern meadowlark habitat, bat habitats, and pond restoration.

Species at Risk



Little Brown Bat
Myotis lucifugus



Tri Coloured Bat
Perimyotis subflavus



Northern Long-Eared Bat
Myotis septentrionalis



Bobolink
Dolichonyx oryzivorus



Eastern Meadowlark
Sturnella magna

Integrated Ecologies



Green corridors bring ecology into the park

Green Corridor Approach

The Green Corridors approach for the park maximizes the opportunity to improve wildlife habitats both at the site and through landscape-scale connections. Habitat values will be preserved and enhanced with efforts to increase buffers around the existing natural features. The pond and wetland in the Central Activity Zone are sensitive habitat features that need to be carefully integrated into the larger plan to protect their functions and habitat values. The Master Plan increases buffers around these features and incorporating them into a larger east-west corridor that will link the two features together and connect them to offsite habitats. Clean water features are particularly valuable to wildlife, and these will support a myriad of species residing in and migrating through the surrounding landscape. To the west, the larger habitat corridor is more disturbed due to the noise and activity associated with Keele Street. Although roads can deter the movement of wildlife species, they do not deter all wildlife. Birds and insects for example will still utilize a habitat corridor even if fragmented by a road such as Keele Street. The westward corridor is still likely to facilitate wildlife movement to the larger Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Natural Heritage System via a cemetery and railway line on the west side of Keele Street.

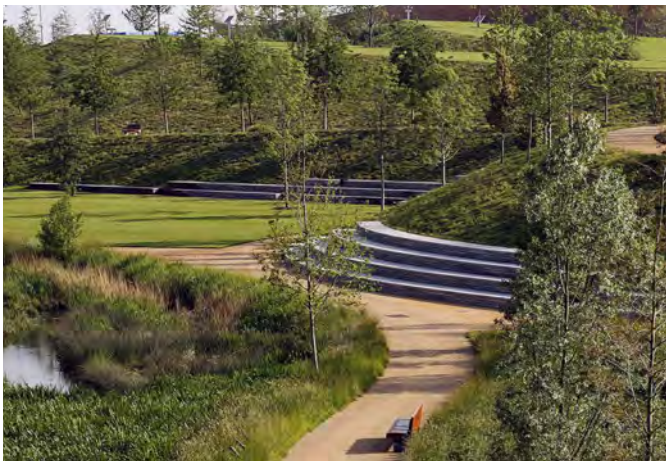
Key Strategies

Green Corridors

The Master Plan site design must be flexible to adapt to future requirements of the park. When considering spatial arrangement of facilities or amenities during the detailed design phase, consider these strategies listed.

Key Takeaways from Public Engagement:

Participants strongly supported reducing mowing, expanding forests, and using native plantings. This reinforces the plan's approach to habitat protection through the use of natural buffers and wildlife (green) corridors. Residents consistently requested interactive learning and moments for ecological education. These insights inform the placement of interpretive nodes and outdoor classrooms, embedded within the parks ecological framework.



Strategies

Maintain the integrity of ecological corridors

Protect habitat and biodiversity through the use of natural buffers (edges), limiting the exposure to noise, light pollution, and invasive species to the interior spaces of the corridor. This provides essential foraging, nesting, and resting habitats as wildlife move through the landscape between larger, isolated ecological hotspots.

Integrate functional ecology throughout the entire park

"Everything in Nature" is a key component in realizing the vision of the park. Ecology is not a separate function but rather an integral element that ties park program and activities together with nature into a cohesive, balanced experience. In some areas (such as the green corridors), protecting ecological functionality will be prioritized and guide decision-making around active and passive recreational uses.

Protect and enhance drainage corridors

Protecting water patterns is an important component in maintaining overall environmental health of the park and the surrounding areas. Enhancing these corridors improves the park's capacity to hold and filter water, promoting greater biodiversity and habitat of at-risk species. This also reduces reliance on traditional stormwater ponds and tanks in favour of utilizing natural solutions.

Water Systems



Wetlands at the park

Water is fundamental to the park's vision of creating an innovative and sustainable community. From the drinking water that flows through our taps to the rain that nourishes the landscape, water connects every aspect of daily life to the natural systems around us. Managing water thoughtfully—through modern infrastructure and nature-based solutions—is essential to building a resilient community that works in harmony with the environment.

The park will provide three essential services: clean drinking water for buildings and fire protection, sanitary sewers to manage wastewater, and stormwater systems to handle rainwater. The plan connects to existing City of Vaughan water and sewer lines while using green solutions like rain gardens, vegetated channels, and permeable surfaces to capture and filter rain where it falls. The design integrates engineered landscape features that slow down runoff, recharge groundwater, and support natural ecosystems. The plan works within the site's natural topography, ensuring new buildings and pathways drain properly while meeting accessibility standards. All infrastructure is coordinated with the City's planned upgrades to ensure reliable service as the community grows.

Water Demand Analysis

As part of the Master Plan, a preliminary water demand analysis was completed to assess the site's servicing requirements and evaluate the capacity of the existing municipal system to support future development.

Potable water demands were estimated based on preliminary architectural gross floor area (GFA) attributes in accordance with City of Vaughan Engineering Design Criteria.

For more details, refer to **Technical Volume 3: Civil Engineering**. For future studies and investigations needed for civil engineering, refer to **Next Steps: Studies and Reports** in the Implementation and Phasing section, within **The Future Chapter**.

Enhanced Stormwater Network





Vernal Pool (dry and inundated)

Strategies

Establish reliable water infrastructure network

Create a looped water distribution system that integrates with existing City infrastructure and maintains consistent pressure. On-site investigations will inform detailed design and ensure reliable service for future development.

Coordinate with existing sanitary infrastructure

Plan sanitary servicing to accommodate growth without overloading existing systems. Align development staging with City capital works programs to optimize infrastructure lifespan and reduce inflow and infiltration.

Promote greater stormwater carrying capacities

With 100-year storm events becoming a more common occurrence due to climate change, it is vital to enhance and expand natural drainage systems to support stormwater infrastructure. This not only protects the park from potential flood events and relieves pressures on man-made storm infrastructure, but also provides additional flood protection and water quality improvement to sites downstream.

A combined drainage system that allows for both natural and man-made interventions to work together creates the ideal environment that supports both active use and ecological health.

Key Strategies

Integrated Natural Systems

Water Conservation

Water conservation measures (efficient fixtures, rainwater harvesting) are integrated throughout all strategies rather than being a standalone item.

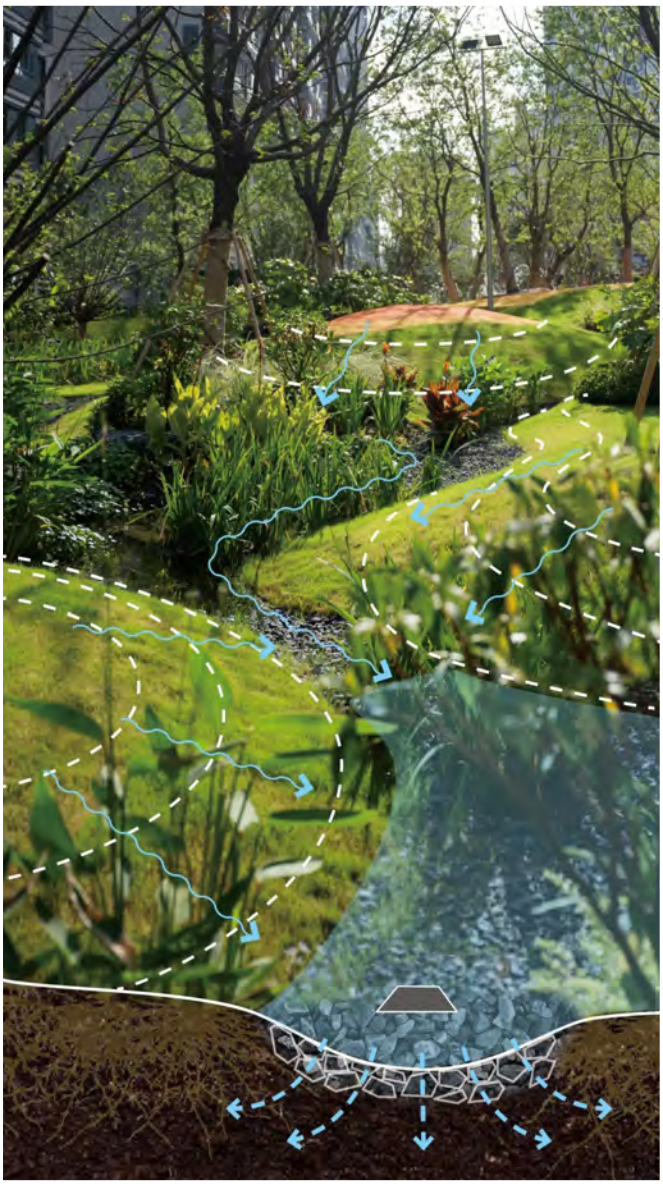


Illustration of how a natural drainage corridor functions

Strategies

Integrate natural drainage into the overall stormwater strategy

Incorporating a natural systems approach to the management of water, allows for a unique park experience where environmental processes are in complete harmony with active program spaces. This contributes to the guiding principle of "Everything in Nature".

Optimize site grading for natural drainage

Work with the site's natural topography to promote positive drainage and enable green infrastructure features. Minimize earthworks while ensuring safe overland flow, supporting groundwater recharge through surface features such as swales.

Implement green stormwater infrastructure

Adopt a decentralized, green infrastructure approach to manage runoff, recharge groundwater, and build climate resilience. Bio-retention facilities (BRF) located throughout the park are integral features to this approach.

Utilize natural systems to improve water quality

Natural drainage corridors act as filtration systems that remove sediments, encourage soil microbial activity, and absorb pollutants/excess nutrients. Water quality improvements such as these promote a vibrant river network, especially in supporting downstream health.

Natural Drainage Systems Map

Legend

Existing Bio-Retention

Landfill Drainage Paths

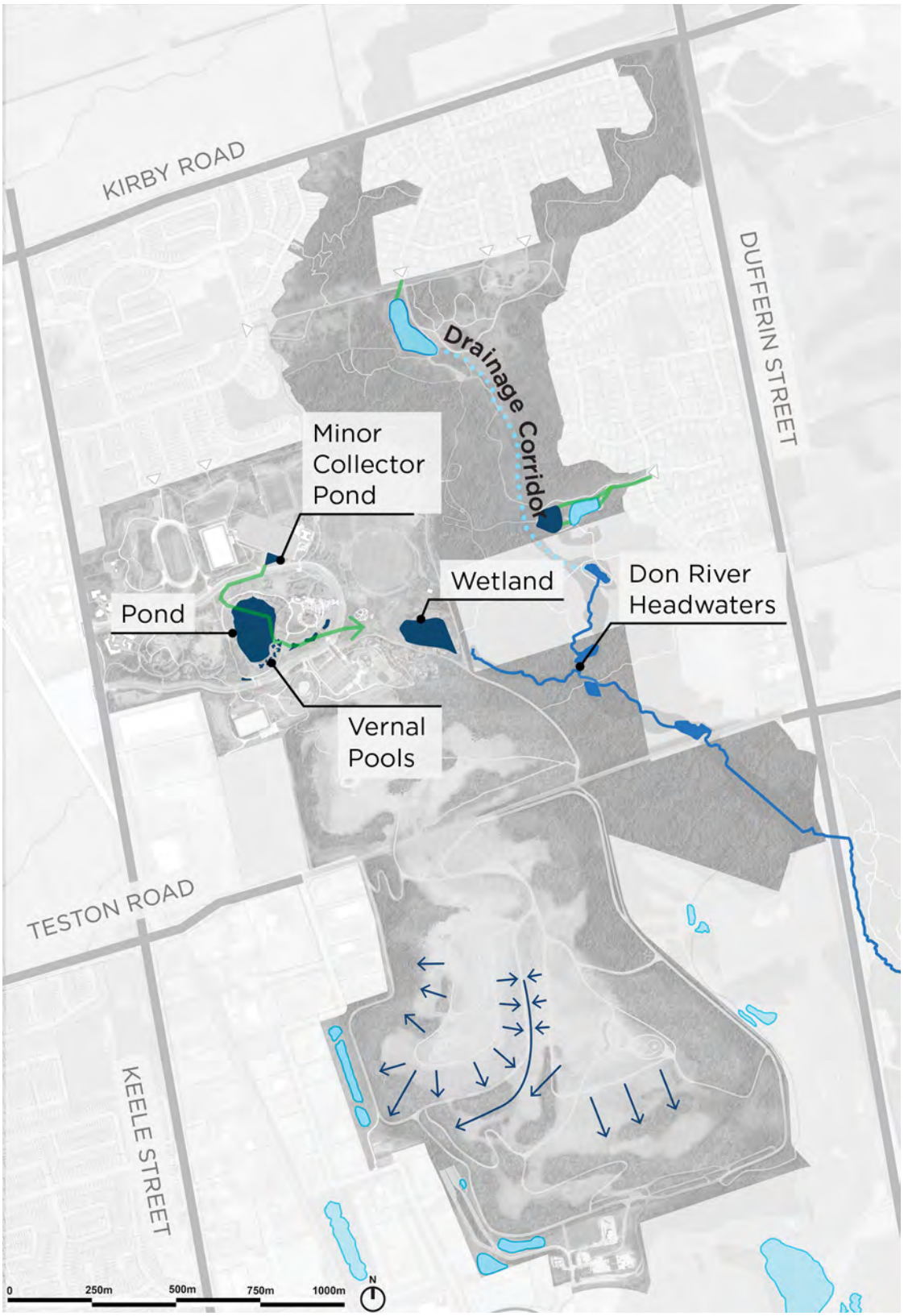
Stormwater Conveyance Infrastructure

Naturalized Stormwater Enhancements

Don River

For any changes to the drainage patterns on the landfills, refer to:

Technical volume 2: Landfill Restoration Engineering



Map 12. Natural drainage systems

Ecological Restoration Strategy and Management

The restoration approach for the park aims to assist the recovery of degraded portions of the site. It also seeks opportunities to go above-and-beyond preservation by linking and enhancing ecological features, protecting ecological functions, conserving biodiversity, and creating new habitats.

While there are robust restoration efforts in the park, the design seeks balance with the planned human recreational uses of the site, fully integrating human and natural activities into a single ecology. Noteable ongoing restoration and species at risk work includes pond restoration, bobolink and eastern meadowlark compensation habitat and bat habitat creation.

Grounding programmatic elements within a strong and responsive ecological framework ensures that park activity and the natural environment are interconnected and experienced together as a whole.



Map 13. Planting zones

Novel Ecologies

The site has been divided into planting zones based on distinct conditions and associated target vegetation communities. These communities are defined by specific ecological outputs and provide the framework for selecting appropriate plant species in each zone.

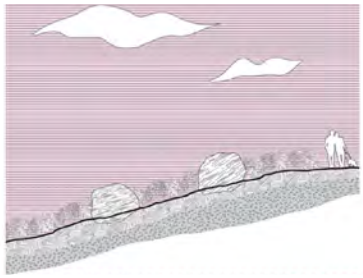
Applying novel ecological restoration requires species selection to be tailored to current conditions, rather than a historical reference, allowing the selected habitat type to thrive in its ideal growing conditions.

Choosing the most suitable fit for each zone of the park requires a deep understanding of landform characteristics such as slope, aspect, sun, shade and wind. This approach promotes a high degree of resilience and adaptation to shifting climates.

Planting Zones

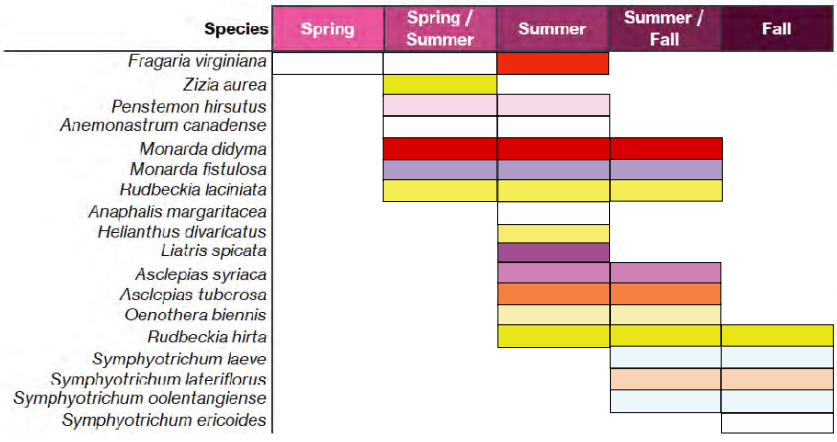
1. Summit Meadow (Dry Meadow)
2. Butterfly Sunset Meadow (Dry Meadow)
3. Bobolink Morning Meadow (Tall grass Prairie)
4. Hillside Garden (Anthropogenic)
4a. Pollinator Garden Terrace (Anthropogenic)
5. Castle Rock Meadow (Dry Meadow-Boulder Complex)
5a. Pollinator Garden Terrace (Anthropogenic)
6. Hummingbird Vale (Dry Shrub Thicket-Meadow Complex)
7. Meadowlark Prairie (Tall grass Prairie)
8. Riverstone Meadow Path (Dry-wet lowland meadow)
9. Bird feeder Shrub Forest (Dry Shrub Thicket)
10. Cedar Grove (Coniferous Visual Screen)
11. Cultural Plantation
12. Frog Marsh (Shallow Marsh)
12a. Swamp Thicket and Open Water
13. Turtle Pond (Open Aquatic)
14. Riparian Ring
15. Cultural area buffer
16. Habitat Connection Corridor
16a. Arboretum
17. Oak - Pine Forest (Mixed Forest)
17a. Evergreen Stream (Mixed Forest Riparian Corridor)
18. Maple - Hemlock Forest (Mixed Forest)
19. Coniferous Forest
20. Sugar Maple Deciduous Forest
21. Native Forb Old Field Meadow (Cultural Meadow & Thicket)
22. White Cedar Swamp (Mineral Coniferous Swamp)
22a. Mineral Coniferous Swamp & Open Water







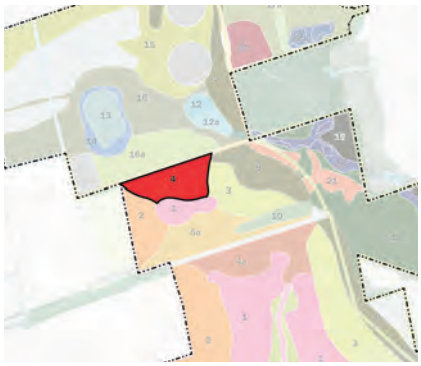




Castle Rock Dry Meadow - Boulder Complex: example of planting zone build-out

Highlighted Planting Zones

These restoration planting zones are highlighted as good representations of areas with a high human and animal value (blended ecology). Detailed lists and descriptions of all planting zones can be found in **Technical Volume 6: Ecological Framework Plan.**



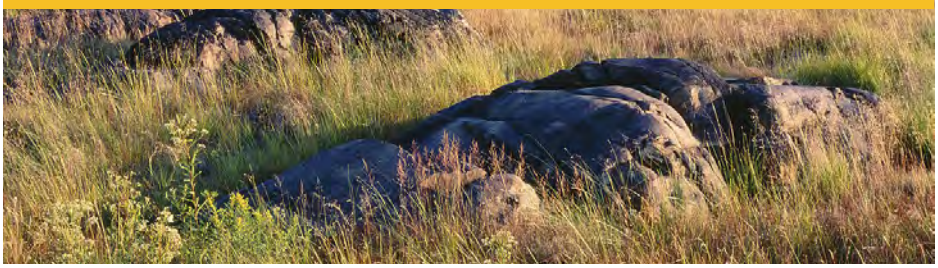
4. Hillside Garden



Defined by winding pathways through a mosaic of tall grass prairie and native meadow gardens, this space offers a blend of natural and formal landscape interpretations into one unique experience. This zone provides an important moment of transition in the park from the more active recreation areas in the north to the more passive, restored landfills to the south. An important aspect of the natural occurrence of tallgrass prairie and native meadows is dependent on regular disturbance cycles. This provides an opportunity to showcase the park's approach to restoration management, utilizing tactics such as strategic mowing as an integrated educational component for the park.



5. Castle Rock Meadow



This zone includes landforms characterized by sunny valley-like slopes. Planted with native meadow forbs and grasses, this zone prioritizes plant material that support butterflies, moths and other pollinators. The introduction of large boulders into the area provides opportunity for human free-play and wildlife habitat usage (e.g. both butterflies and people can utilize flat sunny rocks for basking). The strategic addition of deadfall logs or branches may provide additional cover and nesting locations for bees. Anticipating human presence in the area, species lists must consider low-growing ground cover plants that can withstand some level of trampling.

Highlighted Planting Zones



16. Habitat Connection Corridor



A primary component in integrating nature into the more active parts of the park, this green corridor provides both a habitat connector and providing various park functions such as shade in strategic locations. Hedgerows can be utilized in various locations throughout this zone to function as important ecosystem connectors, enabling wildlife to move safely east-west across the park. Habitat values of hedgerows are increased when a diversity of species are planted. Species selections may include a variety of native tree and shrub species to compliment recreational areas of the park. Planting plans may also include thorny or dense thicket-forming shrubs such as Hawthorns or Prickly Ash where there is a desire to block human access from certain areas.



16a. Arboretum



This area provides significant ecological, educational, and social value by blending curated tree collections with restored, self-sustaining native landscapes, prioritizing biodiversity, habitat creation, and the reduction of maintenance inputs. The Arboretum represents a transitional space from the active recreation areas of the park to the forested landscape. This area not only acts as a “living museum”, but also remains productive and serves as a vital source of seed stock for research, conservation, and propagation purposes as part of the park’s long-term restoration plan. Non-native species can be incorporated into this zone (and similar “manicured areas”) as a carefully managed component of the landscape.



Green rolling hills of the park

Landfill Restoration

At the heart of the park's transformation story are two former landfills: the Keele Valley Landfill Site (KVLS), which operated from 1983 to 2002, and the Vaughan Township Landfill Site (VTLS), which operated from 1965 to 1984. Together, these sites comprise approximately 196 ha (484 acres) of the park's 900-acre footprint, representing a remarkable journey from industrial use to future ecological restoration.

Today, these landfills are no longer receiving waste. Both sites have been capped—meaning they are covered with engineered soil layers designed to control water infiltration and prevent odours. Visitors to the park will find rolling, vegetated hills with no noticeable smell, a testament to successful environmental management and community advocacy.

However, the regulatory status of these sites is more complex than their peaceful appearance suggests. While the landfills no longer accept waste, they remain active from an environmental monitoring perspective. Both sites operate under Environmental Compliance Approvals from Ontario's Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, which require ongoing management of groundwater, leachate, landfill gas, and stormwater controls for decades to come.

The path to full park development requires formal Closure Plans—regulatory documents that outline how these sites will transition from waste management facilities to safe recreational spaces. These plans must demonstrate that environmental controls will protect public health and the ecosystem while allowing appropriate park uses. The KVLS has an approved Closure Plan (issued in 2006) that will be updated for park purposes, while the Vaughan Township Landfill's Closure Plan is currently in development.

This regulatory framework ensures that the park's transformation happens responsibly, honouring both the land's past and its future promise. For technical details, refer to **Technical Volume 2: Landfill Restoration Engineering**.

Understanding Landfills

How are landfills managed?

Landfills release greenhouse gases such as methane, carbon dioxide, and other air pollutants. They can also contaminate ground and surface water because of leachate production. Techniques like capping and lining, strict monitoring requirements and post-closure care help reduce environmental impact and ensure the safe future use of the site.

Why is the landfill restoration 25 years?

The process cannot be rushed because the waste underneath continues to decompose long after the site has closed. This causes the land to sink or become uneven, requiring ongoing maintenance. Risk of gas and leachate generation lowers over time.

When can ecological restoration begin?

Ecological restoration is an ongoing process that can begin immediately with superficial treatments such as grasslands to help curb erosion. More complex ecosystems can be introduced once the land becomes more stable.

When can the public access the site?

Landfill restoration timelines can vary greatly depending on maintenance and environmental safety requirements. While the entire park will likely not be open to the public for many years, certain areas and trails could become available sooner, adding to the amenities already available in the 400 acre, northern half of the park.



Keele Valley Landfill Site (1989)

Advocacy to stop expansion of landfill activities begins around this time.



Enabling works construction (2024)

Ongoing development of park amenities and restoration works

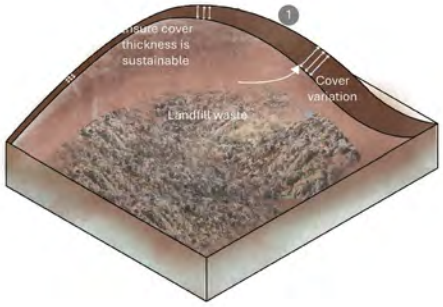


Freshkills Landfill Restoration

Future target for landfill sites at the park

Converting a Landfill to Park

The development timelines will be very different for each landfill site. The following phases from time of closure are for illustrative and educational purposes. They do not include regulatory phasing which would dictate the actual timeframes of these stages. For more details, refer to **Technical Volume 2: Landfill Restoration Engineering**.

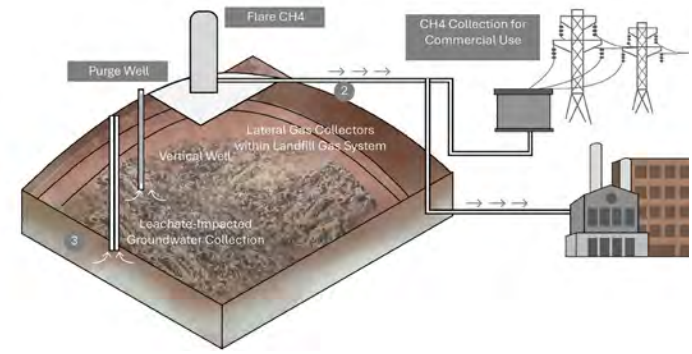


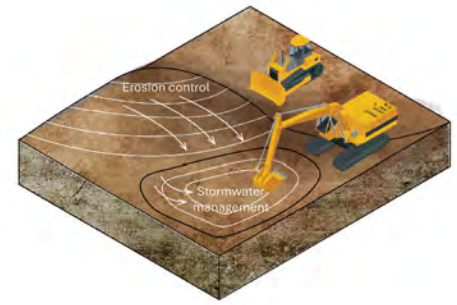
Assessment and Planning

Year 1-3

Complete site assessment including soil composition and contamination, environmental regulation review, stakeholder engagement, and the development of a comprehensive restoration plan that includes objectives, budget, and implementation strategies.

At this early stage, important stakeholders might include entities such as adjacent communities, environmental agencies, landfill specialists, and municipal governments. The focus of this phase should be understanding the processes and timelines required for a safe transition from landfill to park.

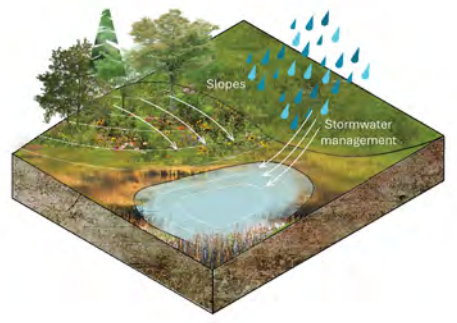




Remedial Work

Year 4-19

Construct final cover system of compacted clay, topsoil, and grass vegetation and continue monitoring gas and leachate extraction networks. Additional security and safety measures such as settlement monitoring points or perimeter fencing with controlled access points may also be implemented to ensure future success of the park.

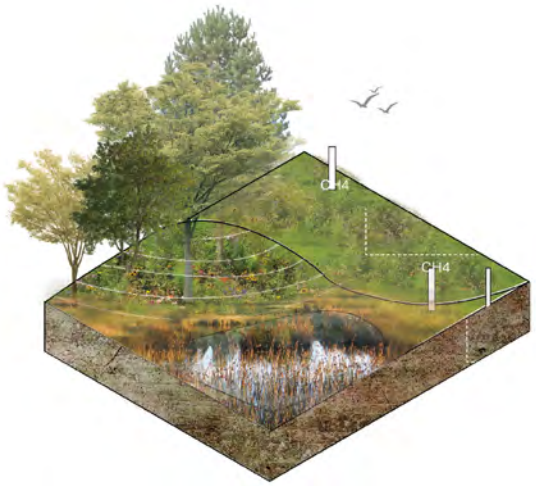


Converting a Landfill to Park

Grading and Land Shaping

Year 20-21

Reshape the landfill to create a stable base for future park infrastructure. This involves grading the surface to create slopes and contours that promote natural drainage, preventing erosion and facilitating sustainable ecological processes



Vegetation Establishment

Year 22-27

Develop and select native place species that can restore habitat, enhance biodiversity, and improve ecosystem services. Ensure ongoing maintenance to support the growth of plants and resilience for the overall ecosystem.



Infrastructure Development

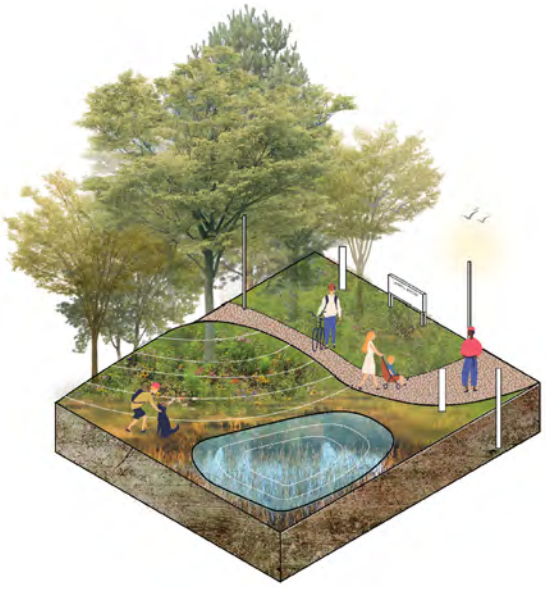
Year 28-29

Site development of hardscape, furnishing, lighting elements, in addition to any facilities. Elements that minimize impact and promote conservation will be highlighted. During this stage, strategic locations for early public access may begin to occur.

Monitoring & Community Awareness

Year 30 and beyond

Establish a monitoring program to comprehensively track vegetation growth, soil quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem health. Following the park's opening, ongoing monitoring will persist throughout the post-closure maintenance period to safeguard public health against any potential impacts resulting from access.



Key Strategies

Landfill Restoration

Strategies

Develop supporting information for park planning and approvals

Collaborate with Vaughan and Toronto landfill managers to support and advance the park development plan, undertaking initial technical studies relating to public health and safety including landfill gas emission surveys, leachate seep, stormwater controls, groundwater controls, and cover soil quality. Develop short and long-term park feature development around landfill control infrastructure including exclusion areas and protective fencing enclosures.

Complete / update landfill closure and end use Plans

Confirm compatibility of park design with landfill closure plan requirements and incorporate planned park design into Vaughan Landfill Closure and End Use Plan development. Strategic review of Keele Valley Closure and End Use Plan to identify required updates to existing plan to support park development. Coordinate and support regulatory approval of proposed closure and end use plans within the proposed timeframe for progressive park development.

While both landfill sites will require closure and end-use planning, their regulatory status, technical readiness, and implementation timelines differ, necessitating site-specific considerations.

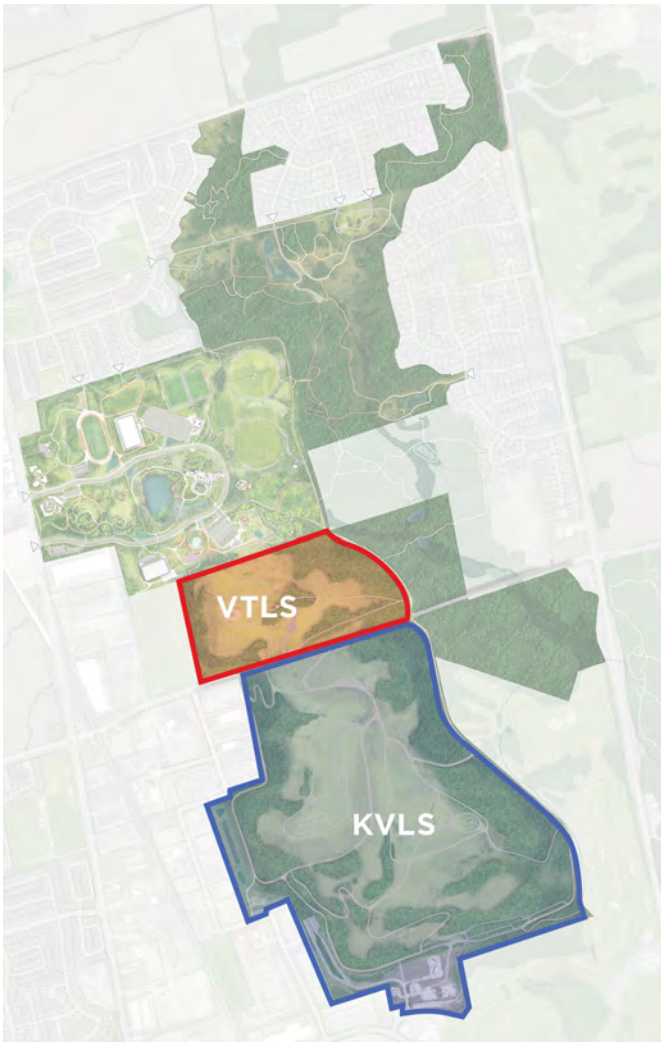
Develop phasing and implementation plan

Sequence planting and feature installation within medium (5–25 years) and long (>25 years) term phases. Update development plan following approval of Closure and End Use Plans and complete development progressing from lowest potential public interaction to full public access (outside of exclusion areas) over time, with a goal of full public access in 25 years.

Implement early and progressive public access

Initiate park-focused planting activities as soon as practicable in areas outside of landfill control system infrastructure. Integrate planned general public access with landfill maintenance access requirements and update park design based on initial studies and regulatory requirements. Open parts of the landfill to general public access as soon as reasonably practical and safe, progressively adding features based on compatibility with ongoing landfill maintenance and environmental control management system requirements.

Landfill Restoration Next Steps
Next steps on developing the landfill sites and timing for the key strategies, refer to the **Catalytic Projects** section of **The Future Chapter**.



Map 14. Landfill sites

Vaughan Township Landfill Site (VTLS)
Manager: Vaughan
Area: 42 ha (104 acres)

Keele Valley Landfill Site (KVLS)
Manager: Toronto
Area: 154 ha (380 acres)

For information on the state of each landfill (both VTLS and KVLS), refer to the end use plans for **Technical Volume 2: Landfill Restoration Engineering.**

Landfill Sites in the Park

The park includes landfill mounds that comprise the closed Vaughan Township and Keele Valley Landfill Sites (VTLS and KVLS, respectively). Environmental control systems at these landfills are managed by the Cities of Vaughan and Toronto, respectively. Any proposed park features on the landfill sites (including access points) will need to be included in the regulated Closure and End Use Plans for these two closed landfills, which outline operation and maintenance of their control systems, some of which are expected to be required into the next century.

Over time, landfill emissions and the need for environmental controls decrease, thereby reducing potential risks to the public and, together with the continued operation of the remaining control systems, allowing for increased public access. The closed landfills are generally compatible with such uses as passive recreation trails, mountain bike trails, ecological features, open areas for passive use, and play areas.

The detailed design stage for the park (the phase of design that turns conceptual visions into actionable, technical plans that focus on materials, construction methods, and sustainability) will provide an opportunity to adapt the park concept to the regulated landfill features. With a focus on continued environmental management and safeguarding the health and safety of the users of the park, the key strategies of this master plan will guide overall park design, early implementation of landfill restoration, and general public access. This is the same approach that has been used to successfully develop park facilities on many other closed landfill sites in North America.

From Landfill to Legacy



Natural areas at the park

Across 900 acres of meadows, wetlands, forests, and restored landfill terrain, the park demonstrates that ecological recovery is possible, visible, and meaningful to experience. Native grasses stabilize slopes and support pollinators. Wetlands filter water and provide habitat for species at risk. Green corridors connect fragmented natural areas, improving conditions for wildlife movement throughout the site and beyond.

The Restore chapter has laid out the ecological framework that underpins the entire park: protecting what exists, connecting local and regional ecologies, and actively supporting the recovery of degraded systems. The former Keele Valley Landfill Site is being integrated into the broader park landscape, with restoration work guided by a detailed Ecological Framework Plan and a long-term management approach rooted in science and adaptive practice.

Interpretive trails, guided walks, volunteer planting days, and accessible nature paths bring visitors into direct contact with the land's ongoing recovery, making ecological stewardship a visible and participatory part of the park experience. That connection between the land and the people who care for it is what the next chapter builds on. Engage follows Restore because a healthy, restored landscape is what gives the park's cultural programming, interpretive storytelling, and community life a meaningful place to take root.



Park grasslands upon rolling hills



Engage

Engage with North Maple Regional Park and discover a landscape alive with stories waiting to be told.

From the ancient Indigenous villages that once thrived at the Don River headwaters, to the grassroots activism that transformed Canada's largest landfill into this emerging natural sanctuary, every corner of the park invites connection. Here, interpretive trails wind through restored meadows where Eastern Meadowlarks nest, a heritage building grounds visitors in over 175 years of history, and community volunteers gather to plant native species that will flourish for generations to come. This is a place where history becomes tangible, where environmental stewardship becomes caretaking, and where every visitor—whether a curious child on their first nature walk or a dedicated volunteer



Conceptual rendering of the treetop canopy walk in Zone 3 Natural Areas

tending a pollinator garden—becomes part of the park's unfolding story.

North Maple Regional Park offers countless ways to engage: through guided walks that explore Indigenous land management practices, hands-on restoration projects that heal the landscape, cultural celebrations that honor the park's diverse communities, and educational programs that inspire the next generation of environmental advocates.

Whether you're discovering the deep and layered Indigenous history of the area, joining a community planting day, or simply pausing at a scenic overlook to read about the land's transformation, the park invites active participation in its present and future.



A Day in the Park: Engage

Sample visitor routes

A Vaughan local and their child hear about the new NMRP and want to learn more about it. In the morning they learn about the landfill history, local ecology, and wildlife from the interpretive signs. They spend the afternoon exploring the conservatory and stay for a multi-cultural performance in the evening.

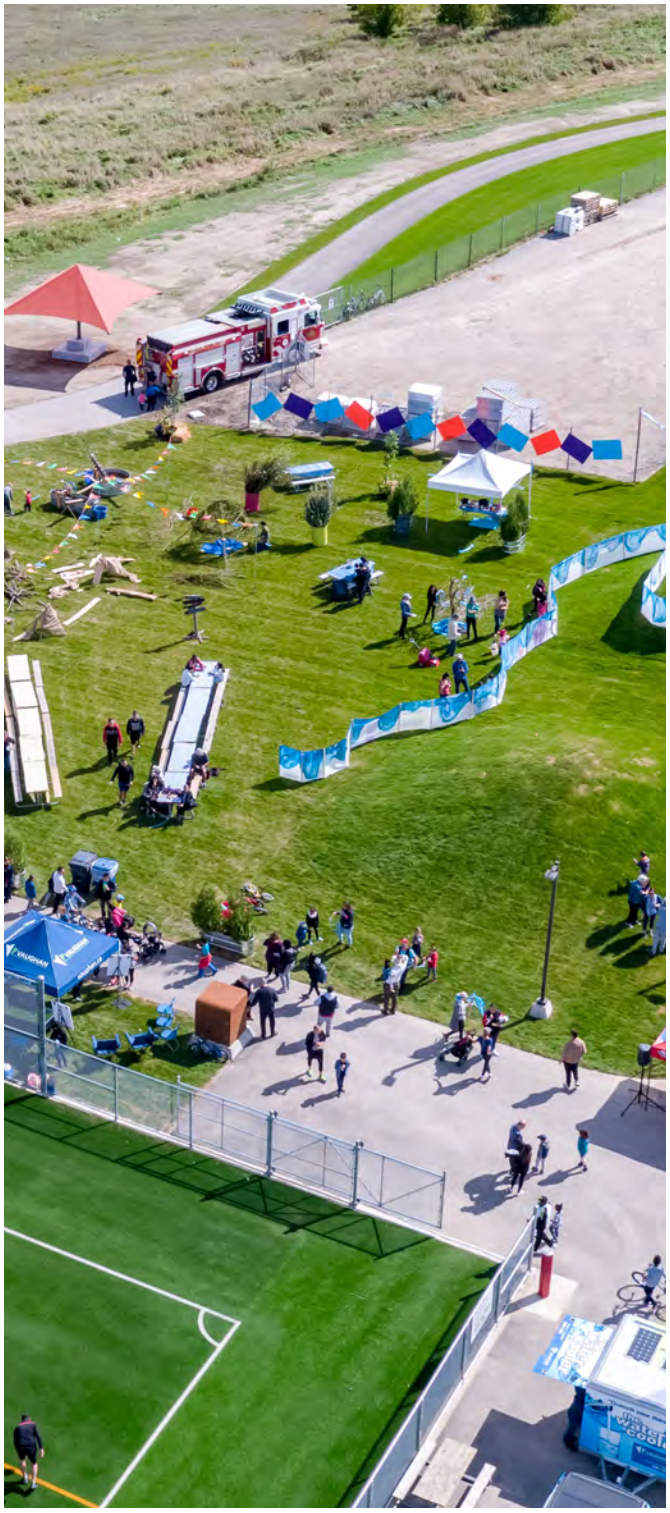
Come Together: Events at North Maple Regional Park

A robust year-round calendar of events and activities is critical to the long-term success of the park. While the landscape is the backbone of the park, its visitors are its lifeblood. Programmed events and activities greatly enhance park usage and visitation. Programmed events and activities:

- Attract targeted audiences
- Draw visitors at specific times
- Increase visitorship
- Can provide earned revenue

Both large and small events are important. One-time special events can attract large numbers of visitors and encourage positive publicity, while frequent low-impact events provide continuous attractions for visitors. Small-scale activities scheduled for daytime hours during the week will attract local residents, caregivers with children, and community members. Local office workers can be encouraged to use the park with small-scale lunchtime and after-work events. Small-scale activities encourage repeat visits and create a consistent level of usership. The presence of people implies a sense of safe space and further encourages others to visit. The presence of people also serves as the “eyes and ears” for the park and help discourage anti-social behavior.

Due to the safety requirements of the landfill sites, fireworks are prohibited in all areas of the park.



Phase 1 opening at the park



Canada Day at North Maple Regional Park (2019)

Event Tiers

Frequent Programs and Events (Tier 1)

Sponsored events for adults and children can occur on a regular basis. These events are often subsidized (at least initially) to help activate the park and enhance visitation. The park should focus on expanding this tier of programs to encourage repeated visits. If educational classes are offered, Park Operators would also need to explore what level of classes to offer. While ambitious, it is possible to offer educational classes for all ages, but more staff will be needed to support this program agenda. Examples of these events and activities are:

- Yoga or Tai-Chi in the Park
- Lunchtime concerts and lectures
- Temporary art displays
- Children's and family activities
- Educational classes

Seasonal Activities and Events (Tier 2)

These will primarily be larger-scale events put on by both the City/Park Operator and outside producers. There will be a special permit process for the permitting of all outside events. Due to the scale of the events, they would require considerable support, ranging from the number of staff organizing and working on them, to park infrastructure needs, such as electrical requirements and tents for their operation. These larger events can have a major impact on the park's landscapes. Examples of these events and activities are:

- Artisan Market
- Farmers' Market
- Holiday Lighting/Market
- Weekend Evening Concerts
- Movies-In-The-Park
- Outdoor Theater

Special Events (Tier 3)

Special events are important to a park's activity schedule as they attract many visitors and can generate revenue for the park. Although large special events are important, they must be carefully planned, scheduled, and operated. There will be a special event permit process for the permitting of all special events. Despite the best efforts of park management and staff, special events can do a great deal of damage to the park landscape which must be quickly addressed to maintain park standards. Examples of these events and activities are: festivals, parades, marathons or runs.

Potential Impact of Special Events on Park Landscapes

The primary long-term impact of special events is on lawns and landscape areas due to overuse and lack of adequate time for resting between events. Constant use of the lawns can place a heavy burden on the turf, particularly if events are back-to-back. Overuse will result in compacted soil and spotty, unhealthy turf more susceptible to pests and diseases. The presence of vehicles on the lawns also accelerates soil compaction. Compacted soil prevents the absorption of rainwater, deprives roots of oxygen, and limits root growth. As a result, turf surfaces lose their durability and anchoring capacity, becoming increasingly vulnerable to wear and tear. With continued overuse, the turf surfaces begin to wear thin, exposing the compacted subsoil underneath. Severe runoff can develop as rainwater erodes the exposed topsoil, eliminating any possibility of turf recovery. Soil reinforcing admixtures like "Turf Grids" can help resist compaction and tearing of intensely used lawn areas.

Events that are not managed properly or are too large for the park contribute significantly to turf deterioration and increased maintenance costs. Before and after events, park users may spill over path systems leading to the site, creating compacted areas through the surrounding landscape and trampling adjacent landscape plantings.

Damage also occurs during set-up, take-down, and clean-up. Large vehicles, vans, and other equipment involved in event set-up and removal of stages, sound systems, barricades, vendor tents, deliveries, and other event support activities frequently drive off paved paths, adding to soil compaction and turf damage. Heavy event schedules with back-to-back events means that it's almost impossible to establish an adequate turf maintenance plan: lawns can't be regularly fertilized, irrigated, aerated, over-seeded, and rested. To limit wildlife and habitat disruptions, adequate natural buffers and protected areas will be clearly marked. Lighting, sound systems and litter can impact wildlife within the park.



Key Takeaways from Public Engagement:

Amphitheater & Gathering Spaces: Community festivals and outdoor programming ranked among the top requested activities in Phase 2 (86 mentions), supporting inclusion of the amphitheater and stage.

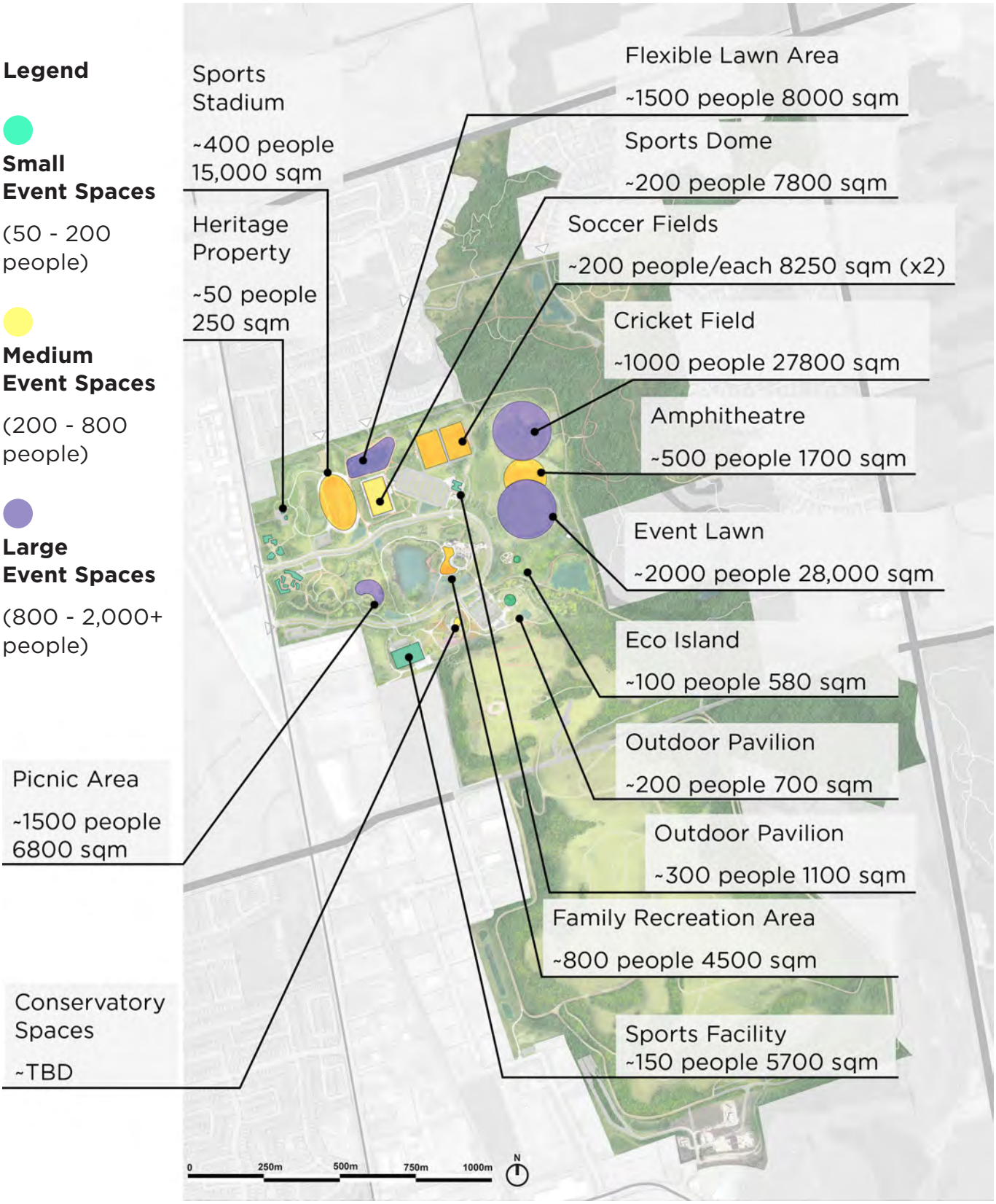
Intended Use Events Capacity

These values represent the average capacity of intended use based on the area of each space, not the maximum capacity. All future park project's capacities will be determined through feasibility studies.

Event space sizing is based on standard assembly occupant load factors (IBC/ NFPA), hospitality and event industry planning guidelines, and outdoor crowd density best practices, adjusted for circulation, accessibility, and comfort typical of regional park settings.

	Small Event Spaces	Medium Event Spaces	Large Event Spaces
Capacity	(50 - 200 people)	(200 - 800 people)	(800 - 2,000+ people)
Indoor	35 - 300 sqm	175 - 1,500 sqm	900 - 1,500 sqm
Outdoor	75 - 560 sqm	375 - 3,500 sqm	2,000 - 20,000 sqm

Event Type	sqm per person	sqm per person	sqm per person
Indoor			
Standing	0.55 - 0.75	0.65 - 0.95	0.75 - 0.95
Theatre-style seating	0.65 - 0.95	0.75 - 1.1	0.95 - 1.4
Seated / tables	1.1 - 1.4	1.1 - 1.7	1.4 - 1.9
Outdoor			
Standing	0.9 - 1.4	1.4 - 2.3	1.9 - 3.3
Mixed lawn + seating	1.4 - 2.3	1.9 - 3.3	2.3 - 4.6
Picnic / tables	1.9 - 2.8	2.8 - 4.6	3.7 - 7.0



Map 15. Event capacity

Key Strategies

Cultural and Ecological Heritage

Strategies

Protect the park's cultural and ecological heritage resources

Protection through conservation planning, sensitive land management, and ecological monitoring, ensuring these irreplaceable cultural and natural resources are safeguarded for future generations. Use of the heritage building for a new purpose must respect its historical significance and preserve the historic character. Use distinct habitat zones to conserve and restore wildlife habitats using native plants to support future-resilient plant communities.

Celebrate the park's cultural and ecological heritage resources

Develop an Interpretation and Commemoration Plan to showcase the layered storytelling that links the past, present and future of the park. This allows history and storytelling to be shared, holistically understood and publicly experienced through a variety of mediums that reflect the overall design narrative of North Maple Regional Park. Examples are expanded upon in the following pages.



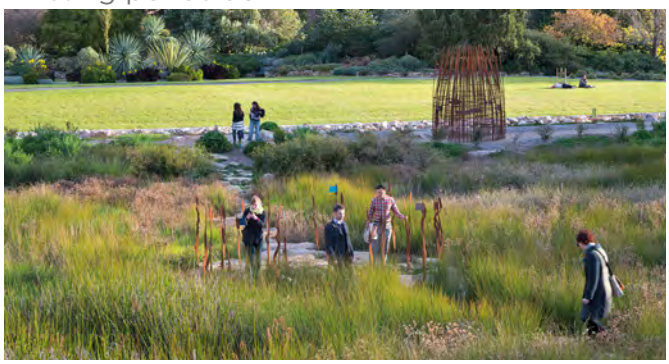
Heritage property

Overarching Strategy

Protect and celebrate the park's cultural heritage resources and stories as the park develops.



Existing pondside



Ecological trails, wetland



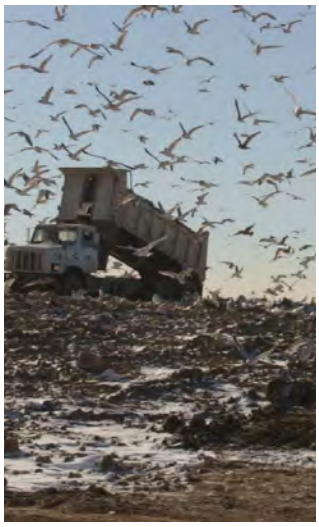
Tree planting

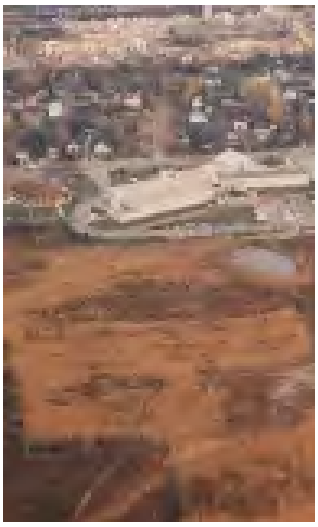


Site photo looking west to Keele









Archival imagery:
agriculture, landfill, gravel extraction

Historical Land Use & Heritage

Preserving layered histories within the park honours the Don River headwaters as a longstanding natural and cultural corridor shaped by Indigenous use and early settlement.

The river valley, landform, and vegetation reflect enduring relationships between people and landscape. The heritage house and surrounding cultural landscape further embody 19th-century rural settlement patterns and commemorate early settler families whose stewardship helped define the area's historic character.

More recent uses of extraction and landfill are acknowledged and rectified as part of the extensive rehabilitation work to the site.

Key Strategies

Interpretive Themes and Stories

The Role of Storytelling in the Landscape

Public awareness and celebration of the heritage value of a place is an important component of successful conservation. The experience of being in nature is about connecting with the landscape that surrounds you. At the park, ecological history, cultural memory and lived experience are woven together into layered land-based stories, that are taught by the landscape through interpretive panels, public art and meaningful plantings. Through interpretation and commemoration, these stories may be revealed along trails, gathering areas, and hilltop viewpoints, inviting users to absorb all that the park design has to offer and to link the past, present, and future.

Strategies

Establish self-led interpretive storytelling throughout the park

Building upon Cultural and Ecological Heritage Strategy 2, these five interconnected themes tell the story of North Maple Regional Park, from its ancient geological origins and millennia of Indigenous stewardship, through agricultural settlement and industrial use, to today's transformation into a restored landscape. These themes honour the past while inspiring sustainable stewardship for the future. The development of interpretive storytelling and commemoration will require iteration and perspective from key stakeholders, Indigenous peoples, land caretakers, designers and experts.

Interpretive Theme	Where You May Find This in the Park
Indigenous Connections	Gathering areas, contemplative natural areas, commemoration signage and artwork referring the Traditional Territory, Indigenous-led teachings and planting
Where the River Begins	Headwaters, tree top walk, wetland boardwalk, habitat structures in corridor near bodies of water
Land as Provider	Wellness gardens, tree nursery plots, GROW Hub, conservatory
From Landfill to Living Landscape	Showcasing the ecological restoration to create grassland habitats for birds and wildlife to an open-air gallery along the hilltops.
Play and Community	Large gatherings and events, daily and seasonal programming

Flowing Through the Park: A Water Droplet's Journey



A Water Droplet's Journey, A 'Where the River Begins' panel example.

This short story provides a playful narrative that explores the "Where the River Begins" theme, offering an accessible way to understand how water moves through the park.

It's April at North Maple Regional Park. The sun has just peaked over the horizon and a single water droplet loosens itself from a leaf. Moments earlier it had just been fog, suspended among trees, until warm air and gravity drew it down the leaf's veins, finally relinquishing its grasp and falling onto the grass below. The little droplet is embraced by the earth, brushing past fungal threads and tree roots as it continues its descent.

Along the way, it nourished a maple, then settled into some grass roots. By midday, the droplet is set out again as vapor and rises into the sky, now drifting along with others, forming a cloud. Our little droplet falls from the sky and onto the pond's surface mixing with other droplets, all on their own journey. A gentle overflow at the pond's edge carries it outward, where it slows, slipping between plants and leaf litter. The narrow ribbon of moisture the droplet now follows begins to widen, into pools of wetland sedges and spongy soil.

What had once been a simple drop is now part of the wetland's careful work, storing and cleaning water. Over time, the droplet joins groundwater again and travels unseen, emerging from the soil as a cold seep of the Don River headwaters. Joined by countless others, it flows swiftly over stones and roots, becoming current, beginning an even longer journey shaped by slope, seasons, and the living edges of the land.

Land-Based Interpretive Themes and Stories

Theme 1: Indigenous Connections

Honour the deep Indigenous history of this place and recognize the continuing presence of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in the region.

This theme celebrates the original caretakers of the land, their ongoing connections to this place and deep knowledge of native plantings, reciprocal relationships and teachings. This theme will be developed in partnership with Indigenous communities.

For more, refer to **Indigenous History** and **Indigenous Engagement** sections Volume 1.



Indigenous connections vignette



Where the river begins vignette

Theme 2: Where the River Begins

Explore the park's unique location at the headwaters of the Don River, where water begins its journey to Lake Ontario. Discover how glaciers shaped this landscape 13,000 years ago, creating the rolling hills of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Learn how Indigenous peoples used these waterways as travel routes and gathering places, and how this geography continues to influence life in the region today.

For an example of an Interpretive Panel for this theme refer to **Flowing Through the Park: A Water Droplet's Journey**.



Land as provider vignette

Theme 3: Land as Provider

Discover how people have used and shaped this land across thousands of years including Indigenous farming and seasonal camps, to 19th-century family farms, gravel extraction, waste disposal, and today's ecological restoration.

Each era tells a story of how communities have made their living from the land, offering lessons about sustainability and our relationship with nature.

Theme 4: From Landfill to Living Landscape

Experience the story of how one of Canada's largest landfills transforms into a thriving park. Learn about the community activists who fought for change, the environmental challenges overcome, and the ongoing work to restore this land. The legacy shows how dedicated communities can heal damaged landscapes and create new possibilities.



From landfill to living landscape vignette



Play and community vignette

Theme 5: Play and Community

Celebrate the park's role as a gathering place for sport, recreation, and community connection. From traditional Indigenous games to today's sports pitches and trails, showing how active play brings people together across generations.



Community planting event

Volunteer Opportunities

Key Takeaways from Public Engagement:

Organized volunteer programs build caretakers and community connection by giving people meaningful ways to contribute. People want to be involved and when clear pathways exist, volunteering becomes a powerful tool. for fostering care, ownership, and long-term engagement with public green spaces.

Public parks thrive when people are given meaningful ways to contribute their time, skills, and care.

Volunteer opportunities invite individuals, families, schools, and community groups to actively participate in restoring ecosystems, supporting wildlife, leading walks, removing invasive species, and engaging others through outreach and education. These hands-on experiences create deep connections to the land while building environmental knowledge and pride of place.

Volunteering transforms a park into a shared "classroom without walls," where people of all ages learn by doing and become long-term stewards of the landscape. By creating clear pathways for community involvement, the park becomes more than a destination—it becomes a collective effort. Through volunteerism, people invest sweat equity, build community, and help ensure this 900-acre park continues to grow, heal, and inspire future generations.

Volunteers are essential in extending the park's capacity to care for land, wildlife, and visitors, while bringing local knowledge, energy, and commitment into day-to-day operations. Land caretakers build a shared responsibility for the park, ensuring it is not only protected today, but cared for across generations.

Volunteer Programs

Strategies

Develop Events Logistics Plan

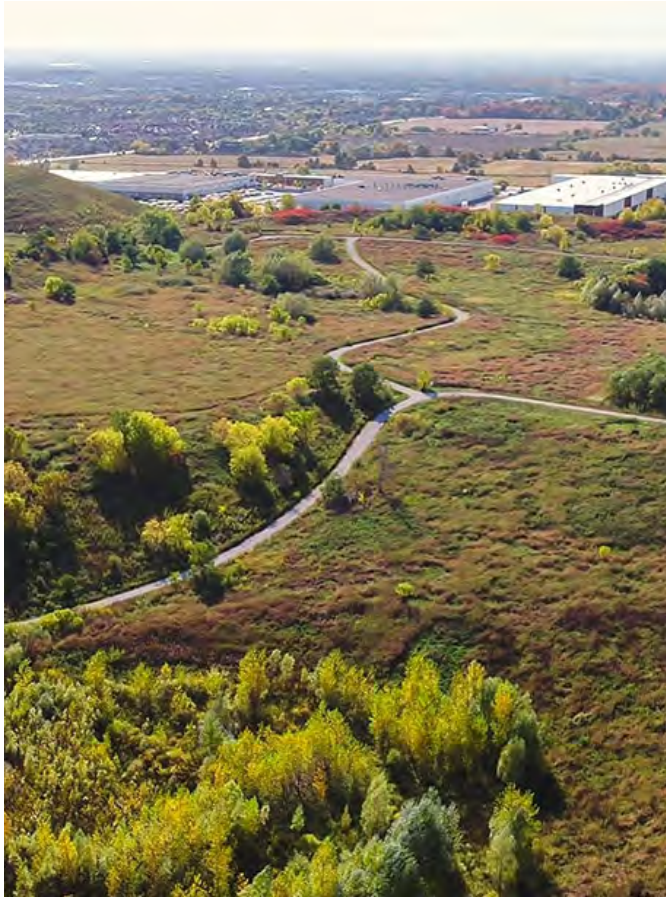
The dedicated Recreation Program Coordinator(s) will develop a coordinated Events Logistics Plan that will enable educational and cultural programming, coordinate scheduling, partnerships and volunteers. Management of the operational aspects of programming and special events will ease visitors' experience of the park. Thoughtfully located infrastructure will support guided walks, seasonal events, and volunteer activities that immerse visitors in the natural and cultural processes of land use, remediation, and restoration.

Establish Tiered Volunteer Framework

A tiered volunteer framework will create accessible pathways for visitors to engage with the park's evolving landscape and heritage, from introductory stewardship activities to advanced leadership roles. Supported by a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator, volunteers will learn through participation, gaining insight into ecological recovery, cultural history, and the park's transformation over time.

Volunteerism as Land Caretakers

This strategy encourages community members and park visitors to support ongoing restoration efforts through volunteerism. Through hands-on participation ranging from seasonal tree planting events to informative training series on the ecological processes and cultural land histories that have shaped the site, volunteers will form deeper connections to the park as caretakers , advocates and Green Guardians.



Volunteer Program Examples



Brickworks volunteers

Evergreen Brick Works, Toronto

Volunteer Role

Hands-on activation of public spaces through gardening, markets, education, festivals, and events; acting as onsite support and ambassadors.

Volunteer Benefits

Skill-building, leadership pathways, social connection, and participation in high-impact, mission-driven urban sustainability work.

Community Benefits

Vibrant, animated public spaces; expanded programming capacity; stronger civic engagement around climate, food, and cities.

Program Scope

Large, structured volunteer base (1,000+ volunteers) significantly increases delivery capacity and organizational resilience.

Reciprocal Relationships

Place-based action fosters long-term care for urban nature and public spaces through repeat engagement.



Friends of Algonquin

Algonquin Provincial Park, Whitney

Volunteer Role

Support education programs, special events, visitor services, and museum interpretation.

Volunteer Benefits

Connection to iconic landscapes, educational enrichment, and participation in legacy conservation work.

Community Benefits

Enhanced visitor experience, expanded learning opportunities, and sustained park programming.

Program Scope

Cooperating association model under agreement with Ontario Parks that leverages volunteers and diversified funding to support provincial park objectives.

Reciprocal Relationships

Education-focused volunteering fosters lifelong environmental awareness and park advocacy.

Park-Programmed Events

Strategies

Develop Events Logistics Plan

Create a specific brochure and/or webpage for booking and planning small, medium, and large events at North Maple Regional Park. Include facility details, fee structure, vendor requirements, contractual information, and contact info.

North Maple Regional Park produces a number of small but consistent programs that will encourage visitors to return and participate in other events. Approximately 80-100 events per year, which averages 2-3 events per week, is an appropriate goal. The events should be concentrated on the weekdays and some on the weekends and if the budget allows, include one or two large events per month to draw in larger audience(s). Additionally, the park can host events produced and operated by outside entities.

While programs and events can generate some revenues, very often they do not cover the entire production and operating costs. It is important to balance keeping the park activated and affordable, with using the park as a revenue-generating venue. The potential revenue these programs may generate is not covered in this report.

Preliminary Programming Calendars

To envision the future for events at North Maple Regional Park, there are two programming options: moderate and high intensity programming. These options are explored in more detail in **Technical Volume 7: Business Plan**.

Moderate Intensity Programming

Third party rentals, permits, and events will be the primary focus. A few independent contracted fee-based classes and programs will be available, with some free programs available to the public. The number of events and activities from Tier 2-4 will be limited. The anticipated revenue would not be able to cover all staffing costs.

High Intensity Programming

The park will be fully programmed to maximize rental areas. Multiple Tier 2-4 events are expected to take place throughout the year. Both free and fee-based programs and events will be provided, in addition to third party rentals, permits, independent contracted classes/ programs and events. This strategy will be the most active and balanced schedule of activities and events. It is anticipated that the revenue generated from this strategy will not cover all staffing costs.

Rooted in Community



Community Event Hikeshop (July 2024)

Parks are sustained by the people who care for them. At North Maple Regional Park, community engagement is central to the park's identity. From the Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. residents who advocated for the landfill's closure to the First Nations communities whose teachings inform the park's relationship to the land, the park has depended on people who are invested in this place.

The Engage chapter has explored how that investment becomes structured: through interpretive trails that tell the park's layered story, through a tiered volunteer program that gives visitors meaningful ways to contribute, and through a year-round calendar of events, from cultural festivals to guided ecological walks, that supports regular activation and broad community access. Cultural heritage, interpretive storytelling, and community programming are woven into the fabric of the landscape, present in the heritage farmhouse, the naming of Vaughan CARES Way, and the interpretive nodes placed throughout the site.

Community connection and active recreation are closely linked at the park. People who feel a sense of belonging in a park are more likely to use it fully, return regularly, and bring others with them. Play follows Engage because the park's recreational programming grows out of the same commitment to inclusive, accessible, community-centered experience. The next chapter explores the full range of active and passive recreation the park will offer across every season.



Tree-lined pathway



Play

At North Maple Regional Park, play takes infinite forms—from the exhilaration of kicking a ball on FIFA-certified soccer fields under stadium lights to the quiet wonder of following a butterfly along a meadow trail. Children navigate natural playgrounds nestled among the trees, mountain bikers tackle challenging terrain on the former landfill mounds, and families gather for impromptu picnics on sun-drenched slopes.

Here, play isn't confined to designated areas—it spills across 900 acres of diverse landscapes where you might find yourself sliding down hillside features one moment and exploring interpretive trails the next. Whether you're seeking the thrill of organized sports, the freedom of unstructured exploration, or the joy of moving your body, the park invites you to play your way.



Conceptual rendering: Hilltop lookout in Zone 4

This is a park designed to inspire movement, curiosity, and connection; a place where generations come together to create memories, test their limits, and rediscover the simple pleasure of being active outdoors. From sunrise yoga sessions to twilight cricket matches, from nature-based adventure to world-class athletics, the spirit of play animates every corner of this transformed landscape.

Youth Priorities (Phase 4)

A total of 122 high school students participated in Phase 4 engagement, identifying sports and social infrastructure as top priorities. Youth strongly advocated for:

- Indoor sports domes
- Outdoor courts
- Flexible social gathering spaces



A Day in the Park: Play

Sample visitor routes

A young couple, their children and parents come to the park together, and immediately split up. The kids practice for their upcoming soccer game. The grandparents explore unfamiliar foods at the multi-cultural food festival. The young couple take advantage of the free time to take part in their favorite hobby: tandem biking.

Programs and Amenities Year-Round

North Maple Regional Park transforms with the seasons, offering diverse opportunities for active living and outdoor discovery twelve months a year. The matrix below identifies peak programming by season and demonstrates continuous park activation. A dedicated Recreation Program Coordinator(s) will be essential to coordinate scheduling and partnerships, while external collaborations with sports organizations, schools, cultural groups, and recreation providers will deliver the breadth of programming envisioned.

Year Round Activities

- Trail hiking and walking
- Outdoor fitness and wellness
- Nature interpretation
- Seasonal markets (farmers', craft, food)
- Cultural events and festivals
- Field sports and leagues
- Educational programming



Summer

- Sports tournaments
- Summer day camps (sports, nature, adventure)
- Outdoor concerts and movies
- Outdoor education programs (pollinators, meadows, insects)
- Botanical gardens



Fall

- Cycling events and trail races
- Harvest festivals (markets, pumpkin, Thanksgiving)
- Fall foliage tours
- Outdoor school programs (curriculum-based, field trips)



Winter

- Cross-country skiing, warming huts
- Sledding and winter hiking
- Indoor education programs,
- Winter festivals (lights, skating)



Spring

- Spring celebrations (Earth Day, opening festivals)
- Bird watching
- Outdoor education programs (ecology, watershed, wildlife)

Key Strategies

Active Recreation

Overarching Strategy

Provide a diverse range of sport, fitness, and adventure opportunities that encourage physical activity and structured play, while respecting the park's natural systems and landscape character.

Active Recreation by the Numbers



13 km
of total trails



10.5 km
of hiking and mountain biking trails



6
sport areas/facilities

Strategies

Plan and design sports facilities to be integrated with surrounding landscapes

Facilities are sited and buffered to minimize environmental impact while supporting local leagues, tournaments, and community use.

Design responsive trails and pathways that encourage everyday fitness

A comprehensive trail network supports hiking, running, and mountain biking across a range of skill levels.

Provide adventure-oriented amenities

These elements provide unique, terrain-based challenges that reinforce the park's identity as a destination for active, outdoor play.

Support competitive sport, training, and special events

Facilities and supporting infrastructure are planned to accommodate tournaments and events while balancing everyday community use and environmental stewardship. This will attract regional users and activate the park at a larger scale.

Active Recreation Plan

Legend

Multi-use
Asphalt

Woodlot Nature Trail
Granular

Boardwalk
Wood

Mountain Bike Trail
Compacted Earth

Sport areas/ facilities



Map 16. Active recreation map

*The location of temporary/permanent off-leash areas will be determined in the future.

For a full trail network, refer to Non-Vehicle Circulation section in the **Movement and Connectivity chapter.

Recreational Amenities

This table below outlines the park's capacity to host sports and athletic activities.

Amenity	Capacity / Size	Description
Existing / Planned (as of 2026)		
Artificial turf soccer fields (x2)	75 m x 110 m	FIFA-certified premier field, lighting
Toboggan hill	450 m	Winter activity with low operational or infrastructure requirements
Temporary smaller sports fields	75 m x 110 m	Located north of Sports Stadium, flexible spaces for youth field sports and an off-leash dog area
Cricket field	180 m x 190 m	Circular cricket pitch with artificial turf wickets, digital scoreboard, spectator area, batting cages
Indoor soccer dome	70 m x 120 m	Partnership between City and Vaughan Soccer Club, 11 vs. 11 artificial turf field, parking lot
Mountain biking trails on former landfill sites	3,400 m	Potential to be used for formal bike events and training programs
Family recreation area	15 acres	Nature playgrounds, waterplay, a winter skate trail, a pondside boardwalk and accessible pathways, a major picnic pavilion, flower gardens, a parking lot, and a pavilion with washrooms.
Pavilion and washroom complex	4,000 sq.ft.	Shaded outdoor space for larger social gatherings and picnics

Amenity	Capacity / Size	Description
Proposed		
Multi-use sports stadium	180 m x 90 m	Major sports stadium with rubberized track, spectator seating for 2,000, change rooms, etc.
Sports pavilion	60 m x 100 m	Approximately 4 racquet sport courts (tennis, pickleball, or other)
Recreational facility in public-private partnership lands	TBD	A recreational facility may be considered as part of a future feasibility study.
Skating and cross-country skiing loops	1-3 km	Winter activity with seasonal operational setup to create ice and ski tracks, potential for rentable equipment or programmed use/lessons
Tree top canopy walk	480 m	An elevated, accessible route through the forest canopy.
Hill top lookouts	70 m x 100 m 40 m x 60 m	Areas located to frame long views across the surrounding landscape while enhancing the visitor's experience with nature

What the Community Told Us: Winter Programming

Public engagement participants consistently called for year-round programming across all three phases of engagement:

- Phase 2: Outdoor ice rinks were the top-requested Play amenity (94 mentions), with cross-country skiing, tobogganing, and snowshoeing also ranking in the top 10
- Phase 3: Winter trail activities ranked second for Zone 4 (199 mentions)
- Phase 4: Winter hiking, cross-country skiing, ice hockey, and snowshoeing were the top four additional winter activities requested by survey respondents

Residents also suggested integrating warming huts along trails to provide rest areas and accessible washrooms, supporting winter activities like skiing and snowshoeing. These amenities extend the park's seasonality and inclusivity.

More than one way to play

Not every moment in the park needs to be in motion. The park honors the quieter side of outdoor recreation—spaces for contemplation, gentle exploration, and simply being present in nature.

- Sunset viewpoints on landfill summits
- Shaded forest walks
- Meadow strolls among pollinators
- Quiet reflection spaces
- Nature interpretation stations
- Accessible pathways for all abilities
- Social gatherings and picnics



Key Strategies

Passive Recreation

Overarching Strategy

Provide contemplative, low-impact opportunities for nature immersion, rest, and discovery that enhance visitor connection to the park's ecological and cultural restoration while protecting sensitive natural areas.

Older Adult Priorities (Phase 4)

The Age-Friendly Vaughan Advisory Committee emphasized the importance of comfort, safety, and multi-generational inclusion.

Key themes included:

- Multi-generational programming
- Thoughtful seating design
- Climate-controlled gathering spaces

Strategies

Create contemplative trail networks

Establish smaller walking paths for nature immersion, wildlife observation, and forest bathing, that are physically separated from active pathways to ensure tranquil, mindful experiences. For more details on proposed trail networks, refer to the Non-Vehicle Circulation section within the **Movement and Connectivity** chapter.

Design spaces for rest and social gathering

Provide wellness gardens, seating areas, and pavilions positioned to capture views and create opportunities for relaxation, socialization, and quiet contemplation among nature.

Enable nature discovery and learning

Integrate interpretive signage, observation points, arboretums, public art installations, and public gardens that reveal the park's natural and cultural stories while fostering environmental stewardship and appreciation.

Connect visitors to natural systems

Design passive recreation experiences that make ecological processes visible and accessible, helping visitors understand their role in protecting this critical watershed and its biodiversity.

Legend

Standard Pathway

Asphalt

Enhanced Pathway

Asphalt

Woodlot Nature Trail

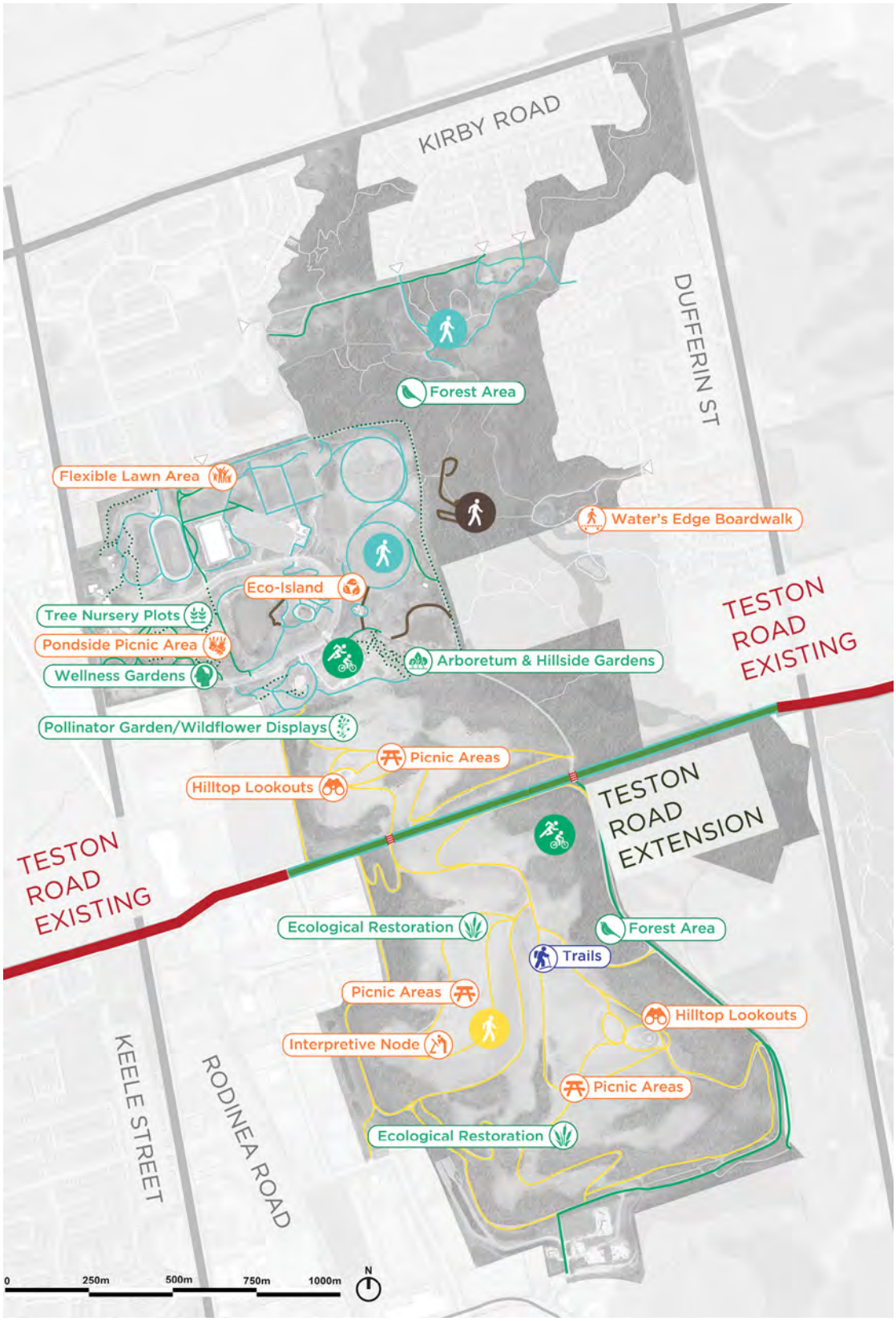
Granular

Boardwalk

Wood

Repurposed Landfill Trail

Compacted Gravel



Map 17. Passive recreation map

Making Play Accessible

Universal design principles guide all play-related development to ensure equitable access for visitors of all ages and abilities.

Building on the City of Vaughan's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2023-2027) and Accessibility Policy, The park advances ambitious accessibility standards that position the park as a model for inclusivity. Community engagement revealed that 71% of participants rated accessible play as "very important," with strong emphasis on supporting youth, seniors, people with disabilities, and neurodivergent individuals.

Accessibility Advisory Committee Input (Phase 4)

The Accessibility Advisory Committee provided targeted recommendations to enhance inclusive park design, including:

- Wi-Fi navigational beacons
- Sensory trail experiences
- Proactive accessible design standards



Key Strategies

Accessibility

Strategies

Barrier-free arrival and navigation

All barrier-free parking spaces are positioned within 30 metres of accessible entrances with adequate lighting meeting Inclusive Design Standards. Primary pathways maintain 0-4% slopes with 3-metre widths suitable for wheelchairs, hand-cycles, adaptive bikes, and mobility scooters. Strategic rest nodes with benches and water fountains provide frequent respite points. Wayfinding signage incorporates tactile elements, high-contrast text, and clear pictograms to support independent navigation.

Equipment rental and modified recreation

Comprehensive accessible rental programs eliminate economic and equipment barriers. Community members specifically identified accessible winter sport rentals—snowshoeing, snowtubing, skiing, and skating—as essential for first-time participants. Recreation programs are modified to accommodate varying abilities through flexible rules, adjustable equipment heights, visual and verbal instruction methods, and smaller group sizes.

Inclusive design for diverse needs

The park integrates accessibility features that accommodate the full spectrum of physical, sensory, and cognitive abilities. Include quiet sensory-considerate spaces for neurodivergent visitors, visual and auditory contrast in signage and wayfinding, communication supports at key service points, and graduated challenge levels across all amenities allowing self-selection of appropriate experiences.

The nature-themed destination playground will feature sensory experiences and equipment/access designed for children with diverse physical and cognitive abilities.

A Park for Every Person and Season



Conceptual rendering of wintertime at Pondside District

Play at North Maple Regional Park takes many forms. It is active and passive, organized and informal, structured and self-directed. Soccer on FIFA-certified fields, mountain biking on former landfill terrain, a family gathering on the event lawn, a walk through the wellness gardens, and a child exploring a nature playground are all part of the same vision: a park that offers something meaningful for every visitor, every season of the year.

The Play chapter has outlined the breadth of recreation that the park will offer: sports fields, a sports stadium, cricket facilities, a destination playground, a treetop canopy walk, winter skating and skiing loops, mountain biking trails, and a trail network of over 13 kilometres. Quieter experiences, including sunset viewpoints, forest walks, accessible pathways, and nature interpretation stations, are equally planned for and integral to the park's programming. Accessibility is integrated throughout the design of every trail, playground, and gathering space, ensuring the park welcomes visitors of every age and ability.

A park this size, with this range of programming, depends on people being able to get here and move through it comfortably and safely. The quality of the recreational experience is directly tied to how well the park is connected to the surrounding community and how intuitively visitors can navigate it once they arrive. Movement and Connectivity follows Play for that reason, addressing the infrastructure and networks that make access possible.



Movement and Connectivity



Conceptual rendering of the Zone 4 Hillslide, and Zone 2 Conservatory and Gardens

Arriving at North Maple Regional Park

Arrival at the park is designed to establish a strong, welcoming public presence while clearly defining the park's relationship with surrounding streets and neighbourhoods. Frontages emphasize visibility, open sightlines, and clearly marked entrances to support safety, wayfinding, and ease of access, while enhanced landscape treatments, signage, and placemaking elements reinforce the park's identity as a destination.

The design approach balances active, engaging edges along key streets with appropriate buffering and ecological sensitivity where the park interfaces with adjacent uses, ensuring a positive contribution to the public realm and a cohesive edge condition throughout the park.



West view



Keele Street Intersection



Keele Street Intersection aerial



Heritage building view



Northwest view of the North Maple Regional Park site. North entrance at Keele Street (left), Dreamwood neighbourhood (right), with pond and parking in the foreground

Edges and Arrival

Overarching Strategy

Create a clear, welcoming, and legible park edge that presents North Maple Regional Park as a regional destination along key streets while transitioning sensitively to surrounding neighbourhoods and landscapes.



View into the park from Keele Street

Strategies

Establish clear, visible, and welcoming park edges

Open sightlines, coordinated edge treatments, and clearly defined park boundaries reinforce visibility and public access.

Reinforce strong gateway conditions at primary entrances

Primary park entrances are identified through integrated landscape features, signage, and entry elements that announce arrival and support intuitive wayfinding.

Use landscape, signage, and design elements to express the identity of North Maple Regional Park

A coordinated family of materials, planting strategies, and wayfinding elements reflects the park's role as a destination-scale regional park within Vaughan's parks system.

Contribute positively to the surrounding public realm and streetscape context

Park frontage design complements existing and planned municipal streetscape standards and improves pedestrian conditions along adjacent roadways.

Key Strategies

Vehicular Circulation

Overarching Strategy

Prioritize a pedestrian-first park experience by concentrating vehicle access on existing roads, minimizing new internal roads, and integrating transit, shuttles, and safety measures to support efficient access while protecting parkland and ecological areas.



View of the soccer fields



View of Vaughan CARES Way and multi-use path

Strategies

Use Vaughan CARES Way as the primary visitor vehicle access

Limit new internal roads to protect park space and enhance the pedestrian experience. Maintain and enhance gateway signage at Keele Street. Specific strategies for Vaughan CARES Way have been provided on the following pages.

Prioritize safe pedestrian and multi-modal crossings

Coordinate with York Region on the Teston Road extension and focus on at-grade crossings with signals and/or above-grade bridges, recognizing that below-grade tunnels are constrained by landfill conditions.

Maintain existing landfill maintenance vehicle routes

Preserve existing vehicle routes required for ongoing landfill operations. Ensure regulatory compliance while minimizing conflicts with park programming and visitor circulation.

Implement road safety measures

Implement traffic safety measures including speed reduction strategies, wayfinding signage, optimized intersection sightlines, and protected pedestrian and cyclist crossings. Ensure emergency vehicle access throughout the park.

Strategies (Continued)

Work with York Region Transit to assess and improve transit connections to the park

Including Maple GO, possible future Kirby GO Station, Teston Road, and nearby trails. Identify opportunities for new stops and enhanced service during major events.

Evaluate limited internal road connections

At the west boundary in Zone 4 to support event operations, emergency access, and maintenance, including a potential west-side connector and a north-south link near Rodinea Road.

Define a shuttle service framework to support special events and peak periods

Working with York Region Transit and special event organizers, identify requirements, planning and implmentation of internal and external shuttle stop locations. Coordinate with transit agencies, Metrolinx, emergency services, and City departments as required to ensure integrated operations.

Specific strategies for the Teston Road Extension have been provided on the following pages.



NMRP signage

Vaughan CARES Way

North Maple Regional Park's internal road network is designed to organize movement while preserving the park's natural and recreational character.

The park features a single vehicular road, Vaughan CARES Way, which provides essential access for visitors, emergency, and service vehicles while minimizing intrusion into the landscape. This curvilinear "ring" road, with modest 3.3 m lanes in each direction, promotes lower speeds and safe navigation.

Adjacent to the road is 3 m-wide bi-directional multi-use trails with a 0.5 m visual buffer to provide dedicated space for pedestrians, cyclists, and mobility users, emphasizing active travel.

Primary access from Keele Street connects visitors to all major recreational destinations, including sports fields, the sports dome, gardens, and the Park Gateway, while the road and trail layout balance operational needs, accessibility, and environmental sensitivity.



Aerial photo of Vaughan CARES Way (2025)



Multi-use path



Pondside District under construction (2025)

Vehicle Circulation Map

Legend

Proposed Shuttle Bus Stop

Existing York Region Transit Bus Stop

Proposed York Region Transit Bus Stop

Parking Lot

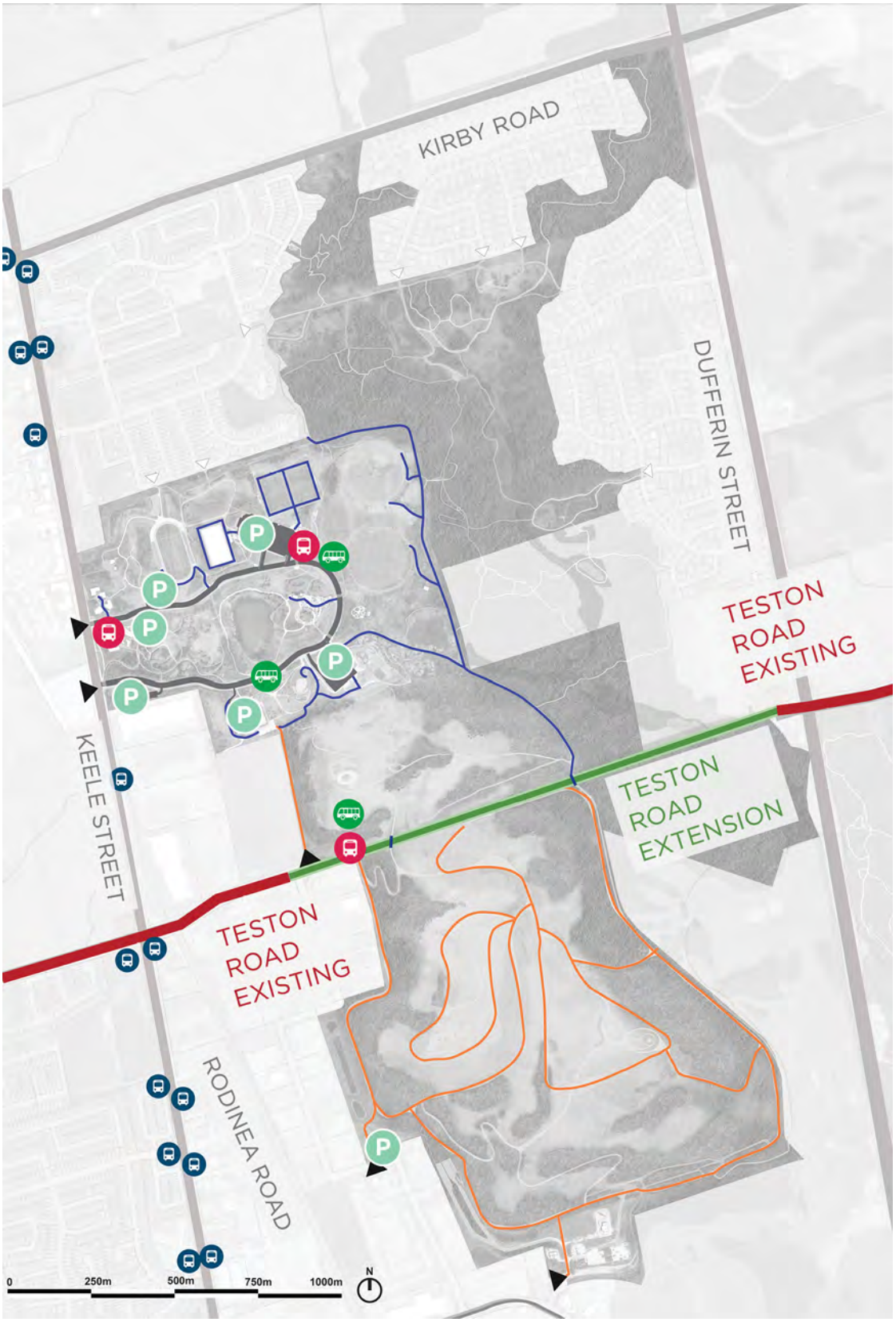
Vaughan Cares Way

Existing Landfill Maintenance Route

Park Maintenance Route

Vehicular Entrance

Pedestrian Entrance



Map 18. Vehicular circulation map

Key Strategies

Teston Road Extension







Precedent images of seamless mobility across a park through grade-separated visitor and wildlife crossings

Strategies

Accessibility and seamless mobility across the park

Provide clearly marked, dedicated pedestrian and bike lanes on north and south side of Teston Road. Create bold and inviting gateways. Provide multiple safe pedestrian and cyclist crossings and traffic calming. Consider grade-separated crossings.

Unified and distinctive public realm

Enhance the treed canopy along the road wherever possible to provide shade and visual interest and vegetative buffer from the road.

Wildlife corridors and wildlife-friendly road design

Consider overpasses or underpasses for wildlife to maintain ecological corridors, and provide ecological planting with native species and habitat restoration.

Lead with resilience and sustainability

Where feasible, integrate bioswales and vegetated buffers. Provide enhanced forests and nodal plantings to improve the visual experience and provide habitat. Consider alternative energy-efficient lighting such as solar-powered or energy efficient lighting systems.

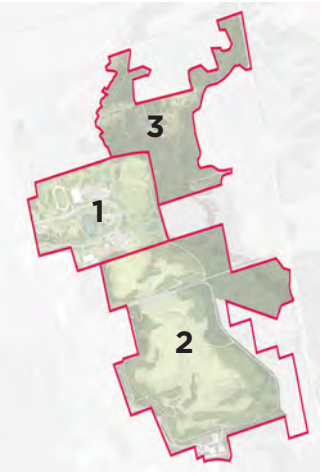
Parking

Parking Analysis Summary

A comprehensive parking analysis was conducted for North Maple Regional Park to determine appropriate parking capacity that balances visitor accessibility with sustainability objectives. This analysis was necessary because the park's diverse recreational offerings and regional scale require careful planning to serve visitors effectively while supporting transitions to sustainable transportation modes.

Transportation Context

The study began by examining current travel patterns, finding that 85% of recreation and leisure trips in Vaughan are completed by car (2022 Transportation Tomorrow Survey data). This reality confirms that despite sustainability goals, many visitors will require vehicle access due to travel distance, recreational equipment needs, or physical mobility limitations.



Map 19. Parking lot analysis areas diagram

Proposed Parking Provision

The analysis reviewed Vaughan's Consolidated Zoning By-Law, which does not include specific parking standards for parks. By applying "Community Facility" requirements (2 spaces per 100 square metres), the park's estimated 40,000-70,000 square metres of recreational facilities would require 800-1,400 parking spaces—establishing a baseline for further evaluation. A total of 830 parking spaces is proposed for the North Maple Regional Park, with the goal of serving a base level of attendance on site and avoiding spill out into communities, with major events leveraging transit and off-site parking. For a detailed breakdown of proposed parking stalls and lots, refer to the **Parking Lots Summary Table** on the following pages.

Parking Provision Methodology

To determine the minimum feasible parking requirement, the park was divided into three distinct area based on usage patterns and facility intensity. Refer to the Parking Lot Analysis Areas Diagram (map 19) on the left. This zone-based analytical approach allows parking provision to be calibrated to actual anticipated demand rather than uniform park-wide standards, optimizing both visitor service and efficient land use.

For more details on the parking analysis, recommendations and key strategies, refer to **Technical Volume 4: Transportation**.

Key Strategies

Parking

Overarching Strategy

Establish a flexible, landscape-integrated parking framework for North Maple Regional Park that prioritizes active and sustainable travel modes, limits the visual and environmental impact of parking, and allows the City to adapt supply, operations, and policies over time as park use evolves.



Drone photograph of existing pavilion and parking lot

Strategies

Prioritize cycling and active transportation parking

Support cycling as a primary mode of arrival to North Maple Regional Park. Provide secure and visible bicycle parking near primary entrances and key program areas.

Design an efficient parking system that balances visitor convenience with sustainability

Provide right-sized parking near main attractions with accessible and electric vehicle spaces.

Integrate parking into the park landscape

Minimize the visual and environmental impact of parking within North Maple Regional Park.

Support long-term parking management and policy flexibility

Barrier-free routes, accessible parking and drop-off areas, lighting, and wayfinding are integrated throughout the circulation system to support intuitive, safe, and inclusive use.

Parking Map

Legend

Proposed Shuttle Bus Stop

Existing York Region Transit Bus Stop

Proposed York Region Transit Bus Stop

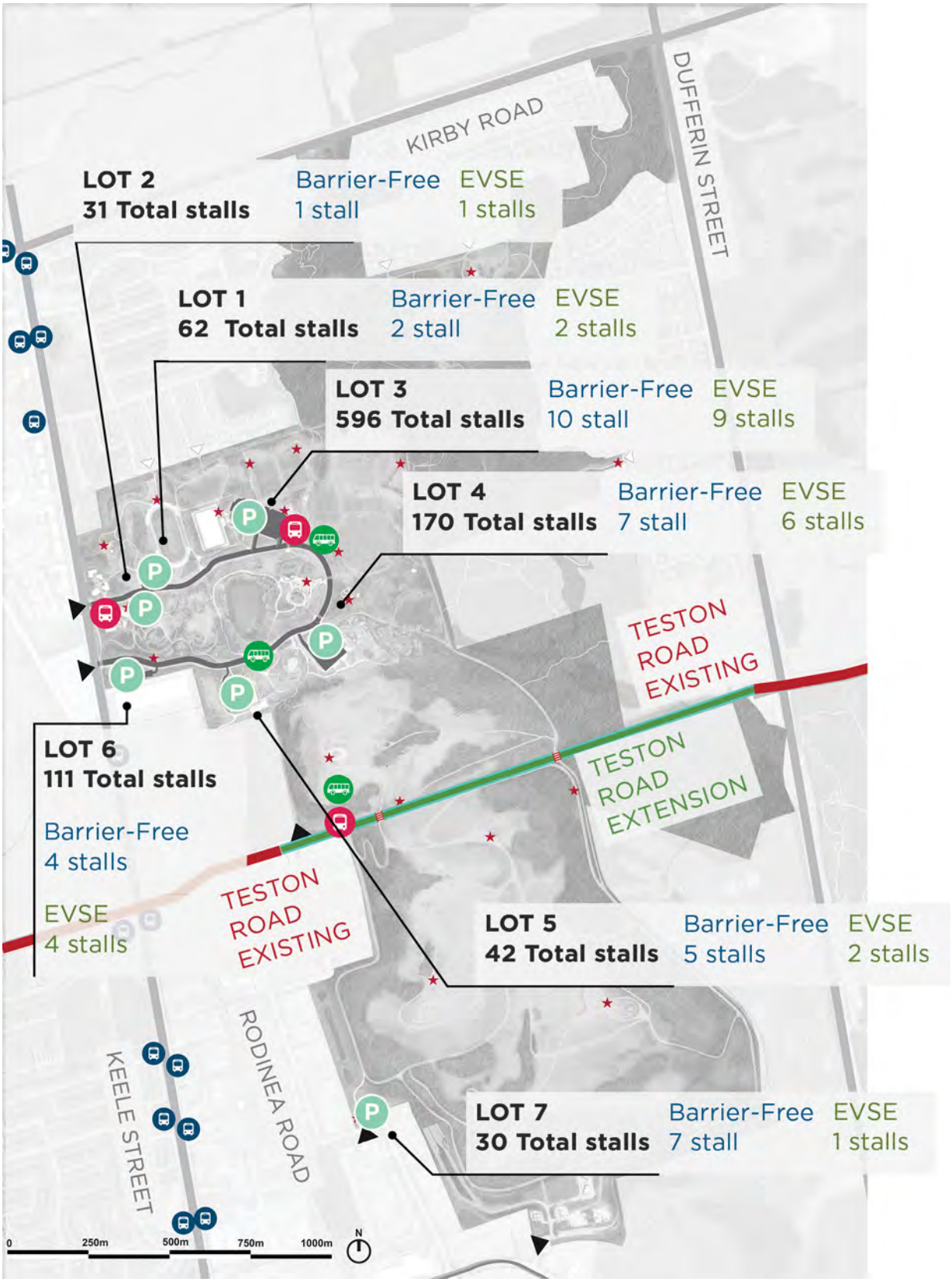
Parking Lot

Vaughan Cares Way

Vehicular Entrance

Bicycle Parking

Safe Pedestrian Crossing



Map 20. Parking map

Parking Lot Summary

The Parking Lots Summary Table below provides a breakdown on the provision of dispersed, non-centralized parking. For additional details and a breakdown of parking stalls by type (regular, barrier-free, and electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE), refer to **Technical Volume 4: Transportation.**

Table 1. Parking Lots Summary Table

Parking Analysis Area/Lot No.	Park Zone	Adjacent Facilities	Status	No. of Proposed Spaces	No. of Existing/ Planned Spaces	No. of Total Spaces
Area 1 Lot 1	Zone 1	Park Village + Gateway Park	Proposed	62	-	62
Area 1 Lot 2	Zone 1	Wellness Village	Proposed	31	-	31
Area 1 Lot 3	Zone 2	Recreational Uses at the Sports Facilities (north)	Existing, Planned Expansion	172	212	384
Area 1 Lot 4	Zone 2	Conservatory and Gardens, Hillslide, Sports Pavilion	Proposed	170	-	170
Area 1 Lot 5	Zone 2	Pondside Picnic Area & Sports Facilities/Parks Operations	Proposed	42	-	42
Area 1 Lot 6	Zone 2	Keele Street Entrance/Wellness Gardens	Proposed	111	-	111
Area 2 Lot 7	Zone 4	Rodinea Road Parking Lot, Landfill sites	Proposed	30	-	30
			Total	**618**	**212**	**830**

Non-Vehicle Circulation

Overarching Strategy

Establish a clear, legible, and multimodal access and circulation framework that supports North Maple Regional Park as a regional destination, prioritizes people-first movement, and minimizes vehicular impacts on the park's natural character.





Active transportation network at Vaughan CARES Way

Strategies

Prioritize pedestrians and cyclists

A connected network of primary multi-use trails and secondary pedestrian paths links entrances, program areas, and natural spaces.

Provide a network of secondary access points

Strengthen connections to surrounding neighbourhoods, support daily local use, and distribute visitor volumes across multiple entry locations to reduce congestion and improve overall park accessibility.

Design primary park entrances as highly visible, legible gateways

Gateways shall clearly signal entry into the park and provide direct access to the primary internal circulation network.

Ensure accessibility and safety for users of all ages and abilities

Barrier-free routes, accessible parking and drop-off areas, lighting, and wayfinding are integrated throughout the circulation system to support intuitive, safe, and inclusive use.

The City of Vaughan Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (2020) was used to inform the non-vehicle trail network and key strategies.

Non-Vehicle Trail Network

Legend

Park Main
Asphalt

Multi-use
Asphalt

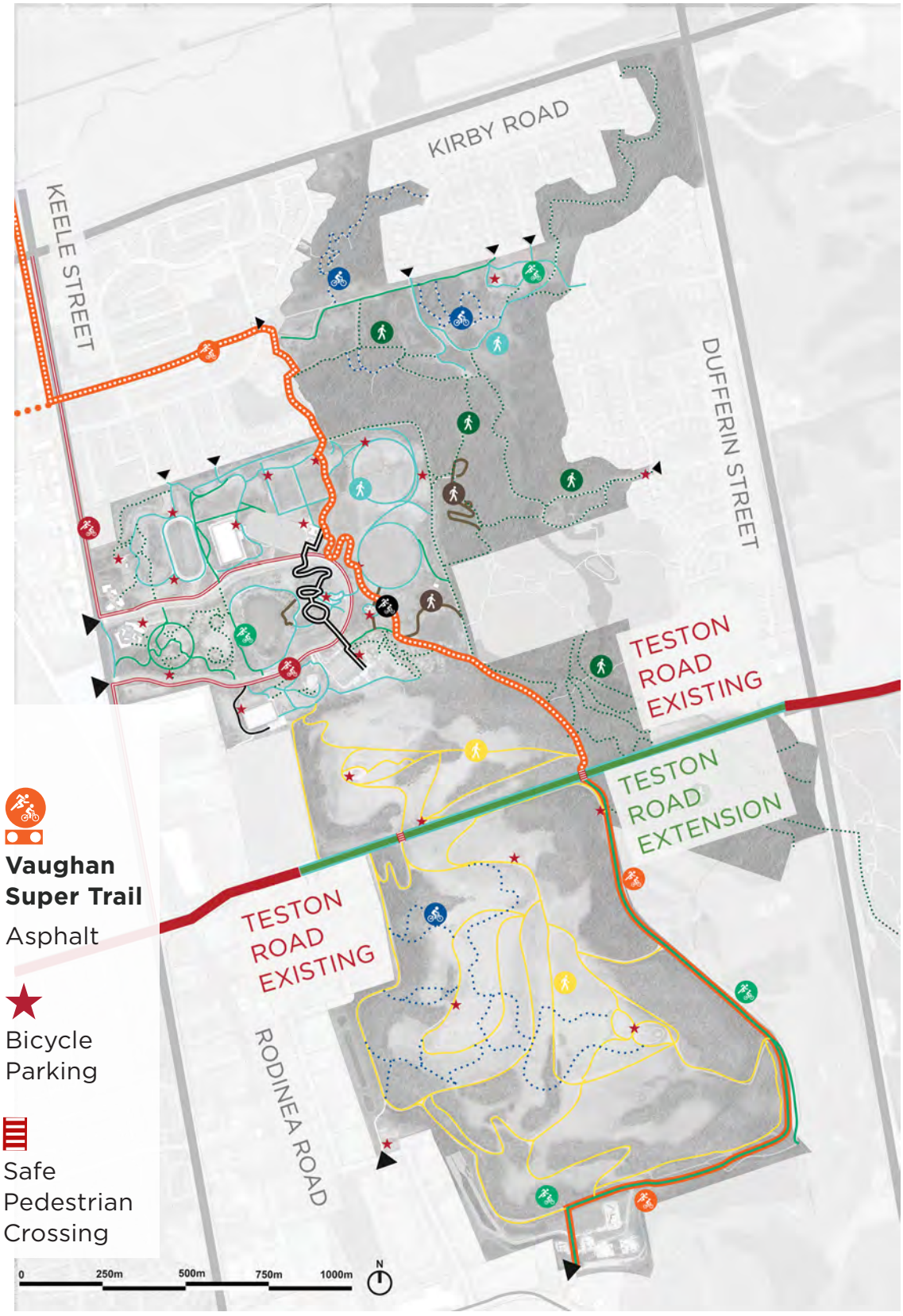
Standard Pathway
Asphalt

Nature Trail
Granular

Boardwalk
Wood

Mountain Bike Trail
Compacted Earth

Repurposed Landfill Trail
Compacted Gravel



Map 21. Non-vehicle circulation map

Non-Vehicle Trail Network

The park is best experienced on foot, by bike, or using mobility devices. The internal trail network establishes a clear hierarchy of pathway types accommodating diverse users, abilities, and terrain. Wide pedestrian walkways and bi-directional trails incorporate visual buffers between travel directions, providing safe and accessible links to all park destinations.

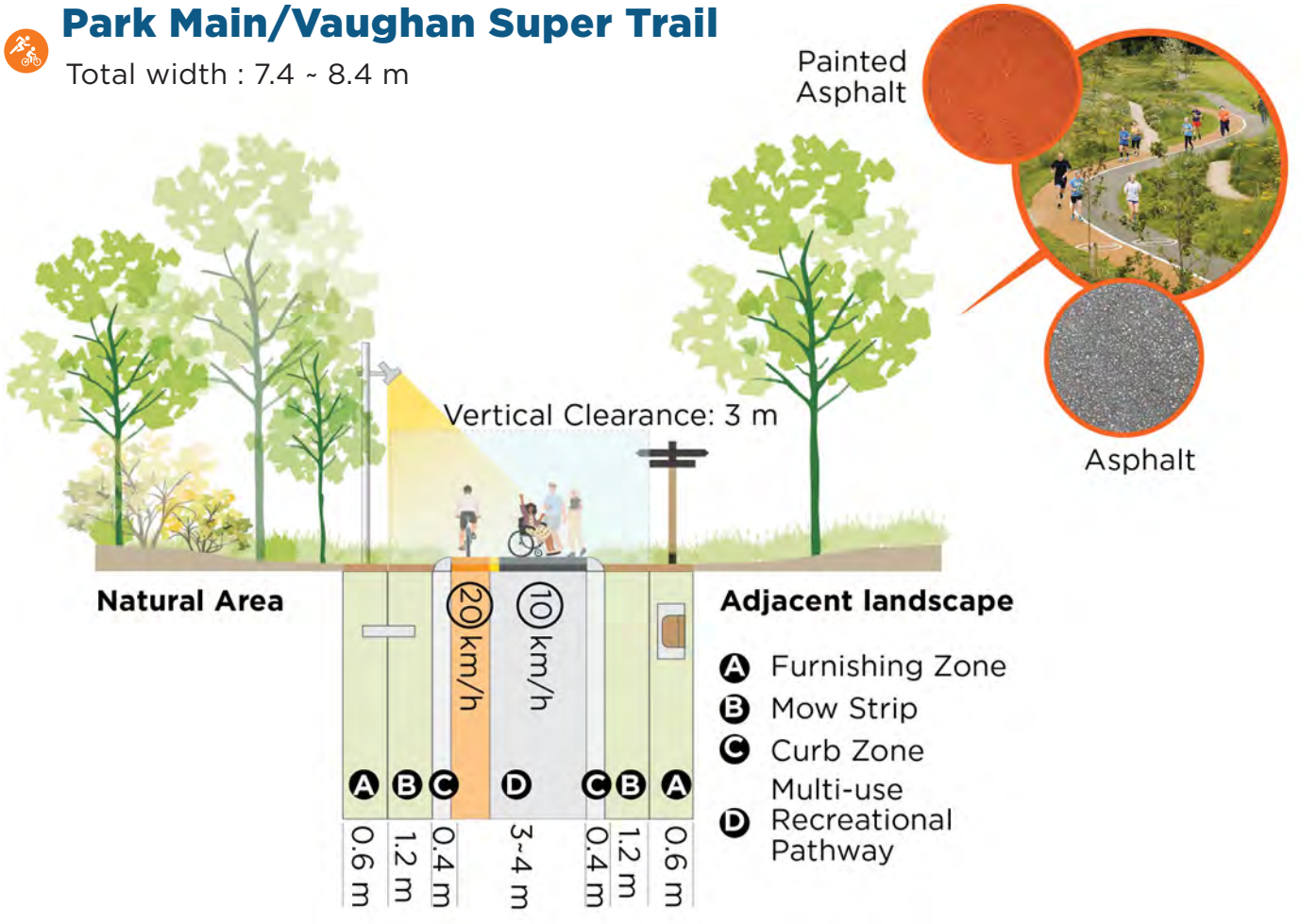
To understand which trail type is suitable for a particular zone or area, refer to the **Non-Vehicle Circulation Map (map 21)** on the facing page.

Public Priorities for Trail Network

From public engagement What We Heard Report (Phase 3) people ranked **multi-use pathways and mountain biking trails** among the top programs for Zones 2, 3, and 4.

Park Main/Vaughan Super Trail

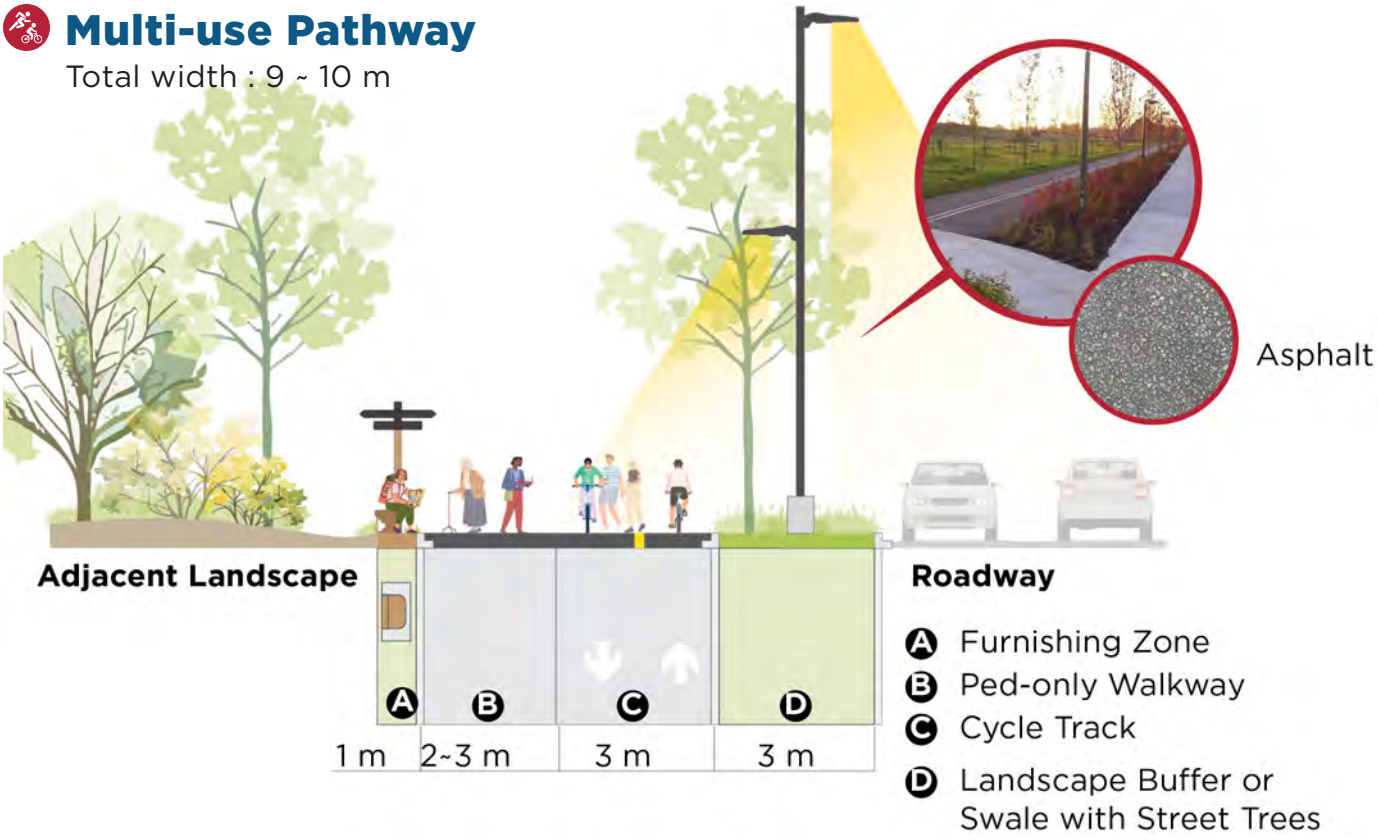
Total width : 7.4 ~ 8.4 m



Park main/Vaughan super trail cross section

Multi-use Pathway

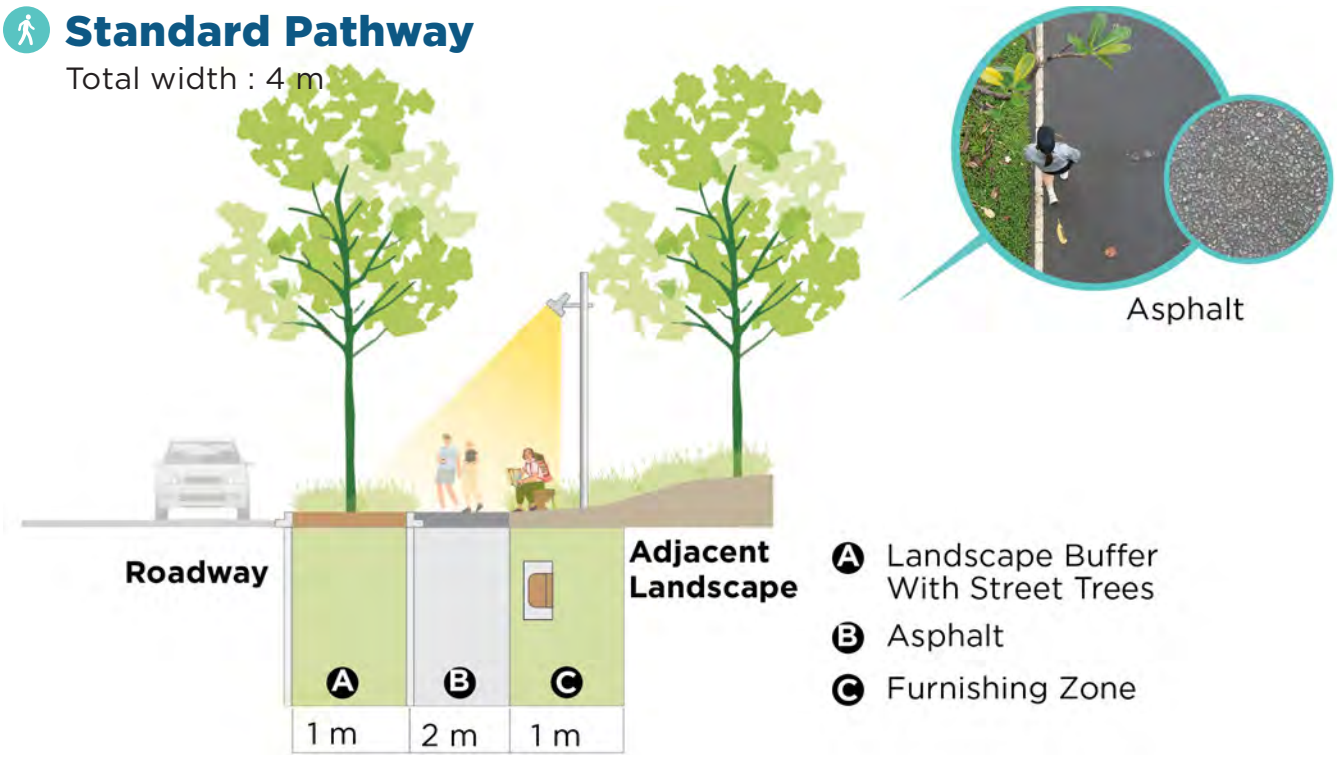
Total width : 9 ~ 10 m



Multi-use pathway cross section

Standard Pathway

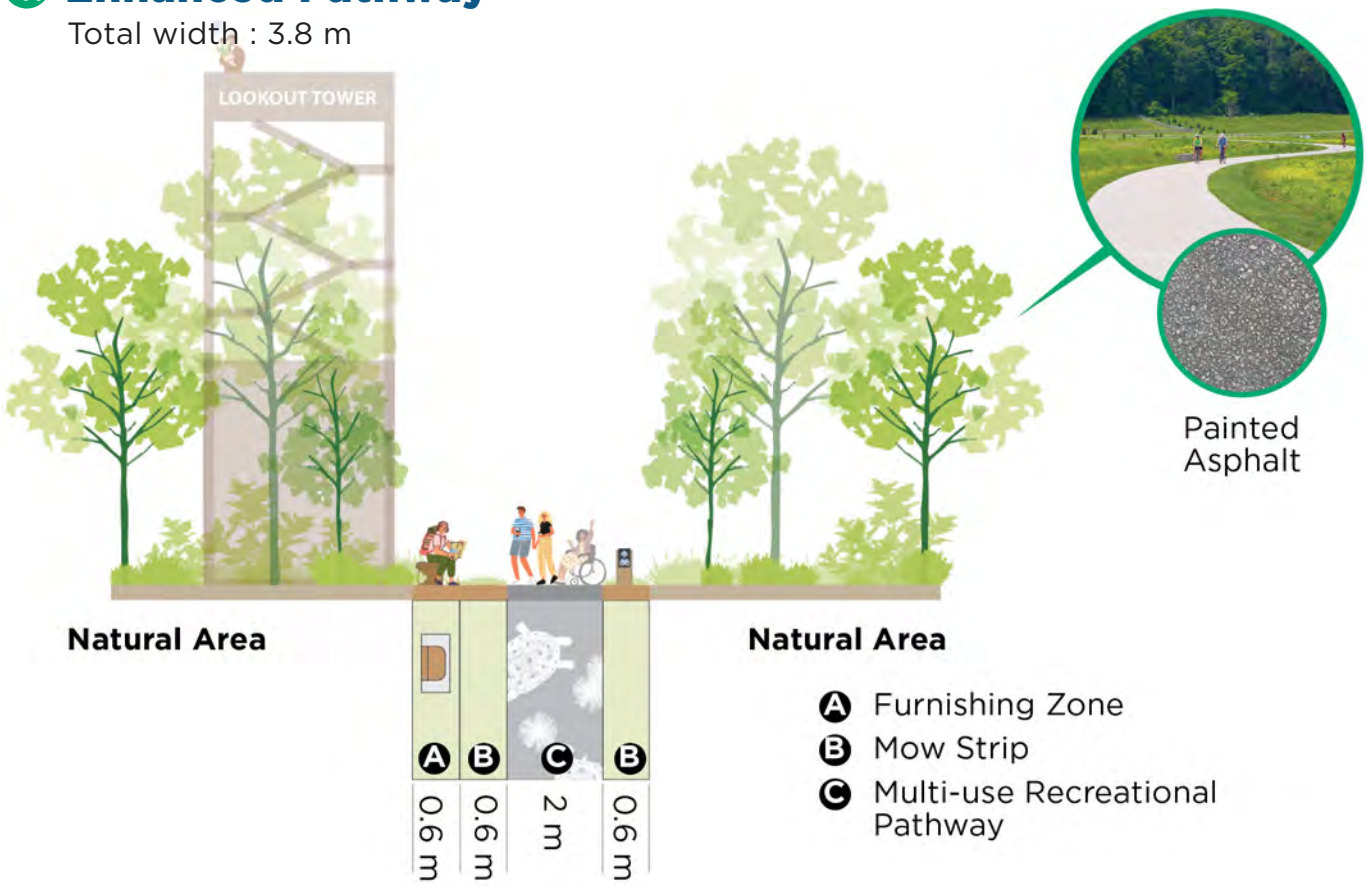
Total width : 4 m



Standard pathway cross section

Enhanced Pathway

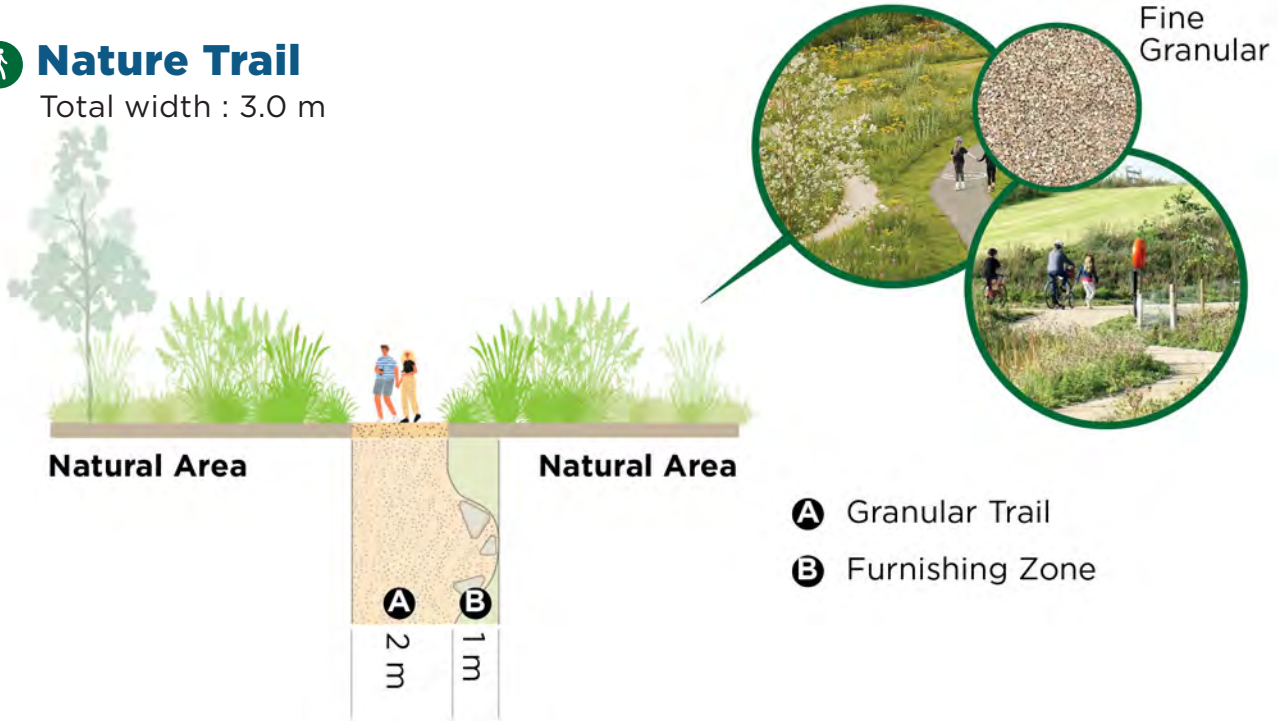
Total width : 3.8 m



Enhanced pathway cross section

Nature Trail

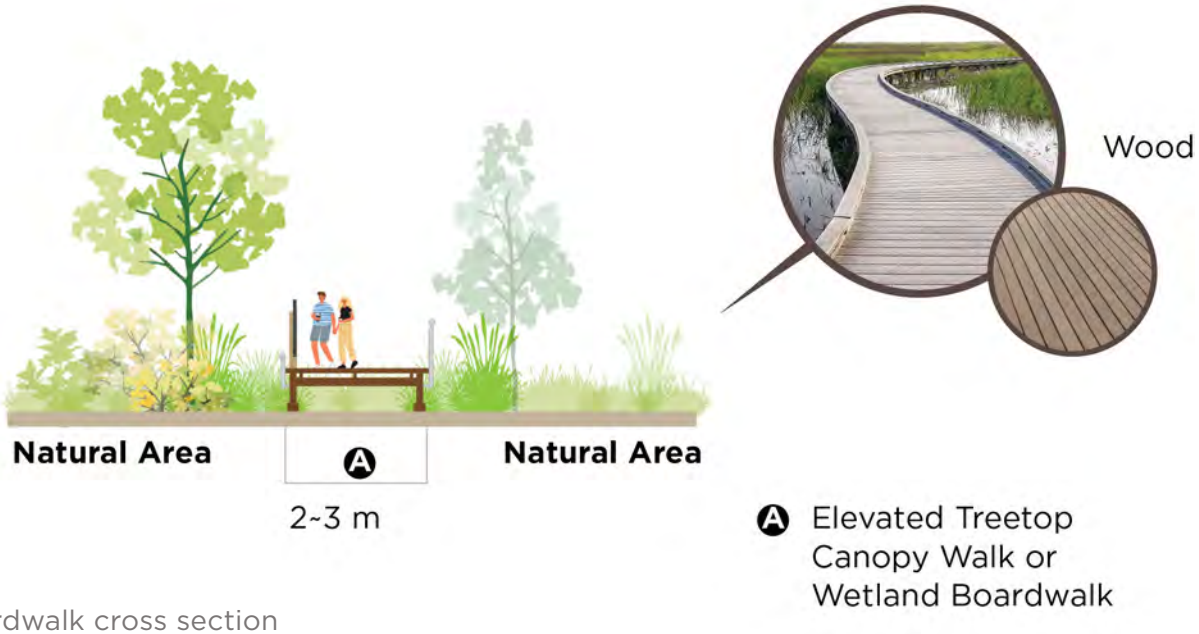
Total width : 3.0 m



Woodlot nature trail cross section

Boardwalk

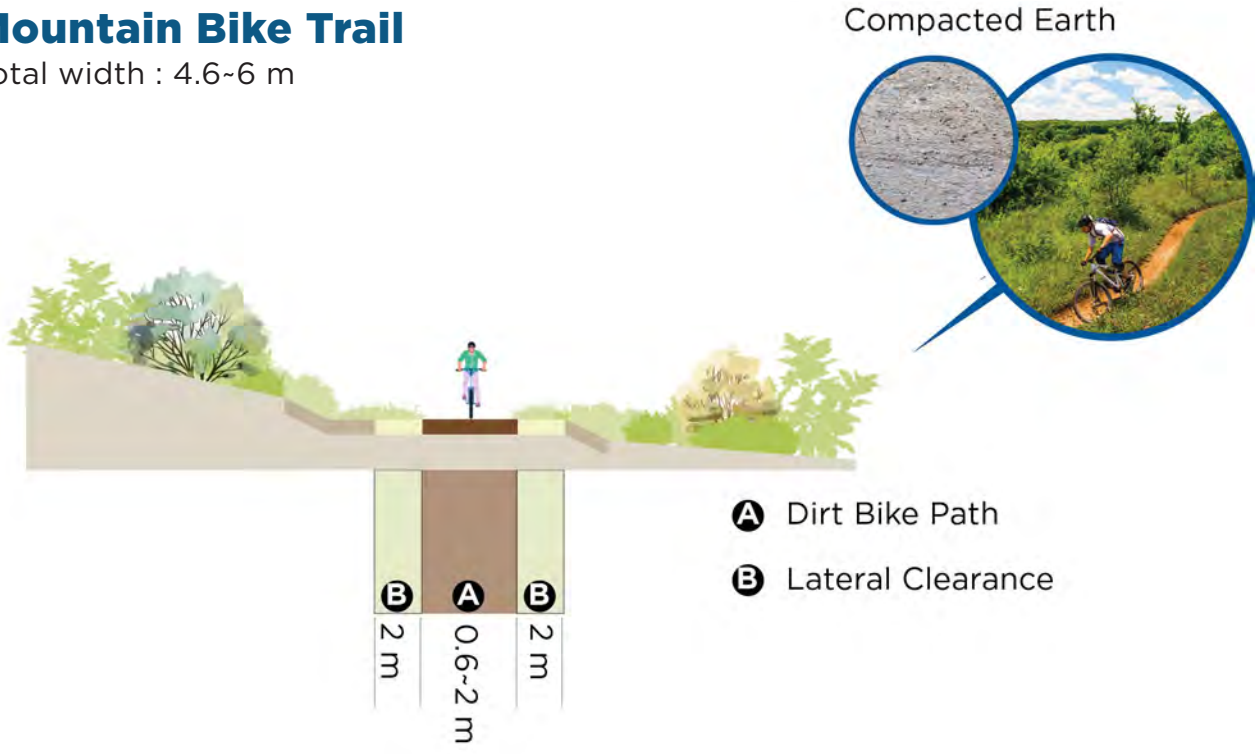
Total width : 2~3 m



Boardwalk cross section

Mountain Bike Trail

Total width : 4.6~6 m



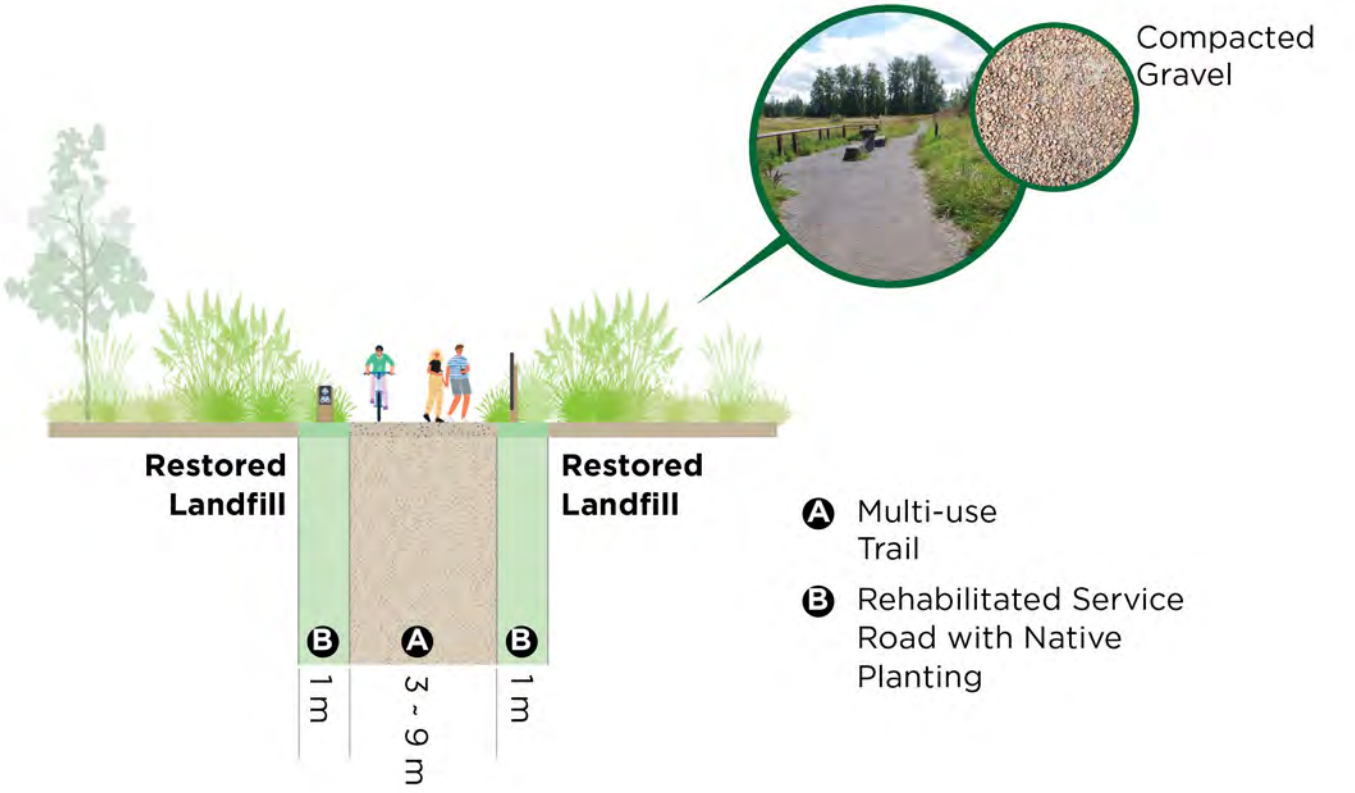
Mountain bike trail cross section

Repurposed Landfill Trail

Total width : 5 ~11 m

The intent of this trail type is to repurpose the existing 5 m wide gravel maintenance routes (currently used by landfill service vehicles) as part of long-term implementation. The existing layout and alignment of service routes is maintained while modifying surfacing and width to better suit park visitors. As part of the broader ecological restoration strategy, the trail edges will be rehabilitated with native planting to enhance habitat value and integrate the pathways into the surrounding landscape.

For further details regarding planting strategy and ecological objectives, refer to the **Restore** chapter.



Repurposed landfill trail cross section

Connecting People to Place



Community Advisory Committee hikeshop for Master Plan public engagement

How people arrive at and move through North Maple Regional Park shapes the quality of their experience from the very first moment. Clear sightlines, coordinated landscaping, and well-defined gateway conditions along Keele Street signal the park's presence and set expectations for what visitors will find inside.

The Movement and Connectivity chapter has established a framework organized around people-first movement. Vaughan CARES Way, the park's primary internal road, is designed for lower speeds, with wide multi-use trails running alongside to prioritize walking, cycling, and mobility devices. Over 1,000 parking spaces, integrated into the landscape and supported by accessible design and electric vehicle infrastructure, serve visitors arriving by car. Transit stops on Keele Street, a future Teston Road Extension, and a planned shuttle service will expand access options over time.

The trail network reaches 13 km and connects to the Vaughan Super Trail and TRCA natural areas, linking the park to a broader network of active transportation and nature access across the region. Getting people to and through the park is foundational, but how the park looks and feels once visitors are inside is equally important to the overall experience. Park Experience follows because the physical design language of the park, its materials, signage, and structures, gives coherence and character to everything the previous chapters have described.



Aerial photograph of parking lot and soccer dome construction (2025)



Park Experience



Conceptual rendering of the eco-island, pavilions, hillside gardens, and boardwalks

North Maple Regional Park Experience



Aerial view overlooking the Patterson Neighborhood and surrounding woodlots

The successful transformation of North Maple Regional Park into a nationally significant destination depends on carefully integrated site systems—materiality, signage and wayfinding, park structures and buildings, and lighting—that balance visitor experience, environmental stewardship, and operational efficiency. Across the park's 900-acre landscape, these systems form the essential infrastructure that enables the park's vision while respecting its unique context as a reclaimed landfill site.

The three pillars—**Restore, Engage, and Play**—are conceived not as separate ideas, but as an interconnected framework shaping the park's character and purpose. Woven into a cohesive plan, each element reinforces the others: active spaces respond to the land's history, renewed landscapes support recreation, and community pride grows through everyday use.

This integrated approach ensures the park is more than a collection of amenities, but a living system where environmental renewal, social connection, and active lifestyles coexist.

This chapter outlines the comprehensive framework of physical and functional elements that embody these principles responding to the park's extraordinary scale and environmental constraints.

The material palette, site furnishings, and planting establish the park's distinctive visual identity through wood and corten steel elements. Architectural interventions range from significant park structures to small-scale amenities, while supporting infrastructure—including lighting, stormwater management, utilities, and landfill servicing—are thoughtfully integrated to create a resilient, accessible, and inspiring public space for generations to come.

Common Ground

North Maple Regional Park is built on a complicated past, and a unique kind of park is taking shape, drawing its character directly from that history of transformation. The most enduring parks in the world are rarely those built on pristine ground. They are places where communities have chosen to reclaim, restore, and reimagine, and the park is precisely that kind of place. The rolling landform of the former landfill becomes the park's defining topography: a living reminder that landscapes can be healed, and that healing is worthy of celebration.

Across 900 acres, the park offers a varied program of uses with good integration between natural and urbanized surroundings, attracting locals and visitors alike. Wide, accessible paths invite walkers and cyclists while natural surface trails draw visitors deeper into restored woodlands and wetland edges. Sport facilities and open lawns anchor active zones that give way, gradually, to quieter naturalized corridors and forest interiors. The park does not ask visitors to choose between nature and recreation. It offers both in equal measure, woven across the same connected landscape and accessible to people of all ages, abilities, and intentions throughout the year.

The material language of the park is grounded and honest. Natural materials root structures in the texture of the land, while native tree planting, meadow grasses, and wetland edges soften infrastructure into habitat. The restoration of the former landfill promotes resilience toward climate change while providing meaningful new green space for Vaughan. The park rewards every season: summer trails dappled in canopy shade, autumn colour sweeping the hillside, winter skating on frozen pond edges, and spring wildflower meadows signaling the return of migratory birds.

Five interpretive themes: **Indigenous Connections, Where the River Begins, Land as Provider, From Landfill to Living Landscape,** and **Play and Community,** are woven through the physical fabric of the park, giving meaning to every path, planting, and viewpoint. Together, they transform an ordinary visit into a layered encounter with place, time, and community.

Key Takeaways from Public Engagement:

In Phase 3 Engagement, participants were asked to select their Top 5 Park Programs to be included in each of the four zones.

The Layered Landscape

Eco-tourism and Education

North Maple Regional Park, sitting at the headwaters of the Don River is the setting for one of Canada's most ambitious ecological restoration stories. Conservatory gardens, naturalist programs, and immersive learning environments, including the Eco-Island Pavilion are nestled within the wetland system. These extraordinary eco-tourism and educational spaces invite school groups, families, and curious visitors to engage with the land directly. Inspired by destination botanical gardens such as The Leaf at Assiniboine Park and VanDusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver, the park's educational infrastructure transforms nature into a living classroom. Eco-tourism at North Maple Regional Park is not passive observation. It is active discovery, grounded in a landscape that demands to be understood and respected.



Grace Farms River building



The Leaf, Canada's Diveristy Gardens, horticultural sanctuary



VanDusen Botanical Garden

Natural Retreats

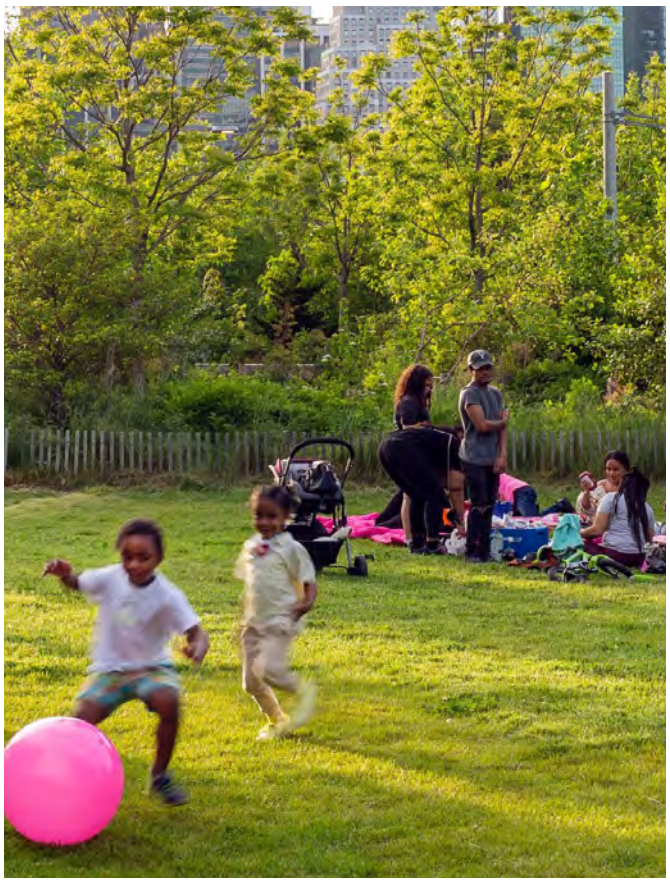
North Maple Regional Park is inspired by urban parks such as Brooklyn Bridge Park and Parc Belval Sud, offering genuine nature in a rapidly urbanizing region without leaving the city. Restored forests, emergent wetlands, native meadow edges, vernal pool necklaces, and quiet pond riparian edges create a restorative landscape where visitors can decompress, observe wildlife, and reconnect with seasonal ecological rhythms. Forest bathing nodes, wellness gardens, and shaded groves invite unhurried use. Indigenous teachings remind us that land is kin, not a resource, and that nature offers calm and healing even in the city. The continuous green corridor spanning the site from east to west ensures that nature and wildlife habitat are never far from the visitor experiences, resulting in a functional ecosystem designed to deepen in richness and meaning over generations.



Forest bathing



Parc Belval Sud, topogrpahic highs and lows offer key views



Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 3

Sports and Recreation

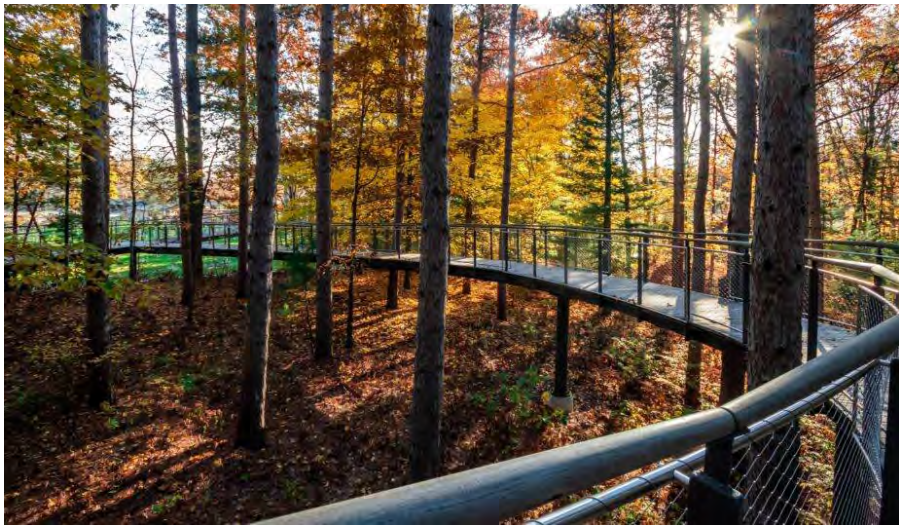
Play is one of the most powerful forces in community building, and North Maple Regional Park is designed to honour that across every generation. The park integrates existing and new sport infrastructure including soccer fields, cricket pitches, a mixed-use sports dome, a tobogganing hill, and a family recreation area, into a flowing and interconnected sports landscape that invites diverse activities and encounters. The diverse recreational offerings serve organized leagues and spontaneous pickup games, while playgrounds, fitness nodes, and open event lawns invite families to linger. Acting as a green pivot point for the broader community, the park accommodates large sporting events, winter skating, and everyday recreation with equal ease. Gathering to play is central to the park experience.



Godrej Rivergreens based on principles of 'people-with-nature'



Stade de Soccer de Montréal fields



Dow Gardens canopy walk

Robust Trail Network

The trail network is the connective tissue of the park, tying together the different park areas and activities to create a higher degree of coherence across 900 acres. Newly designed paths, cycling routes, bridges, and boardwalks link neighbourhoods, viewpoints, wetland edges, and program areas, making the park accessible to people of all mobility levels. Accessible multi-use pathways serve cyclists, pedestrians, and joggers, while natural surface trails offer quieter, more immersive routes through habitat areas including the treetop canopy walk, wetland boardwalk, and mountain biking trails. Thoughtfully placed trailheads, wayfinding, and rest nodes ensure that every visitor, whether arriving for the first time or the hundredth, can navigate confidently and always discover something new.



Senvagė Park loop path



Sowerby Park and Sports Village, multi-use trails



Brazil wellness garden pathway

The Park's Personality

First Look at the Park

Through various stages of early park construction, as more areas of the park opened for public use, the community regularly expressed frustration and confusion over the park's future development. In 2023, the City developed a series of unique installations to better inform the community of the park's design and construction, to share positive messaging about the park's big vision and what is planned. Early phases of installations feature informational signage found throughout the site, interpretive messaging on pathways and large-scale artwork on the pavilion wall.

Design of the artwork was informed by community interactions, input, and feedback that has been gathered since the park opening in 2018. A combination of poetry and illustrations transform key spaces into beautiful, interpretive moments expressing a warm welcome and inviting visitors to experience the park in their own way. They are simple, yet powerful gestures, that help to build excitement and support within the community for what's to come.

Visual Language

Work on these interim wayfinding projects provided the opportunity to explore and expand on an evolving park aesthetic that is descriptive, expressive and playful. In a style reminiscent of botanical and scientific illustrations, graphics are inspired by the site's landscape and existing structures and are representative of the community and of natural elements (plants and wildlife) that can be found in the park. The result is a character and identity unique to the park with a deeper meaning, that is reflective of its grand size and bold vision, integrating elements that emphasize relationship to the site and evoke a greater sense of emotion, wonder and connection to the park.



Materiality

Overarching Strategy

Express the park's landform, natural systems, and regional character through a layered material palette that differentiates active, civic, and naturalized areas. This approach allows the park to read as a cohesive landscape while responding to its unique topography and destination role.



Existing pavilion



Conceptual rendering with a view of Pondside District, conservatory in background

Strategies

Select durable, sustainable and context-responsive paving and surface materials

These materials will respond to the park's topography, drainage patterns, and intensity of use.

Use softscape to reflect the park's ecological restoration goals and regional plant communities

Native and adaptive planting will frame valley edges, slopes, and naturalized zones, while more formal planting will define civic spaces, plazas, and gateways.

Select site furnishings that complement the park's natural setting and landform-driven design

Materials such as wood, stone, and metal will be used to balance warmth and durability.

Prioritize materials that support environmental performance

Selections will emphasize durability, permeability, and long-term resilience to reduce environmental impact and maintenance demands.



Existing pavilion



Conceptual rendering: Hilltop lookout swings



Conceptual rendering: Eco-Island

Paving & Surfacing

Paving and surfacing across the park are organized as a clear hierarchy that reflects intensity of use, accessibility requirements, and key destination spaces. The Hardscape and Softscape Plan (map 22) illustrates primary hardscape routes; feature paving at plazas, gateways, and gathering areas; and more informal trail surfaces along naturalized corridors, reinforcing both circulation clarity and the park's landform-driven character.

Softscape

Softscape areas are structured to reflect the park's ecological framework and restoration strategy, including forest, grassland, wetland, and riparian landscape types. The hardscape and softscape plan frame programmed areas and civic spaces, reinforcing the parks identity as a landscape-led regional destination.

For more details on a park immersed in nature and informed by ecological design, refer to the **Green Corridors** section within the **Restore** chapter.

Hardscape and Softscape Plan

Legend

Hardscape Areas and Paths
Refer to movement and connectivity chapter

Forest

Shrub Layer

Grasslands

Wetlands/ Drainage

Manicured

Opportunity for Feature paving



Map 22. Hardscape and softscape plan

Site Furnishings

Site furnishings at the park will be selected to reflect the park's distinct character and range of programming, while building on the City's existing standards and infrastructure. A coordinated but flexible palette will allow furnishings to respond to different park settings, such as trails, pathways, overlooks, civic spaces, and active areas, reinforcing identity, comfort, and long-term durability. Signage and wayfinding furnishings will be discussed in the next section.

Existing Furnishings

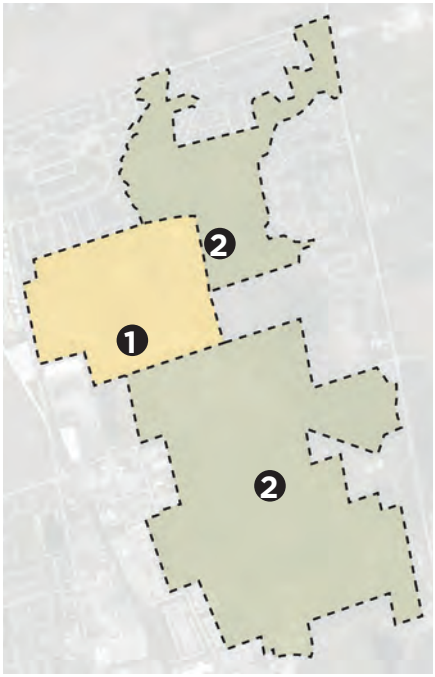
Current site furnishings include coloured muskoka chairs, corten steel signage and wayfinding, and shade canopies for outdoor areas.



Existing site furnishings

Proposed Furnishings

Based on the existing material palette, site furnishings at the park will follow a unified approach based on two zones, to establish a strong identity across the site.



Map 23. Furnishing zones

Zone 1: Active Palette

Includes furnishing types suitable for high-use urban and recreational park spaces. Materiality compliments the city's current furnishing types, while incorporating colours and material elements unique to the park. Materiality and form should be easy to maintain and wipe clean as needed.



Corten Steel Panels



Stainless Steel



Concrete



Wood

Zone 2: Natural Palette

Includes furnishing types suitable for natural spaces, emphasizing integration with the landscape. Furnishing uses colors and textures that echo the surrounding landscape with simple, understated designs. Material should complement the overall park furnishing style with elements that gracefully weather over time (patinas, silvered wood, etc)



Corten Steel



Matte Metal



Stone



Wood



Navigating a Path Forward

Wayfinding Summary

The overall wayfinding strategy prioritizes safety, accessibility, and enjoyment. Clear, well-placed directional signage reduces confusion, discourages off-trail use, and protects sensitive landscapes. Informational signage fills knowledge gaps, highlights ecological features, and promotes responsible park use.

Guided by objectives to welcome, inform, guide, inspire, support discovery, and encourage learning, the system aims to be inclusive, engaging, and interactive. It establishes a feedback loop that supports community participation while creating a strong foundation for future wayfinding and identity development as the park continues to grow. All wayfinding elements will be consistent with applicable city-wide standards and regulatory requirements.

Creative Direction

The park wayfinding and signage approach reimagines interim signage as both an informational tool and a placemaking framework. Moving beyond conventional regulatory and construction signage that is often overlooked, the project integrates a strong visual identity with clear communication to inform visitors while reflecting community aspirations for the park.

Interim Style Guide

An internally developed Interim Style Guide establishes a flexible visual framework for the park, providing direction for signage and communications while allowing the park's identity to evolve over time. Colour palettes are informed by the site's natural and built context, enhancing contrast, guiding attention, and supporting a cohesive visual language across the park.

Naming

Naming and wayfinding frameworks were developed early to support clarity and consistency across the park. A logical yet creative approach to naming aligns with City policy while strengthening identity. To support high-level navigation in what will become one of Canada's largest urban parks, three initial districts were introduced:

- **The Fields:** focused on sports, events, and multi-use recreation;
- **Headwaters:** encompassing trails, woodlots, and the Don River headwaters; and
- **Pondside:** a nature-based family destination centered around the pond and wetlands.

Defining Character

Early exploration of park mapping and wayfinding established a clear framework and guiding principles for key aspects of design and planning. This includes wayfinding programming, location planning, and consistent conventions for naming and classifying park amenities and spaces. These efforts have set precedence and laid the groundwork to help inform future, comprehensive studies and initiatives required to help refine and establish the park as a destination.

Branding

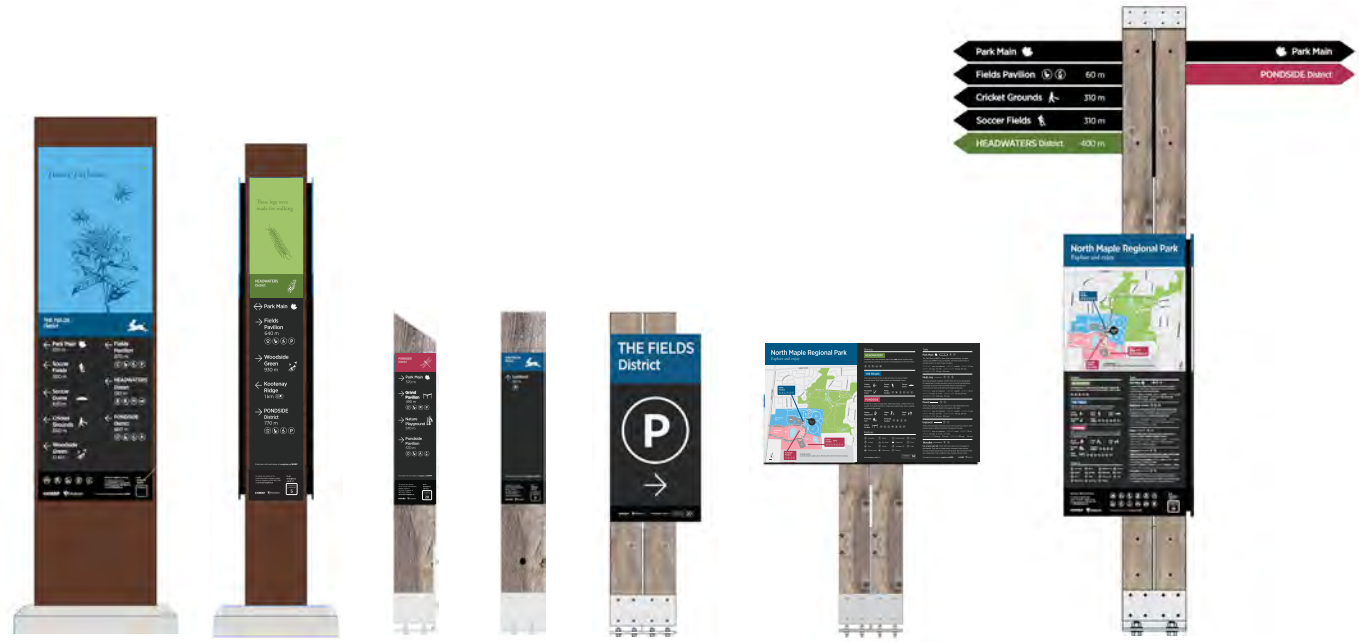
The development of the overall park branding strategy aims to expand on and refine the park's unique identity.

Wayfinding

A comprehensive wayfinding and trailhead signage program will be developed to highlight the park's environmentally significant areas while creating inviting, engaging public spaces and experiences. Establishing a strong wayfinding system is a collaborative and multifaceted process, requiring input from multiple disciplines. The overall strategy will build on the interim vision, refining and strengthening the park's unique sense of place

Enhancements and Expansion of Trail Network

The existing informal and undeveloped trail network within the park and TRCA lands will be enhanced and expanded to improve public access to over 3.5 km of pathways and hiking trails, with phased implementation.



Signage types

Key Strategies

Signage and Wayfinding

Overarching Strategy

Develop an Overall Wayfinding Strategy based on the Interim Style Guide.



Information panel, front elevation

Partnership Signage

External partners and sponsors may be identified on park signage, provided their logo or name is paired with the City of Vaughan and aligned with the wayfinding and signage program appearance. For more details, refer to Partnerships section in **The Future** chapter.

Strategies

Maintain a consistent visual identity that reflects local character

A consistent visual identity supports clear, well-designed signage and wayfinding that enhances safety, usability, and overall park experience. Strategically placed directional signage in highly visible areas helps guide users, reducing the risk of getting lost while discouraging off-trail movement and protecting sensitive landscapes. Together, these elements reinforce a distinct sense of place and strengthen users' connection to the park as it evolves.

Integrate thematic storytelling and digital elements to provide interactive access to Information

Informational and interactive signage enhance the user experience by addressing information gaps, highlighting points of interest, and providing educational content on local wildlife and ecosystems. These elements promote responsible park use while encouraging exploration and learning.

Establishing clear naming conventions, district identities, and a cohesive visual language supports a consistent and accessible wayfinding system. Together, these strategies build user confidence and support navigation, safety, and engagement across the park.

Key Strategies

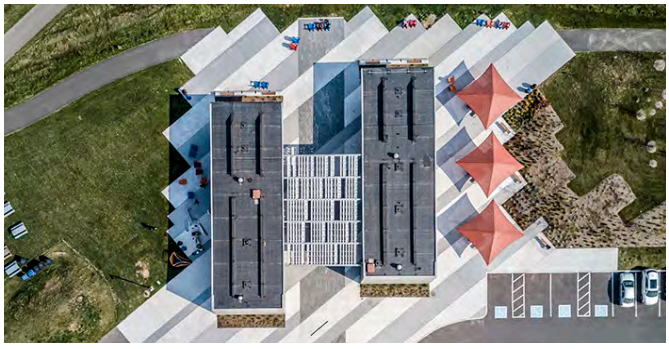
Park Structures & Buildings

Overarching Strategy

Buildings and structures at the park will support visitor services, programming, and park operations while integrating seamlessly with the park's natural systems and landscape character.

Buildings at the park are an opportunity to pilot bold ideas and demonstrate what innovative, nature-integrated public architecture can be. Consider opportunities for:

- Low-carbon materials and construction
- Passive energy systems and natural ventilation
- Compact, multi-purpose structures
- Energy generation visible as architecture
- Daylighting and passive solar design
- Rainwater harvesting and visible water systems



Existing pavilion and plaza at the park

Strategies

Locate and design buildings to respond to the park's topography, natural features, and vegetation

Structures will be sited to minimize visual and environmental impact, maintaining a sense of immersion in the park's landscape for visitors.

Cluster related uses to strengthen operational efficiency and visitor experience

Native and adaptive planting will frame valley edges, slopes, and naturalized zones, while more formal planting will define civic spaces, plazas, and gateways.

Select site furnishings that complement the park's natural setting and landform-driven design

Materials such as wood, stone, and metal will be used to balance warmth and durability.

Prioritize materials that support environmental performance

Selections will emphasize durability, permeability, and long-term resilience to reduce environmental impact and maintenance demands. Consider opportunities for intensive and extensive green roofs.

Park Structures and Buildings Plan



Map 24. Park structures and buildings plan

Existing Architecture



Heritage building **250 sqm**



Soccer dome **8000 sqm**



Pavilion **370 sqm**



Family recreation pavilion **250 sqm**

Existing architectural elements, including heritage buildings and the Phase 1 pavilion, contribute to the park's identity, wayfinding, and visitor experience.

The pavilion acts as a landmark and gathering point that supports visitor services, events, and active recreation while referencing the site's industrial history through its architectural expression. The architectural style of the pavilion sets the standard for future architecture on the site. Together, these assets support park operations, reinforce a sense of place, and anchor key activity areas within the park.

Heritage Stewardship

The tenancy of the heritage buildings by the Vaughan Soccer Club (as of 2026) provides consistent occupancy and active use, supporting regular maintenance, stewardship, and long-term preservation. This partnership helps ensure the buildings remain operational, well-maintained, and integrated into daily park life, reinforcing their role as functional and cultural assets within the park.

Big and Small Architecture

Buildings and program elements are strategically located to reinforce a cohesive park experience that is grounded in the site's natural systems. Key uses are intentionally clustered to strengthen functional and environmental relationships, such as the Conservatory and Gardens being located adjacent to the Arboretum and Hillside Gardens to create a continuous horticultural landscape. The Eco-Island is positioned within a green corridor, with the wetland directly adjacent, supporting ecological connectivity and interpretive opportunities. Sports and active program areas are similarly integrated through green linkages and landscape buffers, ensuring that visitors remain immersed in a natural park setting throughout.

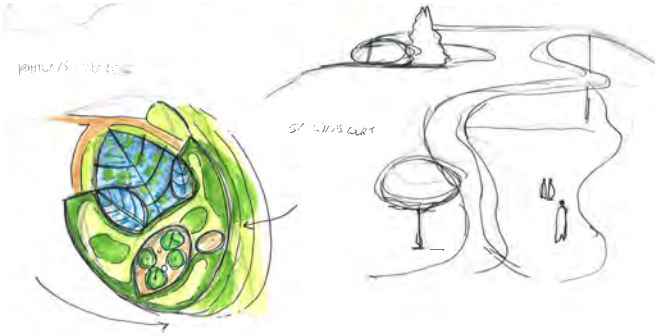
Big Architecture



Conceptual Rendering: Conservatory



The Leaf



Conservatory early sketches

Conservatory
2400 sqm

The Conservatory serves as a year-round botanical destination, supporting plant research, education, and community programming. Its transparent, lightweight form reinforces a strong visual relationship between interior spaces and the surrounding gardens. Using the Leaf at Assiniboine Park (Winnipeg, MB) as a precedent, the Conservatory's primary materials include steel and glass. A greenroof on the second story demonstrates sustainability and immersion in nature. The Conservatory will include botanical exhibits (and associated storage and equipment rooms), lobby/ticketing area, restaurant or cafe, washrooms, and staff offices. The Conservatory may become the headquarters of a long-term public-private partnership governance model for the park.



Churchill Meadows Community Centre, Recreational facility



The Commissary, Base 31, Creative cultural hub



Strom nordic spa, Wellness centre and gardens

Sports Pavilion
5700 sqm

The Sports Pavilion or facility will be an open-air pavilion (likely racquet sports) with high design quality. The Sports Pavilion may have an integrated park operations centre on the south side, including offices, kitchen/lunchroom, lockers, minor storage. and washrooms.

Park Gateway Facilities
5500 sqm

Facilities and amenities within the public-private partnership lands (Zone 1) will create the park's main entrance and visible identity along Keele Street, offering mixed-use opportunities that generate momentum and attract visitors immediately. The designated public-private partnership lands are identified for potential future development to support long-term park sustainability and the park's presence as a regional destination. Architecture will be sustainable, integrated with the landscape, focused on wellness and immersed in nature.



Active recreation, fields



Active recreation, track



Grace Farms indoor courts



John Fry Sports Park Pavilion



The Pavilion in Bend

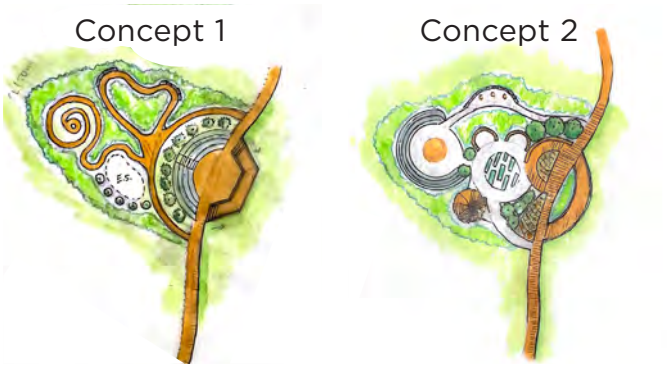
Small Architecture

Eco-Island Pavilion
2000 sqm

The Eco-Island Pavilion functions as an interpretive and gathering node within the wetland system, supporting education, small events, and passive use. Its compact, nature-integrated form is designed to minimize ecological impact while offering immersive views into surrounding habitats.

Sports Stadium and Track
2400 sqm

The sports stadium and track at the park are designed to support high-level athletic programming. These facilities are organized to balance active use with landscape buffers and green connections, ensuring that sports amenities contribute to the park's destination role while maintaining a strong relationship to surrounding natural systems and recreational spaces. The stadium will include an adjacent building with food and beverage concessions, athlete changerooms, offices, public washrooms, and spectator seating for approx 2,260.



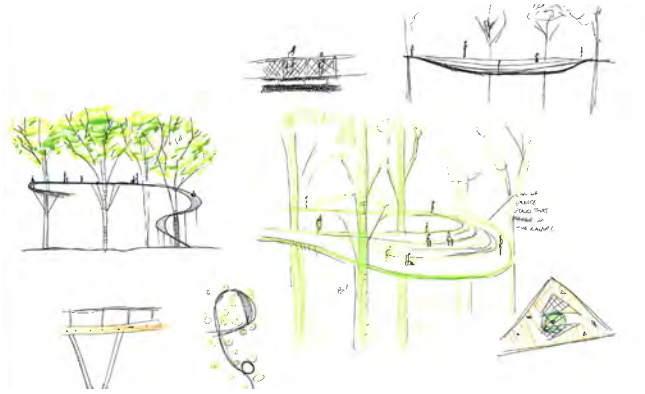
Eco-Island early sketches



Conceptual rendering: Eco-Island



Conceptual rendering: Treetop canopy walk



Treetop canopy walk early sketches

Treetop Canopy Boardwalk
1000 sqm

An elevated, accessible route through the forest canopy, offering unique perspectives of the forest canopy and ecological systems. Its lightweight structure enhances visitor experience while preserving understory conditions and minimizing ground disturbance.



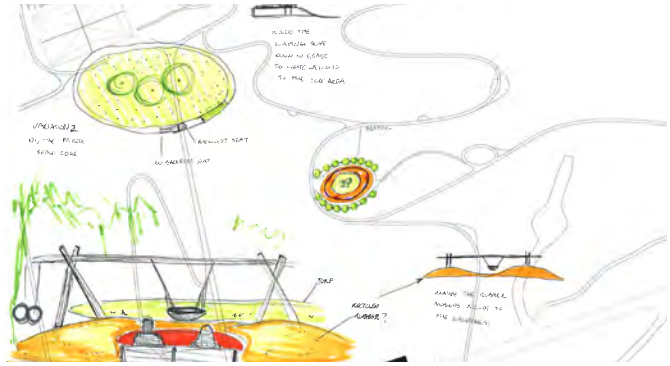
Conceptual rendering: Hilltop Lookout

Hilltop Lookouts and Observation Tower
2200 sqm

Hillside lookouts are strategically located to frame long views across the park and surrounding landscape, providing quiet destinations for rest and reflection. Their integrated, minimal form allows them to blend into the terrain while enhancing the visitor's visual connection to nature. Where the landfill cap allows structural foundations, an Observation Tower may be explored.



Observation tower



Observation tower, hilltop lookout early sketches

GROW Park Hub (Stewardship Hub)

The GROW Park Hub is envisioned as a centralized stewardship and volunteer hub that supports ecological restoration, landscape management, and community-led care of park lands. The hub will provide facilities and coordination for training, volunteer programs, and stewardship initiatives, strengthening long-term park maintenance, environmental resilience, and shared ownership of the park.



Bill Fisch Forest Stewardship and Education Centre

Landfill to Park Discovery Area

The Landfill to Park Discovery Area is a dedicated interpretive zone that tells the story of the site's transformation from landfill to regional park. This area will provide educational opportunities focused on environmental remediation, restoration, and sustainability, helping visitors understand the park's history and long-term environmental management.



Trillium Park interpretive trails

Washrooms

Washroom facilities will be integrated into major capital building projects, including the conservatory, sports pavilion, and similar developments. These facilities and their supporting infrastructure will be planned to respond to evolving park use, special events, and seasonal demand. The City will regularly assess capacity and distribution to ensure that washrooms and servicing systems adequately support visitor volumes, accessibility needs, and long-term operational requirements.



Trillium Park washrooms

Lighting

Overarching Strategy

Support safe, accessible, and extended use of the park while reinforcing wayfinding, placemaking, environmental stewardship and balancing municipal standards with selective flexibility appropriate to a destination-scale regional park.

Strategies

Provide consistent, well-lit conditions along primary pathways, entrances, parking areas, and key amenities

Lighting will reinforce clear circulation routes and gathering spaces while maintaining comfortable visibility for all users.

Incorporate programmable and feature lighting in select locations such as plazas, event spaces, feature landscapes, and primary gateways

To support seasonal changes, special events, and evening programming, contributing to a distinct park identity.

Utilize city-approved fixtures, poles, and electrical systems where appropriate

To ensure consistency, safety, and long-term maintenance efficiency.

Minimize impacts on naturalized areas and wildlife

Energy-efficient LED technology, dark-sky principles for reduced light pollution, paired with timers and dimming controls, will reduce energy use while maintaining appropriate illumination levels. Consider wildlife nesting, feeding, mating, and movement patterns throughout the park.

Lighting Strategy Plan

Legend

Feature lighting



Integrated lighting



Pathway lighting



Recreation lighting

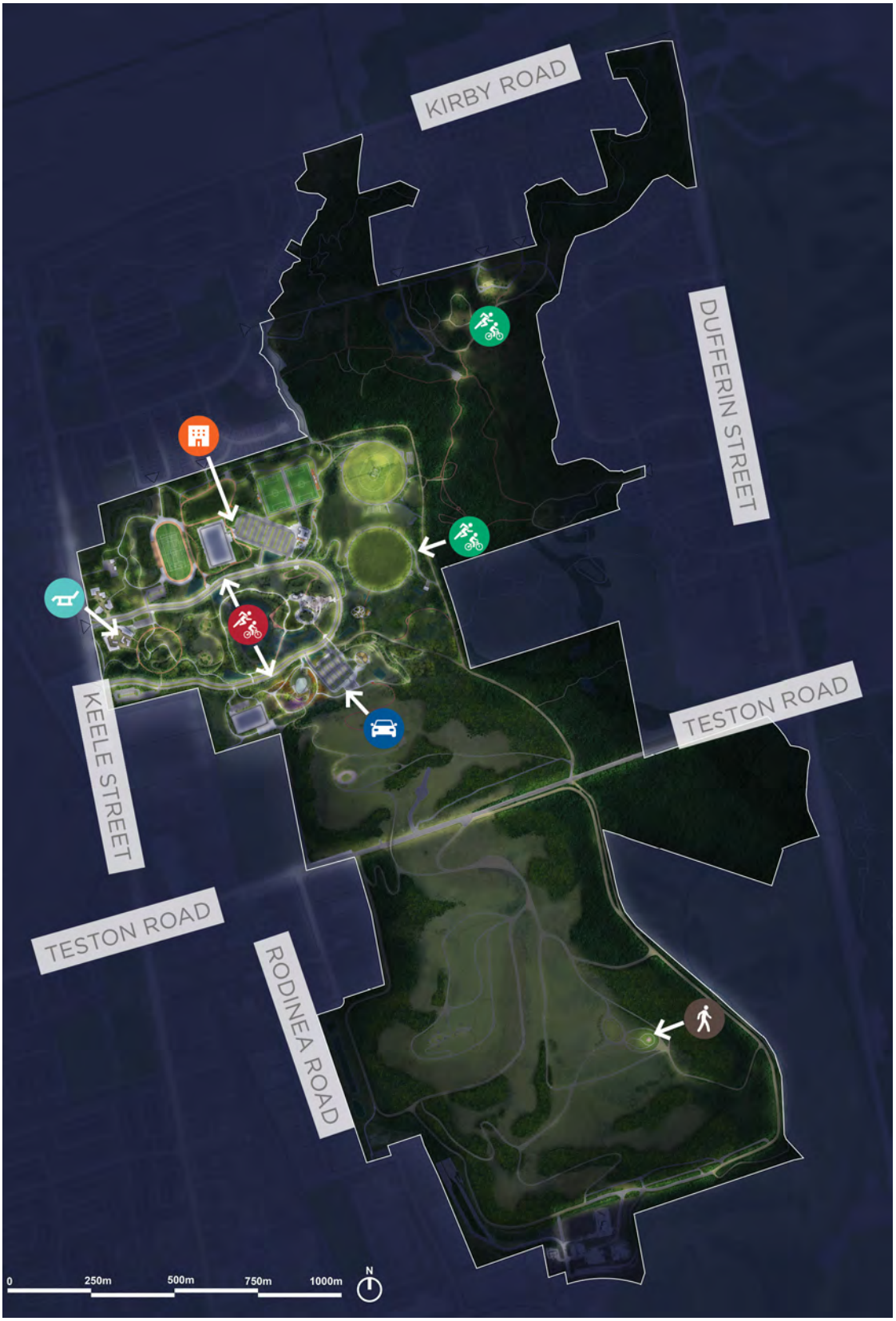


Parking lighting



Facilities lighting





Map 25. Park lighting strategy plan

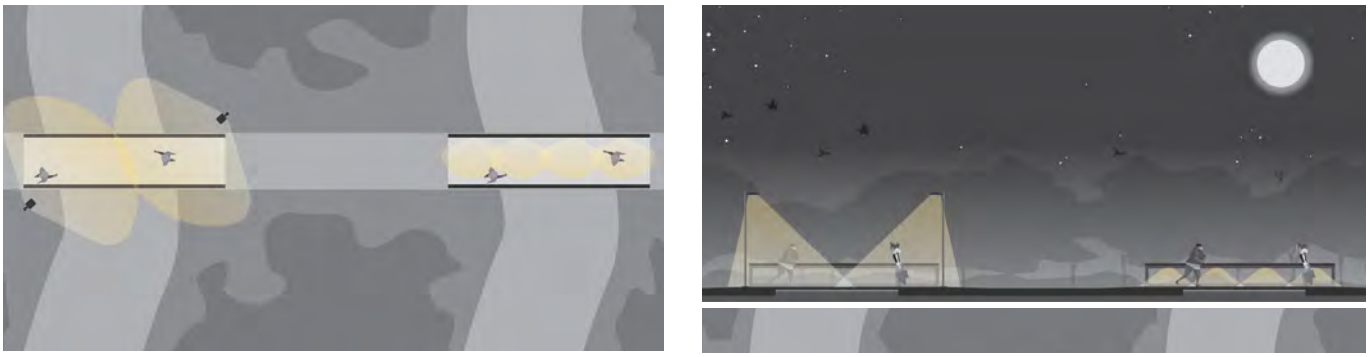
Feature Lighting

Boardwalks

General Considerations

Lighting fixtures should use regressed or flat lenses to minimize unwanted glare. Light should extend beyond entrances to support safety and help people adjust to changes in light levels, as long as it does not spill into surrounding areas.

Asymmetrical distribution of light on boardwalks with minimal spill light will minimize any possible disturbance of the natural nocturnal environment. Low-brightness lights built into structures will help guide people comfortably.



Boardwalk plan and section

Integrated Lighting

Picnic Areas & Shelters

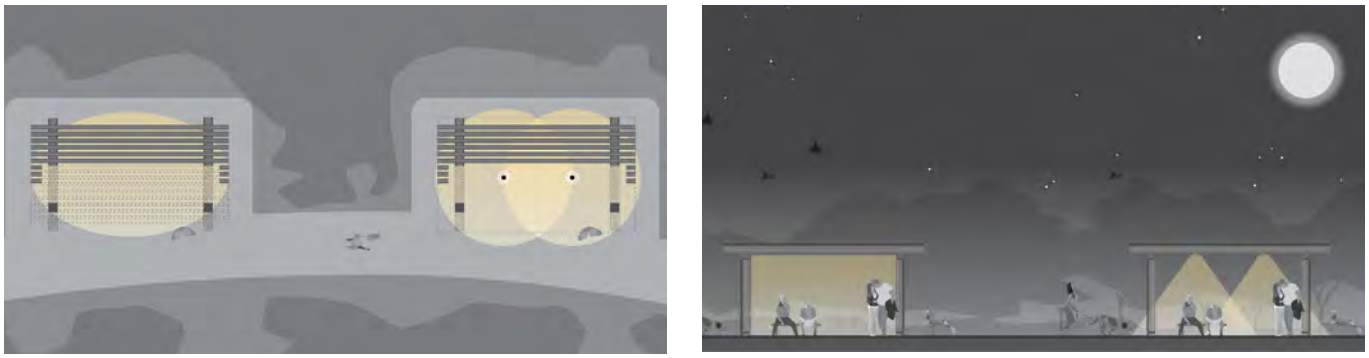
General Considerations

Lighting fixtures should use regressed or flat lenses to minimize unwanted glare. Light past the picnic area is acceptable for safety reasons, as long as it does not spill into surrounding areas.

Seating

General Considerations

Light levels may be higher in areas that already have more surrounding light. Under seating lighting and low-level wayfinding lighting make for a more comfortable environment.



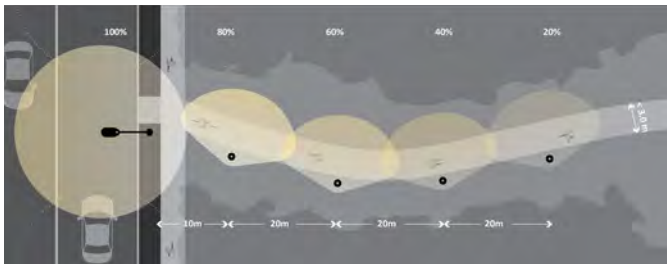
Picnic areas plan and section

Pathway Lighting

Entry Lighting

General Considerations

Provide transition into a dark zone that should remain unlit. Permanent light levels should drop by 20% at each pole as they move farther into the park, with poles spaced 20m apart. Lighting fixtures should use regressed or flat lenses to minimize unwanted glare.

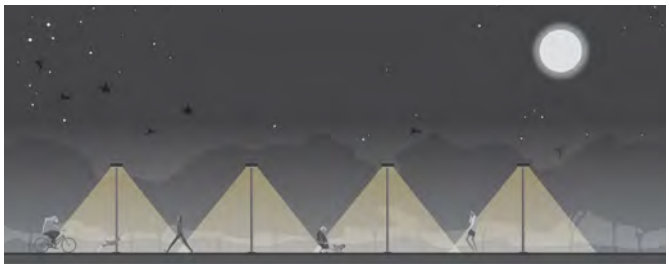


Multi-use pathway entry plan

Multi-use Pathway

General Considerations

Back light requirements may vary due to limits for light spilling onto nearby properties. Lighting fixtures should use regressed or flat lenses to minimize unwanted glare. Lights should be placed on one side of the path to maximize coverage and to minimize light spillage to one side of pathway only.

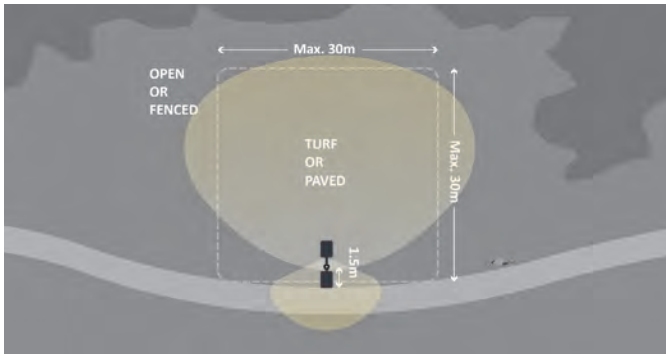


Multi-use pathway section

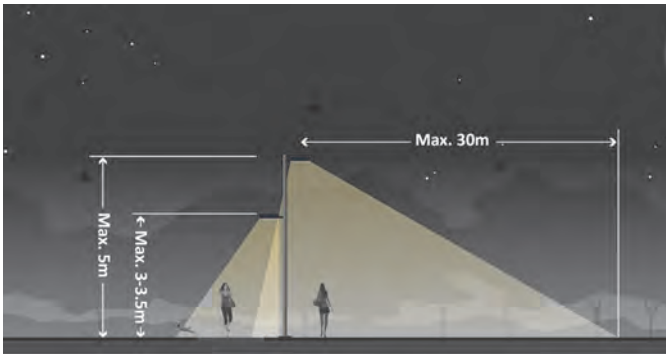
Recreation Lighting

General Considerations

This lighting recommendation is meant to offer additional lighting for areas next to pathways where people may gather. Each pole light will serve two purposes: lighting the path and lighting the nearby gathering space. Pole height will vary based on the area to illuminate. Back lighting may be limited to prevent light spilling onto nearby properties. Lighting fixtures should use regressed or flat lenses to minimize unwanted glare.



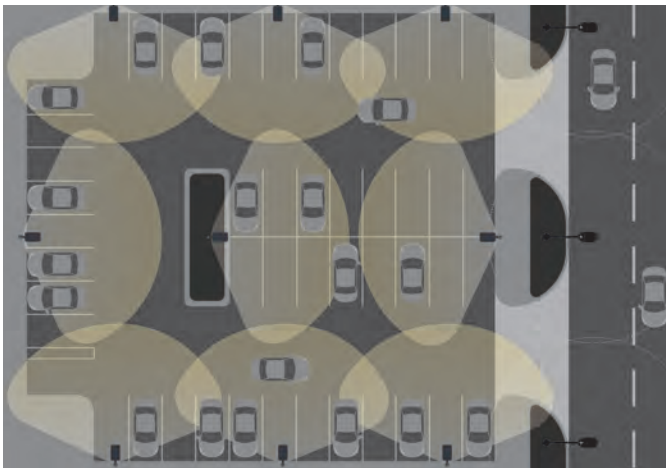
Recreational space plan and section



Parking Lighting

General Considerations

More than one light fixture may be mounted on a single pole. Back light requirements may vary due to limits for light spilling onto nearby properties. Lighting fixtures should use regressed or flat lenses to minimize unwanted glare.



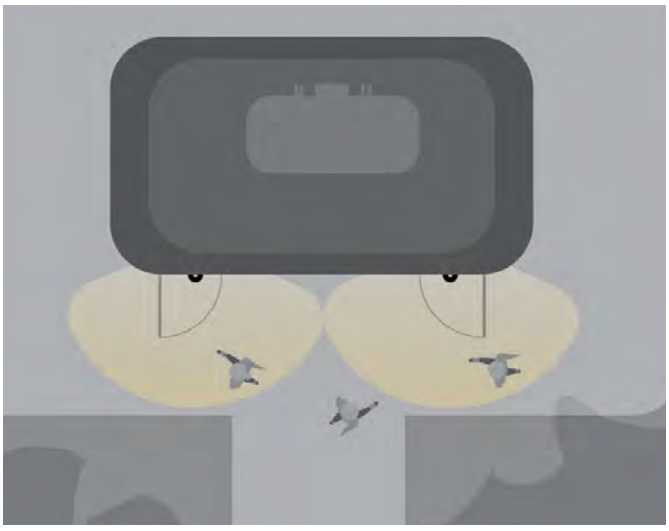


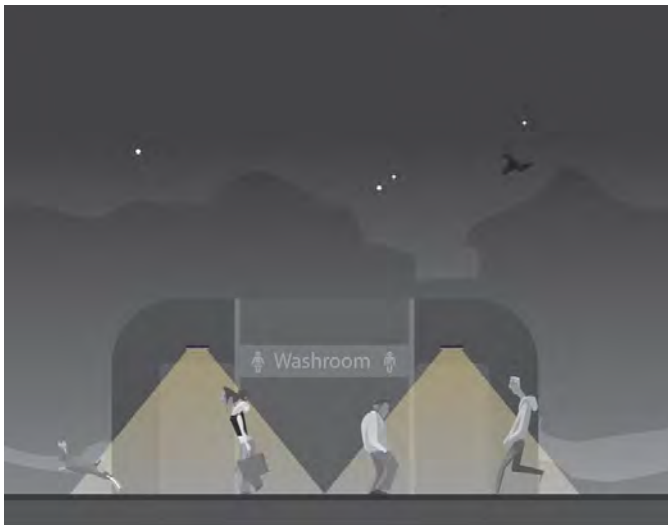
Parking lots plan and section

Facilities Lighting

General Considerations

Lighting fixtures should use regressed or flat lenses to minimize unwanted glare.





Washroom facilities plan and section

An Unforgettable Park Experience



Conceptual rendering of a hilltop lookout in Zone 4

The design of a park's physical environment, its materials, structures, signage, and visual language, shapes how visitors understand, navigate, and connect with a place over time. At North Maple Regional Park, building a coherent and recognizable identity is intentional work that has been underway since the park's earliest public phases.

The Park Identity chapter has described the design language that gives the park its character: a materiality palette suited to both active and natural settings, using corten steel, concrete, wood, and stone across furnishings, structures, and wayfinding elements. Three park districts, The Fields, Headwaters, and Pondside, provide visitors with a clear framework for orientation. Signage inspired by botanical illustration connects the visual identity to the ecological story of the land. A consistent identity across the park supports wayfinding, builds community recognition, and reinforces the park's role as a regional destination within Vaughan's parks system.

The previous chapters have described what the park will contain and how it will function. Park identity is what ties those elements together into a unified experience. With that experience defined, the plan turns to the practical question of how it gets delivered. The Future addresses the implementation, funding, governance, and partnership structures that will bring the full vision to life over the coming decades.



Natural forested areas at the park

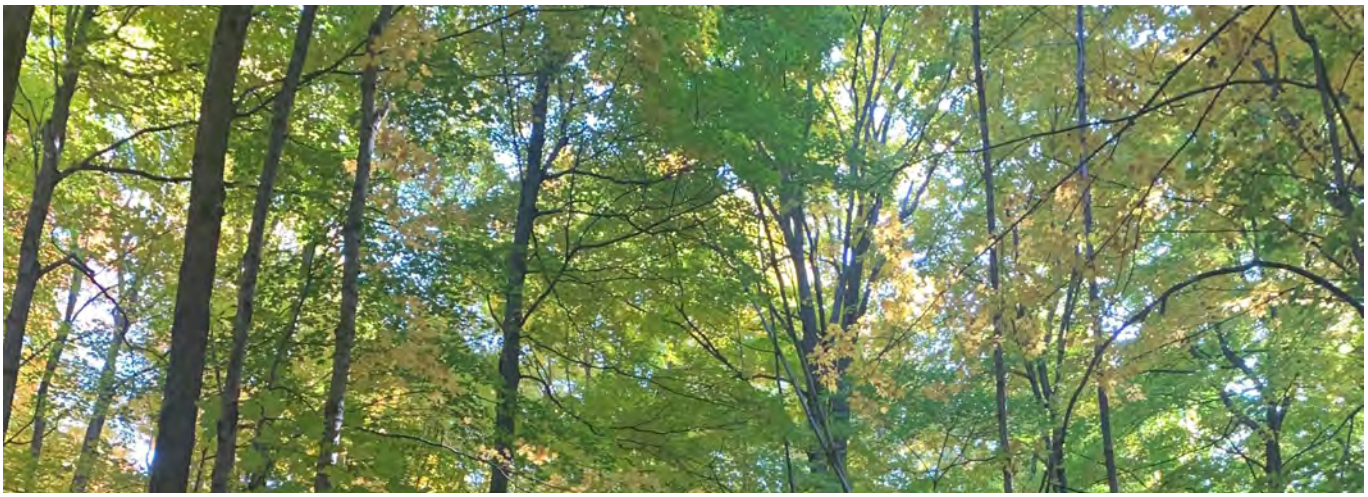


The Future



Conceptual rendering of Zone 2 Pondside winter activities

The Future of North Maple Regional Park



Wood lot natural area at the park

The Master Plan has established North Maple Regional Park's vision—a place where nature and people thrive together—guided by three pillars (Restore, Engage, Play) and six park goals.

The previous chapters have defined what the park will become: its landscapes, programs, amenities, and identity. This chapter addresses the essential question that follows: **How should the park be managed to sustain this vision over time?**

North Maple Regional Park is unlike any park the City of Vaughan currently operates. At over 900 acres, it is significantly larger than any existing City park and encompasses a far more complex range of landscapes—from restored prairies and wetlands to gardens, event lawns, a heritage site, and active landfill infrastructure requiring ongoing regulatory compliance.

The vision for the park requires not only physical construction but also financial planning, organizational development, and governance structures that can evolve with the park over decades. This chapter will address the following:

Implementation and Phasing establishes the sequencing of park development across four phases — from catalytic projects that build early momentum and demonstrate the park's potential, through short-term (0–5 years) and medium-term (5–25 years) investments, to long-term projects (25+ years) that complete the vision as the landfill sites become available for development.

The **Business Plan** provides the financial background for delivery, including captial and operational costs, and funding opportunities.

Management, Operations, and Governance addresses how the park should be organized, staffed, and managed to deliver on the Master Plan's vision.

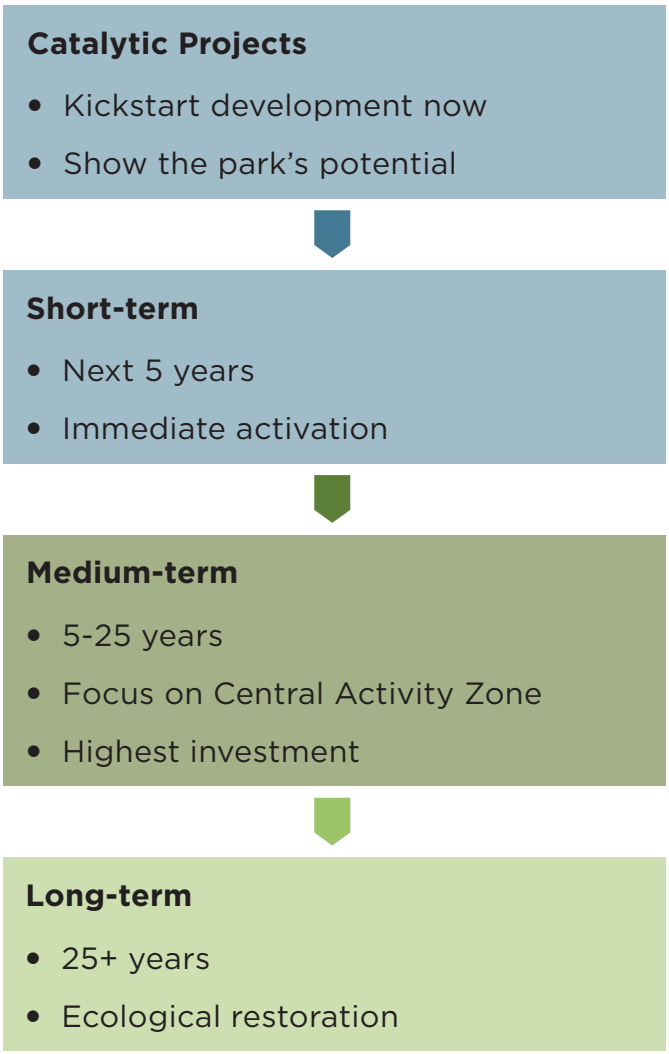
Implementation and Phasing

The transformation of North Maple Regional Park will unfold strategically over time through a multifaceted implementation approach that balances community needs with financial feasibility, regulatory requirements, and land availability. Realizing the Master Plan vision requires coordinated action across multiple project streams—from on-site capital construction and ecological restoration to critical enabling infrastructure, governance transitions, and intergovernmental agreements. In 2026, the park is already welcoming visitors with developed amenities including soccer fields, trails, and pavilions. However, over 230 hectares remain to be strategically planned and developed. This phasing approach bridges the 'meanwhile use plan'—an interim strategy for activating the park during development—with the ultimate vision represented in the overall illustrative site plan.

The extended phasing timeline spanning 25+ years is primarily driven by the former landfill sites, which require ongoing monitoring, management, and regulatory approvals before development can occur. The landfills' closure sequence, ownership, and regulatory approvals directly influence what can be built and when.

Park amenities and programs are organized into four distinct phases. Short-term projects (next 5 years) build momentum, while medium-term projects (5-25 years) expand programming as the park matures. Long-term projects (25+ years), primarily located on the landfill sites, complete the vision.

Catalytic projects are high-impact initiatives that demonstrate the park's potential, build public excitement, and establish a strong foundation for future development. The next steps for catalytic projects are the initial work to be done, but the full projects require implementation through all phases.



Phasing diagram

Catalytic Projects

Three catalytic projects launch the Master Plan's implementation, chosen for their ability to build momentum, attract resources, and demonstrate the park's credibility on a regional stage.

Rationale on why these three projects are identified as catalytic projects is provided below, with more details and next steps on the following pages. The three projects are provided in no particular order.

Why these three projects?

1. Conservatory and Gardens

- Establishes a signature destination that builds regional profile and public support early
- Anchors fundraising, sponsorship, and partnership conversations that benefit all subsequent park projects
- Sets the design and programming standard that guides short- and medium-term investments
- Demonstrates the park's environmental vision in a tangible, visitable form from day one

2. Park Gateway

- Delivers the park's visible front door before longer-horizon projects
- Generates early momentum and activity visible from Keele Street
- Creates the gateway and wayfinding framework that short- and medium-term projects connect into

3. Landfill to Park Conversion

- Initiates regulatory and land transfer processes that gate all southern-lands development
- Avoid delaying medium- and long-term projects
- Establishes the technical and legal baseline every subsequent landfill-area project depends on
- Advances in parallel with near-term capital work, keeping the full 25-year timeline achievable



Map 26. Catalytic projects locations



Conceptual rendering of the conservatory and gardens

Catalytic Project 1: Conservatory and Gardens

The conservatory and exterior gardens will be an iconic and sustainable amenity offering year-round immersive biomes, horticultural education, and event programming—a signature tourism destination for the park. For details on the building, refer to the **Big Architecture** section in the **Park Experience** chapter. For partnerships, refer to the **Partnership Opportunities for Key Site Amenities** in **The Future** chapter.

Next Steps for Conservatory and Gardens

Conduct financial feasibility study

Determine a preliminary budget range, identifying funding sources (municipal budgets, grants, partnerships, senior government funding).

Secure political will and public mandate

Authorize the project and build broad political consensus that spans Council terms. Conduct early public consultation to ensure community support and demonstrate a genuine mandate for the investment beyond individual political champions.

Prepare strategic and planning needs assessment

Determine what services the building will provide, who will use it, and how it fits into the community's broader cultural or institutional infrastructure. Stakeholder consultations with community groups, potential users, and relevant departments help shape this vision.

Produce preliminary site plan and program development

Outline required spaces, approximate sizes, functional relationships and performance requirements for the architecture and landscape architecture programs.

Catalytic Project 2: Park Gateway

Park Gateway Partnerships will create the park's main entrance and visible identity along Keele Street, offering mixed-use opportunities that generate momentum and attract visitors immediately. For background information on the Keele Street Frontage, refer to the **Gateway to the Park** section in the **Welcome** chapter, or refer to the Public-Private Partnership Opportunities along Keele Street in **The Future** chapter.

Next Steps for Park Gateway

Conduct feasibility study

Commission a feasibility study assessing market demand, financial viability, and risks. Develop partnership model defining what municipality and private partners each contribute. Establish preliminary decision-making frameworks and risk-sharing arrangements.

Develop strategy to attract, engage and procure with partners

Document current site conditions, ownership, and zoning. Review constraints like easements, environmental issues, or contamination. Commission necessary technical studies including environmental assessments and geotechnical analysis to identify development challenges.

Prepare legal and financial framework development

Work with legal, finance, and economic development departments to establish potential partnership structures and procurement approaches. Develop land valuation methods, revenue-sharing models, and mechanisms to secure public benefit requirements.

Draft briefing materials and council approvals

Prepare Council reports and presentations explaining the opportunity, preliminary scope, and recommended approach. Draft motions to authorize feasibility work and partnership exploration. Develop materials to address anticipated questions about public-private partnerships.



Conceptual precedent images of possible park gateway amenities



Conceptual rendering of long-term implementation for landfill sites

Catalytic Project 3: Landfill to Park Conversion

The former landfill areas will be a nature-based tourism anchor delivering eco-educational value.

Next Steps for Landfill Sites

Prepare closure and end use plan for vaughan township landfill site

Technical studies inform Closure and End Use Plans required by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. These documents detail protection of public health with public access.

Prepare additional technical studies

Comprehensive field studies will assess landfill gas emissions, groundwater conditions, and soil quality across both sites. This multi-year investigation—typically requiring 12-18 months—will provide important technical data.

Establish memorandum of understanding

Engage in discussions at a strategic leadership level with the City of Toronto for a land transfer of the Keele Valley Landfill Site to the City of Vaughan.

Submit for regulatory approvals and finalize park design

Closure Plans are submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks for Environmental Compliance Approval amendments. Concurrently, detailed park design integrates trails, habitat zones, and amenities with monitoring infrastructure locations. This phase typically requires 24-36 months for Ministry review and approval.

Early ecological restoration plan

Develop an early ecological restoration plan to begin implementation of restoration planting zones and biological processes (ie. phytoremediation) before trails or public access are possible.

Landfill discovery days and open days

Change the connotation of closed landfill areas by allowing the public to bike, run, walk, or birdwatch in normally closed areas of the park. Host guided tours and activities, similar to Freshkills Park, NY.

Phasing Plans

Buidling on the Catalyic Projects, the Master Plan organizes capital development across four distinct zones and three phases. The following pages outline the short-, medium-, and long-term capital projects.

The Master Plan is intended to be high-level and used as guidance for future project planning and technical review. The Master Plan's proposed phasing is a broad recommendation that will act as a guide for decision-making. All future capital projects at the park will be informed by multiple considerations, including:

- Alignment with Master Plan,
- City Council approval,
- Community desire, benefit and impact,
- Capital cost and funding potential, long-term operational costs,
- Feasibility, technical site suitability,
- Implementation timeline,
- Environmental sustainability, ecological value, and climate resilience; and
- Risk: any unique constraints, challenges, and complexities.

Real Estate and Legal Considerations

Bringing the park vision to life will require ongoing collaboration across City departments, partner agencies, and legal and real estate advisors to ensure the right frameworks are in place to support every project, partnership, and land transaction. Before construction begins on any phase of the park, the City should confirm that all land is within City of Vaughan ownership and established property boundaries. Where lands involve the City of Toronto or Toronto Regional Conservation Authority, consultation with Legal and Real Estate will help identify any agreements, access rights, or easements required. Where public utilities cross City property, formal easement agreements should be reviewed and in place before construction proceeds.

Zone 1:
Keele Street Frontage

Zone 2:
Central Activity Zone

Zone 3:
Natural Area & Nevada Park

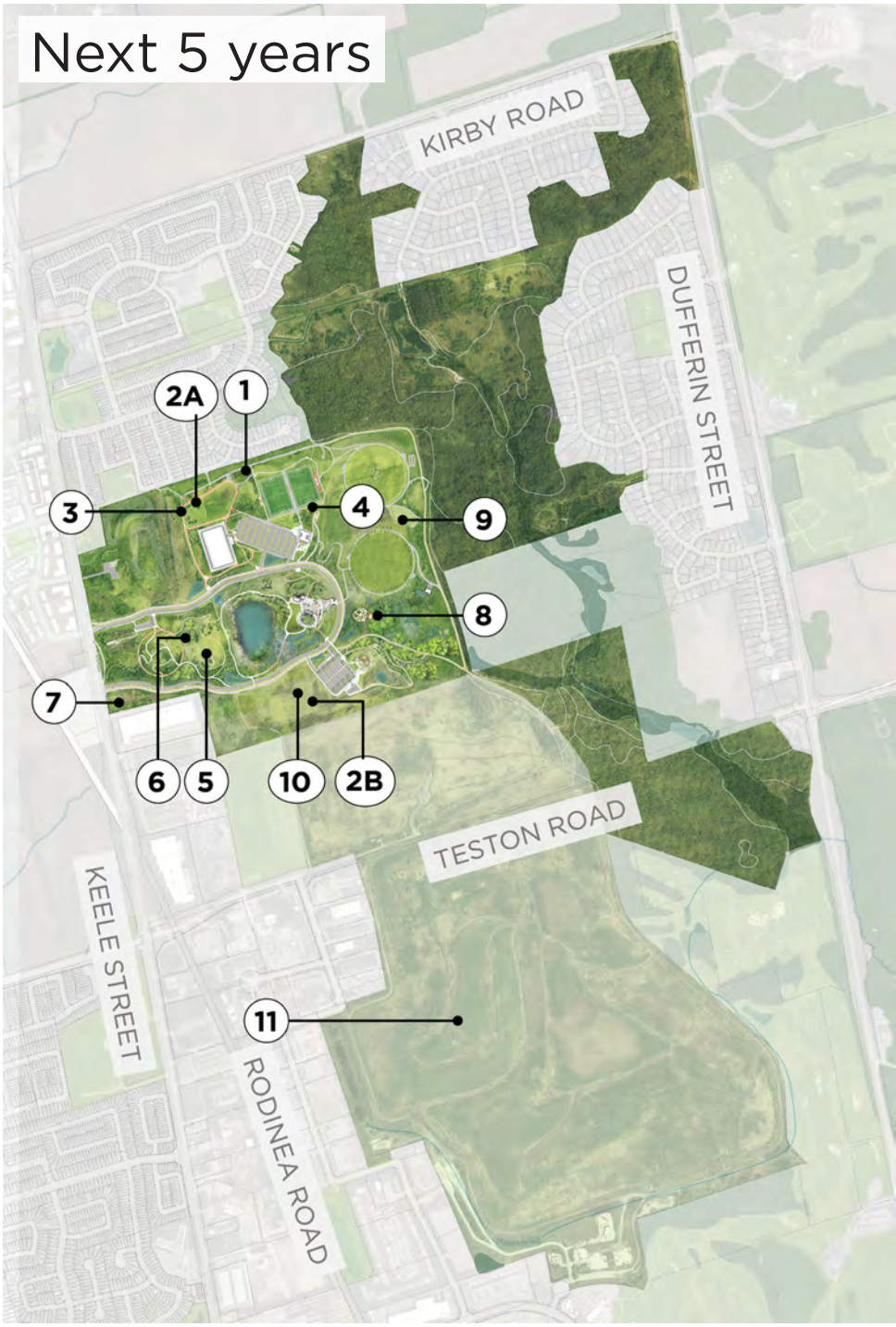
Zone 4:
Landfill Restoration



Map 27. Overall illustrative plan and park zones

Short-term Projects

1. Community Gardens
2. Temporary Off-Leash Dog Area
3. Active Sports Loop
4. Sports Walk of Fame
5. Pondside Picnic Area
6. Tree Nursery Plots and Mini Pocket Forests
7. Temporary Operations Yard
8. Eco-Island
9. Amphitheatre and Stage
10. Conservatory Feasibility Study
11. Early Ecological Restoration



Map 28. Short-term projects map

Short-term Phase: Project Descriptions

Focus: Provide immediate activation, improved safety, and address community needs. At the time of the Master Plan, each short-term project is at different states of development, including early exploration, design, funded/unfunded, and planned. Short-term projects include:

1 Community Gardens

Shared green plots where local people can grow food, flowers and native plants together.

2 Temporary Off-Leash Dog Area

A designated, fenced-in area for dogs to socialize, exercise and play off-leash. At the time of the Master Plan, interim locations were being explored through public engagement. Results of this engagement will inform a future permanent location.

3 Active Sports Loop

A multi-use trail for walking, jogging, cycling, and other modes of physical exercise that connect park amenities in a continuous loop.

4 Sports Walk of Fame

A public landmark that honours and celebrates local athletes, teams, coaches, builders and other contributors to sports and athletics.

5 Pondside Picnic area

Flexible lawn framed by tree groves offering key views overlooking the pond.

6 Tree Nursery Plots and Mini Pocket Forests

Specialized zone for the growth of seedlings, saplings and trees to be transplanted to another location in the park.

7 Temporary Operations Yard

Dedicated maintenance and operations area to support park needs.

8 Eco-island

Outdoor educational hub for nature-based learning to enhance learning opportunities.

9 Amphitheatre and Stage

Open-air performance platform for entertainment and community celebration.

10 Conservatory Feasibility Study

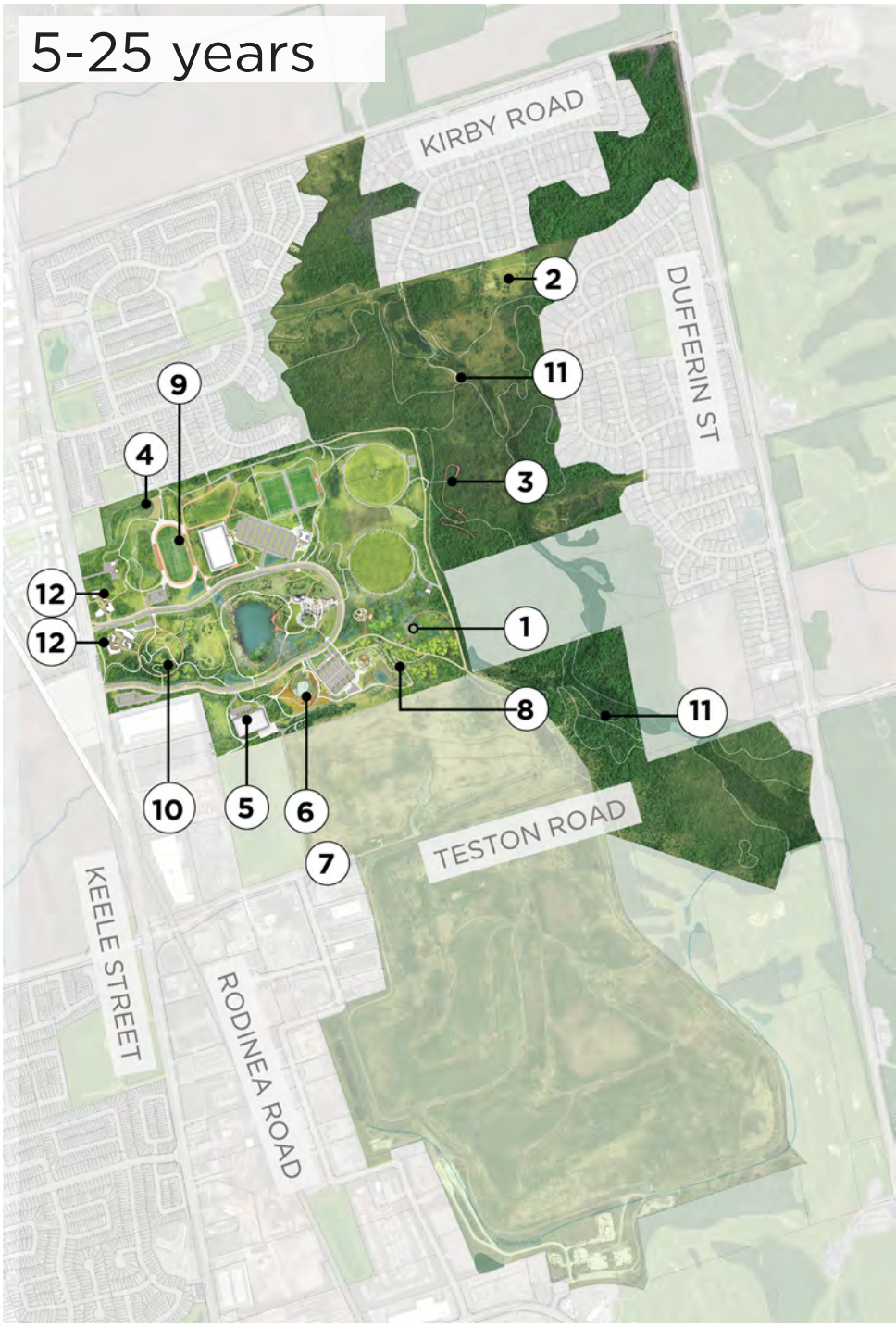
Determine a preliminary budget range, identifying funding sources (municipal budgets, grants, partnerships, senior government funding). For more details, refer to the Catalytic Projects section of **The Future** chapter.

11 Early Ecological Restoration

Prepare and implement an ecological restoration plan to begin implementation of restoration planting zones and biological processes.

Medium-term Projects

1. Wetland Boardwalk
2. Nevada Park Destination Playground
3. Treetop Canopy Walk
4. Permanent Off-Leash Dog Area
5. Year-Round Sports Pavilion
6. Conservatory and Gardens
7. Support for Teston Road Extension
8. Arboretum and Hillside Gardens
9. Sports Stadium
10. Wellness Gardens
11. Nature & Hiking Trails
12. Public-Private Partnership Lands: Capital Development Projects
13. Enabling works and infrastructure upgrades applicable throughout the park



Map 29. Medium-term projects map

Medium-term Phase: Project Descriptions

Focus: Significant site development to expand amenities, facilities, recreation and planting. Because many capital projects are planned for the medium-term phase, the implementation timeline is 20 years (5-25 years after the Master Plan is completed). Medium-term projects include:

1. **Wetland Boardwalk**

   Elevated multi-use walkway spanning across the wetland.

2. **Nevada Park Destination Playground**

   Revitalization of neighbourhood park to destination playground.

3. **Treetop Canopy Walk**

   An elevated series of paths and bridges that guide users through forest exploration.

4. **Permanent Off-Leash Dog Area**

   A designated, fenced-in area for dogs to socialize, exercise and play off-leash.

5. **Year Round Sports Facility**

   Specialized venue with playing surfaces for athletic competition and community recreation. May be combined with a park maintenance and operations centre.

6. **Conservatory and Gardens**

   Year round venue showcasing specialized collections of exotic tropical plants, seasonal flower shows with admissions.

7. **Support for Teston Road Extension**

   Extension of major road through the park with key access points, transit stops, and improved crossings.

8. **Arboretum and Hillside Gardens**

   Curated diverse plant and tree species displayed on a hill with meandering paths and rest nodes.

9. **Sports Stadium**

   Multi-sport track and fields with spectator seating for athletic competition.

10. **Wellness Gardens**

    Slow-paced, sensory-focused and meditative garden trails and forest clearings for forest bathing.

11. **Nature & Hiking Trails**

    In collaboration with TRCA, this series of trails span through natural areas.

12. **Public-Private Partnership Lands: Development Projects**

    Design and use of zone to be determined with private partners.

13. **Enabling Works and Infrastructure Upgrades**

    Pre-design studies required to determine construction needs for future development projects. Applicable throughout the park.

Long-term Projects

1. Passive Use Trails and Open Country Trekking
2. Interpretive Nodes
3. Landfill-to-Park Discovery Area
4. New Park Entry Point and Parking Lot 7
5. Hilltop Lookouts
6. Observation Tower
7. Ecological Restoration of Landfills and Enhanced Woodland Edge
8. Park Operations Centre (Adaptive re-use of existing Landfill Maintenance and Operations Centre)



Map 30. Long-term projects map

Long-term Phase: Project Descriptions

Focus: Ecological restoration, public trails and rest points for the landfill sites can begin after regulatory and safety requirements have been met, likely 25+ years in the future. Long-term projects include:

1. **Passive Use Trails and Open Country Trekking**

   Trails for range of low-intensity recreation to hiking for enjoyment of nature across former landfills.

2. **Interpretive Nodes**

   Network of physical points that explain cultural, historical ecological significance of the park.

3. **Landfill-to-Park Discovery Area**

   Exploratory play area that acknowledges historical use of site and celebrates restoration.

4. **New Park Entry Point and Parking Lot 7**

   Additional entry point for enhanced southern park access.

5. **Hilltop Lookouts**

   Elevated vantage point of park and Toronto skyline.

6. **Observation Tower**

   Landmark elevated structure for panoramic views of the park.

7. **Ecological Restoration of Landfills and Enhanced Woodland Edge**

   Transformation of former landfill rolling hills and forest into sustainable ecologically sound green spaces.

8. **Park Operations Centre**

   Transition of the existing Landfill Maintenance and Operations Centre, including adaptive re-use of buildings, storage, and other facilities where appropriate. Implementation only when regulatory, safety, and landfill maintenance requirements allow.

Next Steps: Studies and Reports

All next steps and studies outlined in this Master Plan will require Council approval and confirmed budget allocations before work can begin.

The planning and implementation of the park should be carried out in close coordination with Legal and Real Estate, ensuring all land, partnerships, utilities, and agreements align with applicable City policies and legislation—including any not specifically identified in this Master Plan—as they evolve over time. Refer to the **Legal and Real Estate Considerations** section in **The Future** chapter.

Capital Planning

Financial / Lifecycle Cost Analysis

While the Master Plan includes an order of magnitude cost estimate, a more detailed infrastructure costing and lifecycle analysis tied specifically to the confirmed capital projects (Conservatory, Sports Stadium, Public-Private Partnership Lands) would help the City sequence investments and identify funding gaps before committing to detailed design.

Major Capital Projects Feasibility Studies

Before advancing any major capital facility into the design, the City should complete a feasibility study for that specific facility to establish a realistic early budget. This may include a needs assessment, site feasibility review, Class D program estimate, benchmarking against comparable projects, lifecycle costing / total cost of ownership, procurement and delivery strategy review, preliminary schedule, and risk and contingency framework.

Landfill Engineering

For immediate next steps for Landfill Restoration, refer to the Catalytic Projects section at the beginning of **The Future Chapter**.

For a list of technical reports, studies, and submissions related to landfill regulatory and ownership next steps, refer to **Technical Volume 2: Landfill Restoration Engineering**.

Civil Engineering

Water Servicing Study

Prepare a study that incorporates updated demand projections for all future capital projects. Include field testing of the Maplewood BPS and PD9 distribution system, pressure testing at key municipal connections, and alignment with planned capital works.

Sanitary Sewer Capacity Study

Prepare a downstream capacity assessment of the existing sanitary system to confirm it can accommodate flows from the proposed development without adverse impacts. This is a natural companion to the Water Servicing Study and should be scoped together.

Hydrogeological Investigation

Technical Volume 3: Civil Engineering includes a preliminary water balance analysis, estimating that approximately 664 m^3 of stormwater must be retained on site to meet the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's requirement of retaining a minimum 5 mm of rainfall. A hydrogeological investigation is required to inform and finalize this analysis by confirming groundwater levels, soil conditions, and in-situ infiltration rates.

Transportation

Transit Service Feasibility & Phasing Review

As the park is developed, maintain an ongoing conversation with York Region Transit (YRT) to assess and review how transit is/could be utilized in the park.

Operational Traffic Study

As the park is developed, monitor and assess the performance of key intersections at the park's perimeter (or at key intersections nearby).

Road Safety Review

As the park is developed, assess the performance of Vaughan CARES Way in providing a safe and efficient access point for vehicles in the park, while maintaining a low speed.

Parking Supply & Special Events

As the park is developed and detailed parking requirements become clearer, reassess the level of parking provided (aligned with City practices for encouraging sustainable modes of travel). Also required will be a special events strategy to ensure that any future events are able to cater to an increased demand for the park through safe and convenient means of travel.

For more details and additional transportation studies, refinements, and implementation priorities that should be further evaluated by the City for development, refer to the appendix of **Technical Volume 4: Transportation**.

Functional Servicing and Utilities

Functional Servicing Report

As individual capital projects are confirmed, each will require a project-specific report that ties together water, sanitary, stormwater, and grading findings into a single regulatory submission for the City of Vaughan.

Utility Coordination Study

A comprehensive review of existing and planned hydro, telecommunications, and gas utilities across all four zones should be completed to avoid conflicts with servicing infrastructure and building footprints.

Specific Plans

Interpretive and Commemoration Plan

Develop an Interpretation and Commemoration Plan as a tool to conserve intangible ecological and cultural heritage values, including Indigenous stories. For more details, refer to the **Engage** chapter, and/or **Technical Volume 5: Cultural Heritage Research Report**.

Business Plan

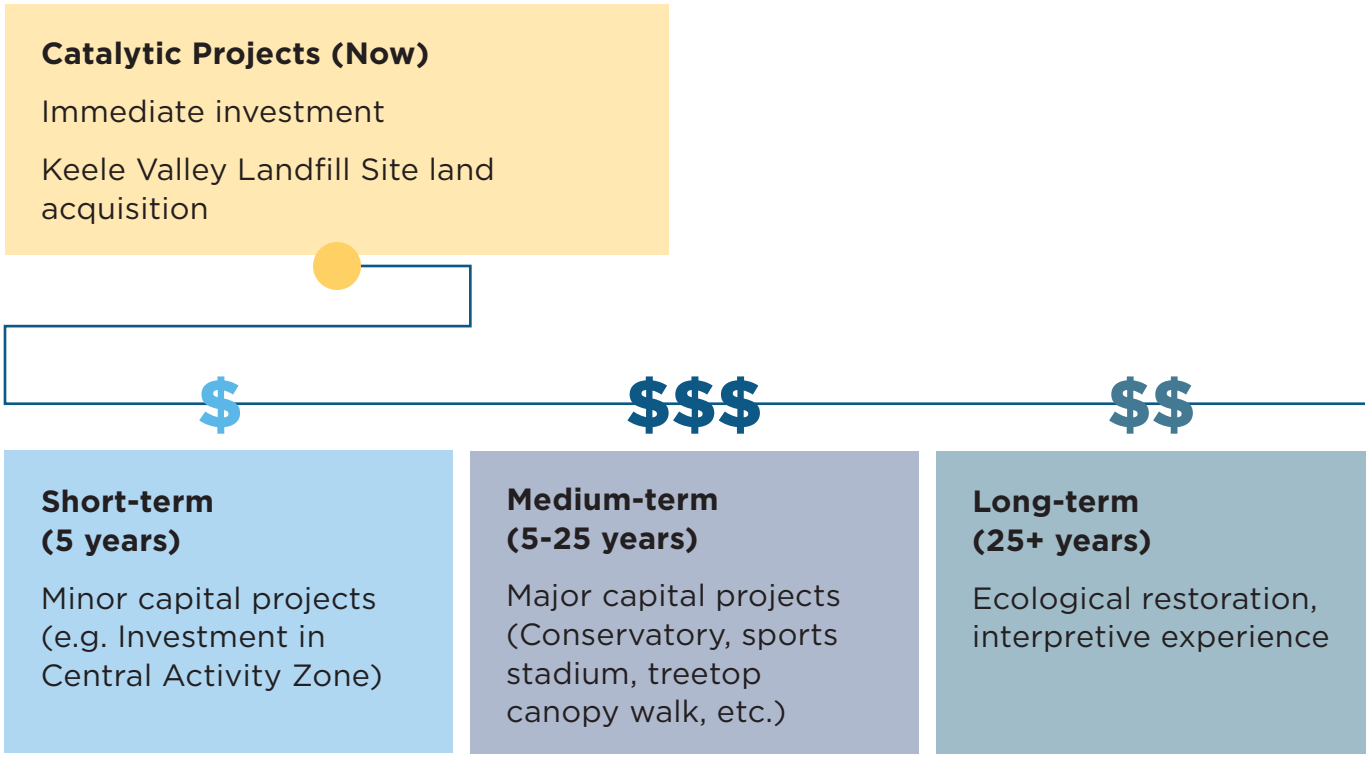


Existing pavilion

The Business Plan for North Maple Regional Park provides a financial framework to support the park's development and long-term sustainability.

Unlike a traditional corporate business plan focused on profitability, this plan recognizes that municipal parks are essential public infrastructure that generate immense community value while typically operating with municipal subsidy. The operating cost of the park must be considered in tandem with the social, environmental, and economic benefits it will provide to the community. The target is financial sustainability through diversified funding, not necessarily breaking even or generating profit.

This Business Plan is organized into three core sections: Capital Development Costs, Annual Operations and Maintenance Costs, and Funding. These sections outline the investment required to build the park, the resources needed to operate and maintain it at high standards, and the diverse funding strategies—including public support, private partnerships, and earned revenue—that will work together to achieve long-term sustainability. Success will be measured not only by cost recovery rates, but by the park's ability to remain clean, safe, well-maintained, and welcoming to all members of the community. The Business Plan also includes opportunities and key stratgies for partnerships. Through strategic phasing and implementation, the park will balance fiscal responsibility with the delivery of exceptional community benefits. For more details, refer to **Technical Volume 7: Business Plan**.



Capital Development Costs

Realizing the Master Plan vision requires significant capital investment in infrastructure, facilities, amenities, and equipment. Strategic investment over three phases allows the City to align major expenditures with funding availability and community priorities. The phases will also allow the City to explore public-private partnerships as part of the investment and development process.

Technical Volume 7: Business Plan provides an order of magnitude estimate of capital development costs. Capital costs include infrastructure, facilities, amenities, and equipment necessary to transform the site into a world-class regional park. Phased development allows the City to align investment with funding availability, community priorities, and operational capacity while ensuring each phase delivers meaningful community benefits.

Total Project Cost

The total Master Plan investment is divided across three implementation phases spanning 25+ years, with the medium-term phase representing the largest financial commitment at roughly three-quarters of the total budget.

Public-Private Partnership Lands

The Master Plan envisions potential for revenue generation and public-private partnerships. A public-private partnership is a collaborative arrangement between the government and the private sector to develop, finance, and operate infrastructure or services. Opportunities include the Zone 1: Keele Street Frontage mixed-use commercial opportunities, the Conservatory and Gardens, Sports Pavilion, Sports Stadium and other facilities. For more information, refer to the Public-Private Partnership Opportunities section within **The Future** chapter.

Capital Development Costs

Understanding Capital Construction Costs

The park's overall capital development cost is divided into six construction categories in the graphic below. The largest capital costs will be for large buidlings (such as the Conservatory or Sports Stadium), where there is opportunity for public-private partnerships and possibly private funding.

Escalation Impact

Construction cost escalation significantly impacts long-term phases. Escalation and inflation are complex and important financial considerations that require further assessment. Escalation has been excluded from the graphic below.

Site Development by Zone

Zone 4's former landfill sites represent the largest land area requiring extensive earthwork and remediation. Zone 2: Central Activity Zone contains the highest concentration of buildings and programmed spaces, and represents the largest financial investment. Zone 3: Nevada Park and Natural Areas features significant natural area enhancement including an elevated treetop boardwalk experience.

16%
Buildings:
Seven major facilities

14%
Site Preparation & Services:
Earthwork, utilities, electrical

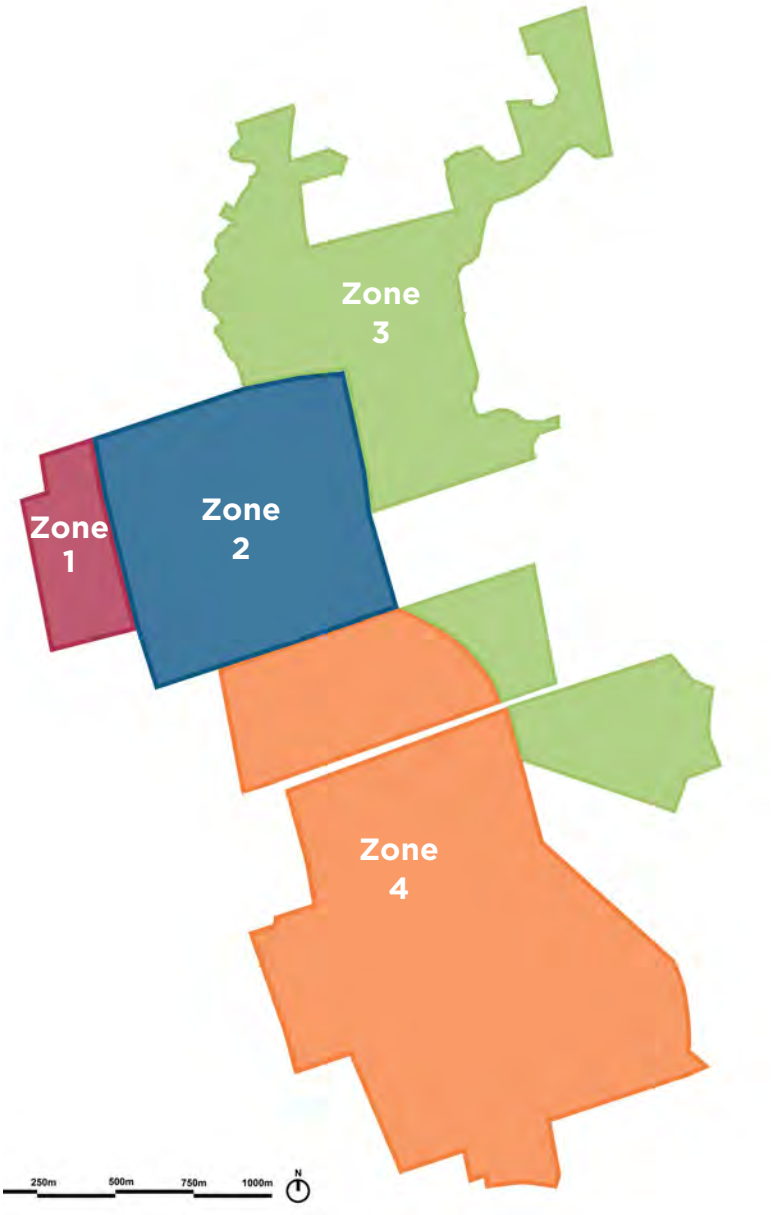
17%
General Requirements & Fees:
Management, contractor fees

14%
Landscaping:
Trees, gardens, seedings

26%
Site Improvements:
Boardwalks, amphitheater, playgrounds

13%
Pathways & Parking:
Hard surfaces, roads, trails

Park capital development construction costs, by percentage



Park capital development costs, by zone percentage

30.8%

Zone 1: Keele St Frontage

primary entry, parking, commercial opportunities, and gateway amenities

41.3%

Zone 2: Central Activity Zone

highest development intensity with all major buildings, sports, facilities and programmed spaces

14.4%

Zone 3: Natural Area & Nevada Park

enhanced natural features, treetop canopy, boardwalk, trails, and playgrounds

13.5%

Zone 4: Former Landfill Sites

remediation, observation tower, extensive pathways, and passive recreation

Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs

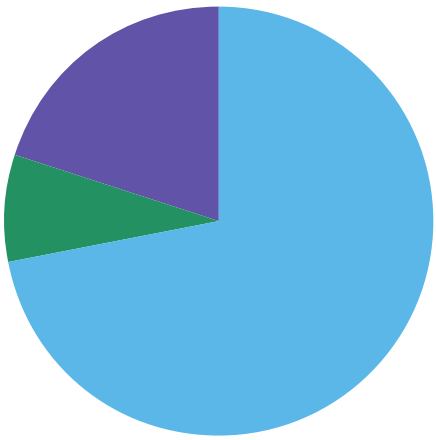
Quality parks require ongoing commitment. Maintenance staff, materials, programming, administration, security, and visitor services ensure the park remains clean, safe, and welcoming. Sustained operational investment protects capital expenditures, delivers the environmental and community benefits that justify public investment, and maintains the high standards residents expect and deserve. Operating costs include maintenance staff, materials, contracted services, park programming, administration, security, and visitor services.

Technical Volume 7: Business Plan estimates the resources needed to maintain the park at high standards, including maintenance, programming, administration, security, and visitor services. These projections help the City plan for protecting its capital investment and delivering community benefits.

Actual costs will vary based on maintenance strategies, volunteer program participation, and potential partnerships with other organizations. **Technical Volume 7: Business Plan** provides order of magnitude cost estimates and explores opportunities to optimize operations while maintaining high quality standards. Phased development allows costs to scale with park development and revenue generation.

For a detailed breakdown of projected park-wide maintenance by park zone, refer to **Technical Volume 7: Business Plan**.

Park-wide Maintenance Cost Breakdown



75%
Personnel Costs
Maintenance staff salaries and benefits

4%
Contracted Services
Specialized services and contractors

21%
Materials & Supplies
Equipment, supplies, materials and consumables

Projected park-wide maintenance cost breakdown (long-term implementation, 25+ years)

Funding

Financial sustainability requires a diversified approach across three funding pillars: public funding (municipal budget, grants, special levies), private funding (philanthropy, sponsorships, partnerships), and earned revenue (events, concessions, facility rentals). **Technical Volume 7: Business Plan** explores opportunities within each funding source and potential revenue ranges to help the City develop strategies for long-term sustainability while ensuring equitable access.

One of the major advantages of a partnership governance model is its flexibility. Non-profits can focus their energy upon the task at hand and move quickly towards implementation. The non-profit partner may also take on various roles and are not restricted to one set of responsibilities. Additionally, private non-profits can coordinate the interests of private developers with the interests of government, as representatives from both sides of the project serve on the board of the organization. While laws and regulations may be different from every province, for some park conservancy in the United States, they must receive a certain percentage of their revenues and funding through fundraising and donations. It is important to further explore and understand the rules a non-profit organization must follow.

With respect to funding, merely because a non-profit does not have direct access to the various tax incentives and funding mechanisms available to public entities does not mean the non-profit organization is precluded from lobbying government for public funding and/or various tax incentive programs. One of the key benefits of public-private partnerships is the private partner's ability to seek assistance from the public partner when it comes to furthering the goals of the project.

The City should conduct a funding feasibility study and funding strategy report to identify and prioiritize which opportunities should be developed and where there may be policy gaps to be filled.

Funding Opportunities

Public Funding

- Municipal budget, including taxes, levies, development charges
- Government grants

Private Funding

- Donations
- Corporate sponsorship
- Partnerships
- Fundraising campaigns

Earned Revenue

- Events & programming
- Concessions
- Facility rentals & Land leases
- User fees and merchandise
- Green revenue

Partnerships



Canada Day at North Maple Regional Park (2019)

Strong park partnerships extend beyond funding to include expertise, leadership, and long-term caretakers. Leadership and management are more significant than funding, highlighting how shared responsibility and planning for maintenance are essential to building a lasting environmental legacy.

The future of a 900-acre public park depends on strong partnerships built on shared vision, long-term stewardship, and community trust. Corporate, philanthropic, joint-venture and community partners play a critical role by investing not only financial resources, but also leadership, creativity, and problem-solving capacity.

By supporting public parks, partners help build community capacity, foster land caretaking, and unlock innovative ideas that enrich public spaces. These collaborations bring people together, strengthen advocacy, and ensure parks remain vibrant, resilient, and relevant for generations. Investing in a park is an investment in community well-being, environmental health, and a shared public legacy.

Strong partnerships are essential to the success of large public parks, particularly complex sites requiring long-term management. By combining public leadership with philanthropic, corporate, and community partners, parks gain financial stability, specialized expertise, and advocacy capacity. These collaborations support ongoing maintenance, innovation, and public trust, ensuring parks remain resilient, inclusive, and relevant over generations.

The following pages explore opportunities for the designated public-private partnership lands in Zone 1 along Keele Street Friontage, along with partnership opportunities for amenities in all areas of the park.

Partnership Examples



FreshKills illustrative render



Frederic-Back Parc meadows

Freshkills Park, New York City

Partnership role

Partners support programming, revenue-generating uses, and stewardship while coordinating closely with Department of Parks & Recreation and Department of Sanitation operations.

Partnership benefits

Partnerships leverage external expertise, funding, and innovation to supplement public investment in a complex, long-term transformation.

Maintenance benefits

Collaborative management helps balance ecological maintenance needs with landfill monitoring, infrastructure costs, and limited public funding.

Park advocacy

Advocacy partners build public trust, sustain political support, and reframe Freshkills as a flagship park and environmental asset.

Frederic-Back Parc, Montreal

Partnership role

Partners support programming, research, education, and activation while the City retains ownership and operational control.

Partnership benefits

Partnerships expand expertise, funding, and programming capacity while reinforcing the park's environmental innovation mandate.

Maintenance benefits

Collaborative operations support specialized maintenance needs tied to landfill infrastructure, biodiversity management, and long-term monitoring.

Park advocacy

Dedicated partners champion the park's environmental mission, building public understanding, investment, and long-term political support.

Key Strategies

Partnership Opportunities for Key Site Amenities



Conceptual rendering of the Conservatory and Gardens in summer

Overarching Strategy

Establish partnership opportunities with key site amenities

Formalize partnerships to build capacity to leverage partnerships with conservation and education organizations, schools, and post-secondary institutions, corporate, and philanthropic partners.

Conservatory and Gardens

There is a significant opportunity for the creation of a conservatory and exterior gardens at North Maple Regional Park, even though it is not directly located in the designated Public-Private Partnership lands along Keele Street.

Public engagement revealed strong support for botanical amenities (142 mentions), with participants envisioning both outdoor gardens and year-round indoor conservatory facilities.

The operational complexity of a conservatory—requiring specialized horticultural expertise, climate-controlled infrastructure, year-round programming, and substantial ongoing maintenance budgets—makes it well-suited to a partnership model.

The Conservatory and Gardens have potential to become a catalytic project for the park. For more details and next steps, refer to the **Catalytic Projects** section in the **Future** chapter.

Stadium, Sports Fields, and Courts

Partnerships through sponsorships of sports stadiums, fields, and courts create shared value for both the park and the community. Sponsorship funding can support the construction, maintenance, and programming of high-quality recreational facilities, reducing long-term operational costs while expanding public access to sport and active living. In return, partners gain positive visibility through association with health, inclusion, and community wellbeing. When thoughtfully aligned, these partnerships can also support youth programs, tournaments, and community events, strengthening local identity and ensuring park infrastructure remains vibrant, accessible, and resilient over time.

Next Steps

Create a formal **Partner Outreach Program** to determine long-lasting, tiered relationships. The program will have specific audiences, highlight the various types of partnerships available to meet targets, and outline key benefits and opportunities for tiered partnerships.



Event on soccer field and adjacent field

Public-Private Partnership Opportunities Along Keele Street

The Public-Private Partnership lands present a unique opportunity to blend private sector innovation with public parkland values.

Engaging Communities Through Strategic Partnerships

The Public-Private Partnership lands in Zone 1 along Keele Street directly support North Maple Regional Park's Engage pillar by creating spaces that connect people and build community.

Public-Private Partnerships partners can facilitate social gatherings through farmers' markets, festivals, and bookable event venues while providing food and beverage facilities that bring residents together. Nature-based tourism operations and interpretation centers offer educational programming about the park's Indigenous history, agricultural heritage, and ecological restoration story. Supporting services such as bike-share stations and enhanced transit connections lower barriers to participation.

Strategic partnerships generate revenue for park operations while creating local employment, demonstrating how collaboration enhances the public good and builds lasting community pride.

Community Vision and Priorities

Through extensive public engagement, over 2,500 community members shared their vision for Zone 1. Their input clearly demonstrated support for development that enhances the park experience while respecting its natural and heritage character. The community emphasized the importance of sustainability, requesting that any commercial partners share the park's environmental values and incorporate eco-conscious design elements such as solar lighting, natural materials, and minimal environmental impact. Participants were clear that development should feature low-rise structures that complement rather than dominate the park landscape, creating an accessible and welcoming gateway experience that honours the heritage property.

Top Programs for Public-Private Partnership Lands

By most number of mentions

Nature-based tourism (271 mentions)

Natural retreat and parkland (244 mentions)

Sports hub (228 mentions)

Food and beverage (218 mentions)

Sports facility (192 mentions)

Key Strategies

Public-Private Partnerships

Strategies

Establish transparent selection process

Develop a clear process for identifying and selecting private partners with demonstrated expertise in parkland-compatible sectors. Given NMRP's unique vision, partner selection may require targeted outreach to specialized organizations.

Maintain public control and oversight

The City retains ownership of all Public-Private Partnership lands and maintains control over development vision and operational policies. Private partners must comply with Master Plan standards, with authority reserved to modify partnerships as needed.

Align revenue with park enhancement

Direct Public-Private Partnership revenue to support park operations and programming, with commercial activities designed to enhance visitor experience and park stewardship.

Next Steps

Conduct a feasibility study to determine how the unique context of park-based Public-Private Partnership development can attract specialized private partners, generate viable revenue, and deliver on community priorities while managing technical and financial risks.

What are Public-Private Partnership lands?

To learn about what a public-private partnership is, and where it could happen in the park, refer to the Public-Private Partnership section within the **Understanding North Maple Regional Park** chapter.



People enjoying look out view

Appropriate Public-Private Partnership Development Opportunities

Public-Private Partnership development in will focus on amenities that enhance visitor experience and support the pillars of Restore, Engage, and Play. Appropriate uses may include:

- Nature-based tourism facilities such as eco-lodges, interpretation centers, or guided tour operations that connect visitors with the park's ecological features
- Food and beverage services including farm-to-table restaurants, seasonal cafés, or event catering facilities that prioritize local, sustainable ingredients
- Sports and wellness hubs featuring indoor sports facilities, fitness centers, or sports equipment rental services that support active recreation
- Bookable event spaces such as conference and retreat centers, wedding venues, or community meeting facilities
- Heritage integration projects that adaptively reuse the historic farmhouse
- Supporting services including bike-share stations, enhanced transit connections, and accessible parking

These uses should enhance the visitor experience, support park programming, generate revenue for ongoing operations and maintenance, and bring private sector expertise in hospitality, recreation, or tourism management. All development must align with the park's guiding principles and the community's vision for a sustainable, accessible, and distinctive regional park.

Public Feedback About Commercial Opportunities

When evaluating a commercial opportunity, consider the following aspects*, in order of importance:

1. Public affordability
2. Shared values
3. Financial sustainability
4. Long-term stability
5. Park revenue
6. Accountability
7. Activity types
8. Environmental impact
9. Facility footprint
10. Neighbourhood and community impacts

*Public engagement informed the prioritization of these aspects. For more details and definitions of each aspect, refer to the **What We Heard Report** from the third round of engagement - **Shaping Our Park: Preliminary Master Plan.**

All public-private partnerships will align with the City's Procurement By-law, the Municipal Act, and applicable City policies—including the Sponsorship and Donations Policy for any commercial opportunities. The City should seek overarching Council authorization and delegated authority early to streamline decision-making as the park grows.

Exploring Partnership Scenarios at Keele Street

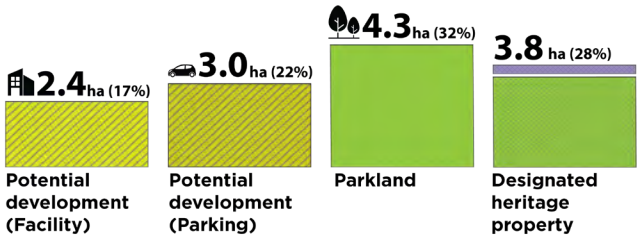
The Master Plan team explored three potential use scenarios, which were shared during public engagement. The spatial requirements are used as a key comparison between the scenarios.



Recreational Facility scenario

Recreational facility

A multi-use recreational facility may provide additional opportunities for year-round recreational activity and fitness. Visitors could potentially take part in a variety of activities and classes that support physical literacy and long-term athlete development. Partnership opportunities include athletic sponsorships and corporations.

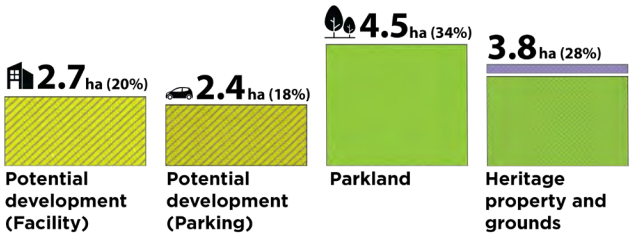




Wellness Centre and Gardens scenario

Wellness Centre and Gardens

The wellness centre and gardens create experiences of health, connection, and rejuvenation immersed in nature. Visitors could potentially take part in health and wellness classes, therapeutic programming, nordic spa treatments or seasonal workshops centred around botany. A key theme is healthcare.

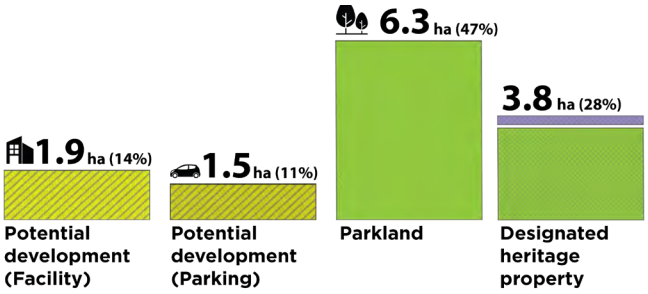




Creative Cultural Hub scenario

Creative Cultural Hub

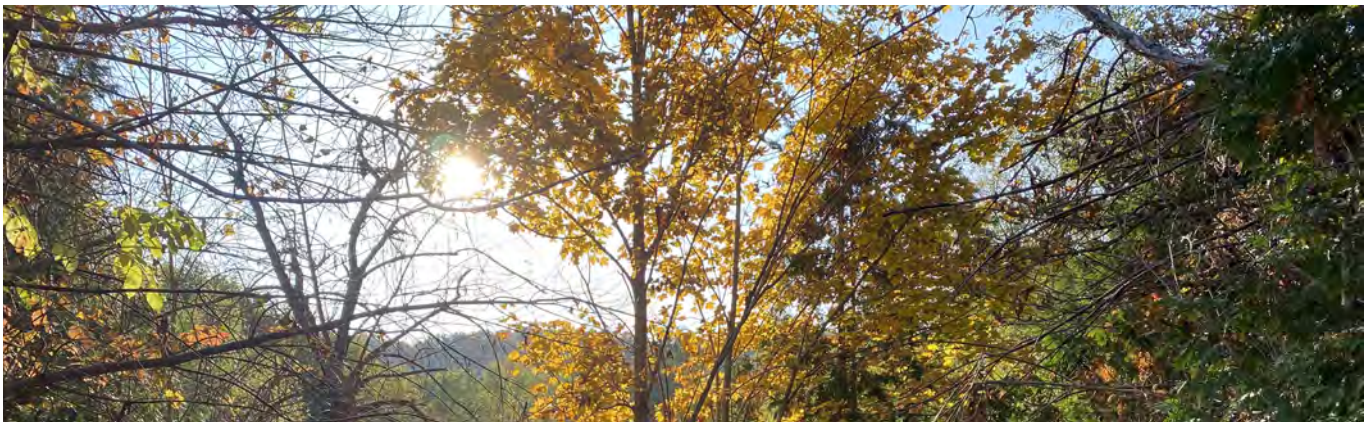
The creative cultural hub could serve as a dynamic anchor for arts, education, and cultural exchange. Visitors could potentially take part in flexible studios, maker workshops, exhibitions, mentorship, and resource sharing. Other partnership opportunities include local personalities, and philanthropists.



Public Feedback on Public-Private Partnership Scenarios

Public engagement participants felt most strongly that the scenario with the recreational facility was the most suitable. Participants also expressed support for the wellness centre and gardens scenario and creative cultural hub scenario. Overall, there was no strong opposition to any of the scenarios.

Management and Operations Plan



Forest in autumn

The Management and Operations Plan establishes a possible roadmap for North Maple Regional Park's transition from municipal management to a third-party-led partnership model.

Why the Park Requires a Distinct Management Approach

North Maple Regional Park is the largest park in the City of Vaughan. Its landscapes span restored prairies, wetlands, gardens, event spaces, a heritage site, mixed-use commercial opportunities, and active landfill infrastructure requiring ongoing regulatory compliance. Its programming ambitions (year-round, multi-season, serving a regional population) go well beyond what is typically expected of a municipal park. The park's multi-jurisdictional context adds additional complexity.

The Management and Operations Plan recognizes that delivering on the Master Plan's vision will require organizational capacity, specialized expertise, and financial sustainability that must grow in step with the park itself. The City will remain as owner, but there are alternative management structures that can be considered to best position the City and the park for long-term success.

Overview of Current Park Management

As of 2026, the park currently operates under a City-led model with a collaborative structure involving the City's Parks Operations Team, dedicated Project Team, Program Committee, Collaboration Team, and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority. The teams and relationships in place today represent a significant institutional asset that any future management approach will build upon. As the park grows, the demands on this structure will increase substantially.

Governance Structure

There is an opportunity for the City to consider the benefits of transitioning the park from municipal operations to third-party-led management.

This third-party public-private partnership model would maintain City ownership while enabling non-profit fundraising, specialized expertise, and entrepreneurial flexibility to deliver world-class park stewardship.



Central Park Conservancy Park Rangers, New York, NY



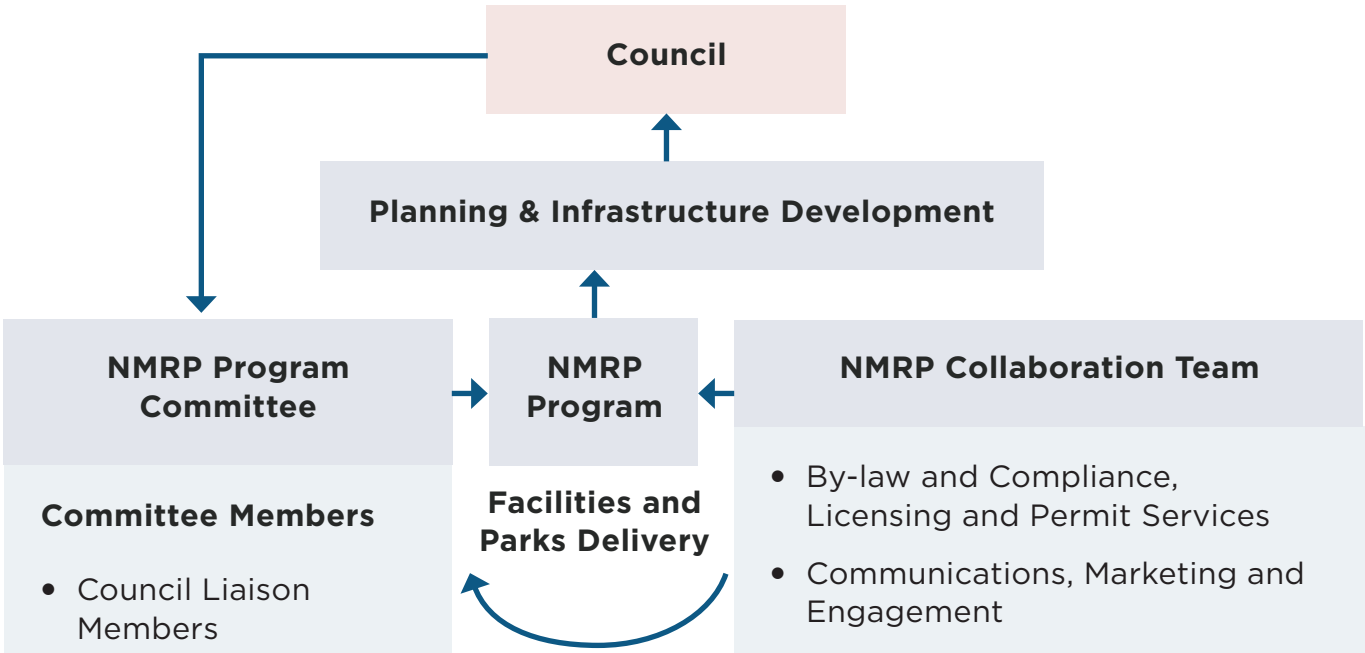
The Leaf Conservatory, Assiniboine Park Conservancy, Winnipeg, MB

Understanding the Partnership Model

A public-private partnership for park management is a contractual arrangement between a municipal government and a private non-profit organization. The City retains ownership of all park lands and assets while sharing management responsibilities with a partner organization that brings specialized expertise, entrepreneurial flexibility, and diversified funding capacity. This governance model—proven successful by Central Park Conservancy (New York, NY), Assiniboine Park Conservancy (Winnipeg, MB), City Park Conservancy (New Orleans), and Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation (Calgary, AB)—elevates urban parks to world-class destinations while maintaining public accountability.

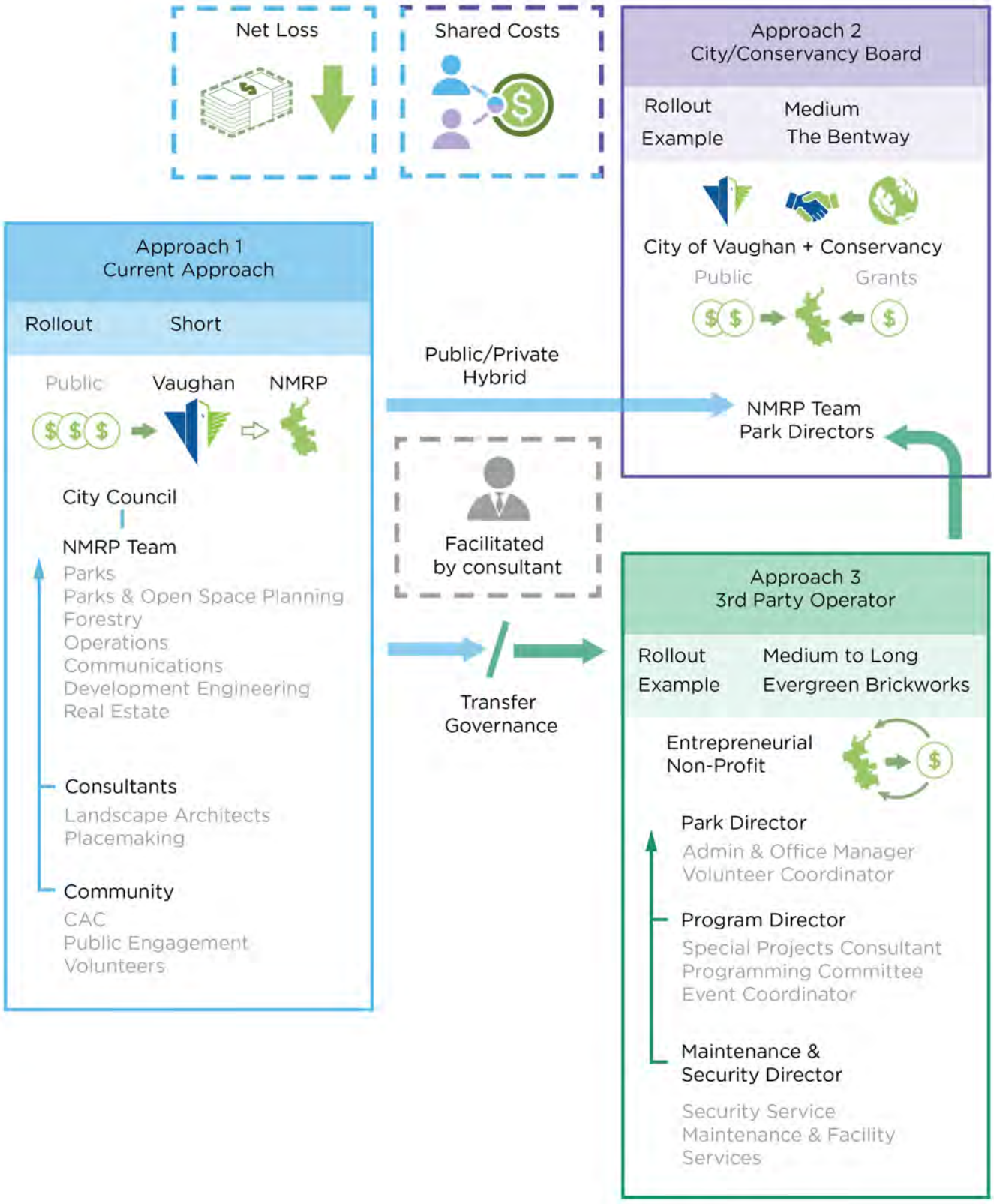
Forming a viable third-party or non-profit organization requires many years and careful cultivation of community support, board leadership, and organizational capacity. The recommended approach is a phased transition rather than an immediate handoff, allowing relationships and trust to develop through successful collaboration.

Existing Park Governance



The park's existing program structure (2026). For future opportunities related to program structure, refer to the following pages.

Third-party Led Park Governance



Possible approaches for the park's governance structure, from City-led to third-party led.

Recommended Third-Party Governance Structure

A possible future third party or non-profit organization will be governed by a Board of Directors comprising 5-15 members recruited for expertise, community connections, fundraising capacity, and commitment to the park's mission. Board composition must include City appointees, business and philanthropic leaders, community advocates, and key stakeholder representatives. Board members serve staggered terms (typically 2-4 years renewable) ensuring continuity while allowing fresh perspectives.

The non-profit President/Chief Executive Officer reports to both the City's Parks Commissioner and the Conservancy Board, ensuring decisions serve public interest and organizational mission. This dual accountability structure maintains public oversight while allowing operational flexibility. Major policy changes, significant capital projects, and long-term planning decisions require City approval, while day-to-day operations remain under Conservancy authority.

Formal Partnership Agreements

The City-non-profit relationship will be formalized through written agreements starting with a Memorandum of Understanding and evolving into a comprehensive Management Agreement.

Agreements should evolve from experience rather than being overly prescriptive at the outset. Central Park operated for 13 years before formalizing its first Memorandum of Understanding, allowing the relationship to develop organically and build trust. The formal agreement codifies what has already proven to work rather than attempting to predict every scenario in advance.

Critical Success Factors

Third-party formation is dependent on mutiple success factors:

City Leadership

Municipal leadership must genuinely embrace shared responsibility and commit to sustained public funding regardless of private contributions. The Mayor, Council, and senior staff must champion the partnership, communicating clearly that the non-profit supplements rather than replaces City responsibility. Without this commitment, potential board members and donors will not invest.

Build Incrementally

Successful partnerships begin with modest projects that demonstrate collaborative capability, gradually expanding responsibilities as trust develops. Central Park Conservancy started by hiring interns for specific restoration needs before assuming comprehensive management 18 years later.

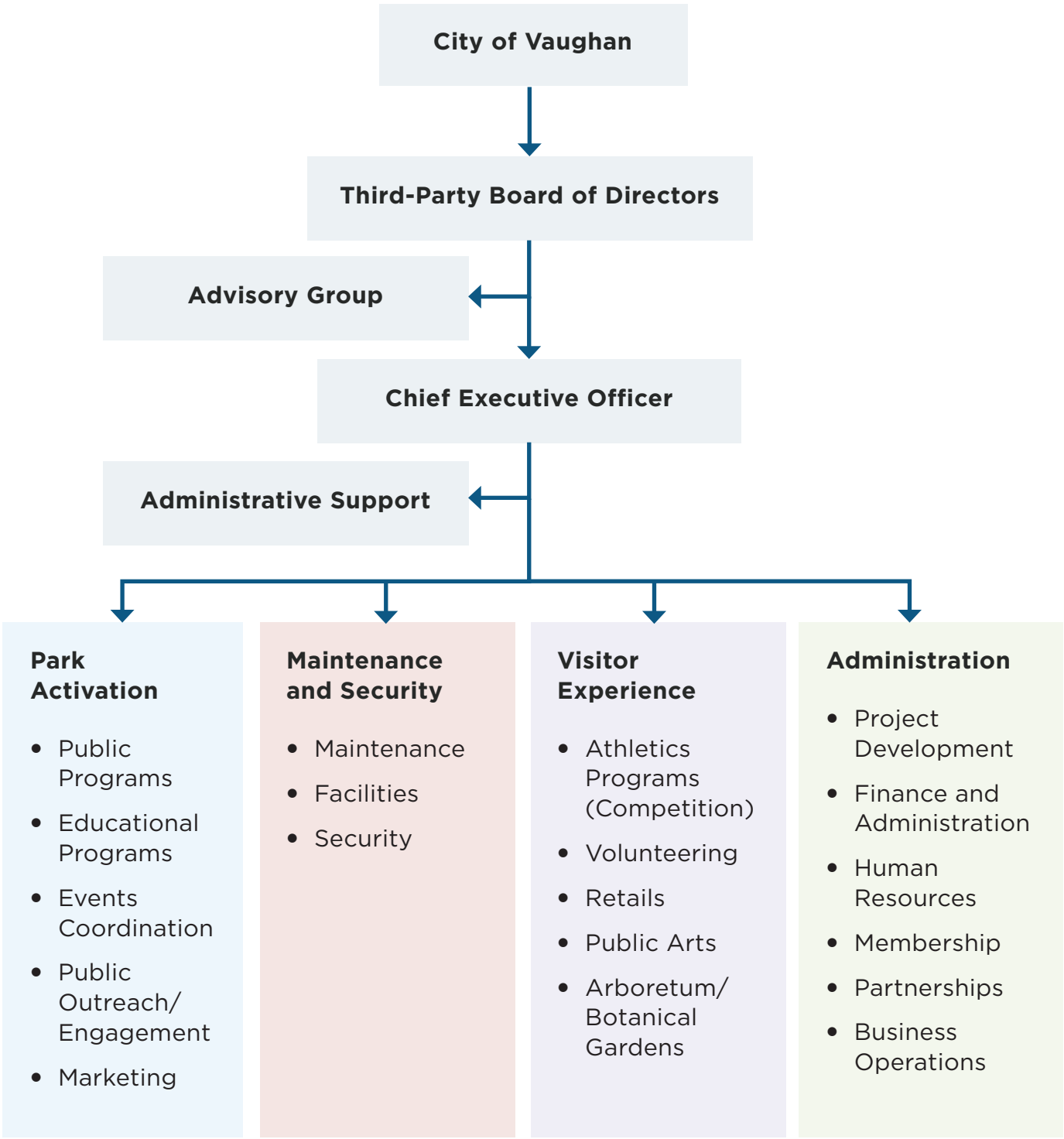
Initial Decisions Shape Outcomes

Board recruitment, initial staffing, early project choices, and the tone of City-non-profit relationships establish patterns that persist for decades. Strategic rather than expedient choices pay long-term dividends.

Equity and Accountability

The partnership must address privatization concerns through inclusive board composition, transparent financial reporting, formal City oversight, programming serving all community members, and outreach to equity-deserving groups.

Third-party Park Operator Organization structure



Possible organization chart for third-party park operator (long-term implementation, 25+ years)

Governance Guiding Principles

The possible transition to a third-party-led, non-profit governance model can be directed by five guiding principles. These principles will be reviewed, adjusted as required, and approved by an inaugural Board of Directors to guide all future governance decisions for the park.

1. City Leadership and Sustained Commitment

City initiates partnership, maintains land ownership, and provides consistent base-level funding that demonstrates long-term municipal commitment to park success.

2. Financial Sustainability and Organizational Capacity

Diversified revenue streams through fundraising, grants, and earned income supplement public investment while maintaining transparent budgets and fiscal reserves.

3. Partnership-Powered Collaboration

Formal agreements with multiple stakeholders—City, residents, Indigenous partners, Toronto Regional Conservation Authority, donors, artists—define shared responsibilities and create collaborative decision-making.

4. Adaptive and Site-Responsive Management

Flexible, zone-specific, ecology-based approach uses evidence-based decision-making and Indigenous knowledge to balance long-term planning with responsive adaptation.

5. Community Engagement and Inclusive Access

Proactive outreach to diverse communities, barrier-free programming, and volunteer opportunities ensure equitable access and build community ownership.

Indigenous Voices

When governance opportunities, issues, and decisions arise, consider Indigenous values and knowledge systems. The future governing body of the park, whether the City or a third-party organization, is a caretaker of the land, not a steward. Engage further with Indigenous peoples about governance and to learn more kinship relationship with the land.

For more details, refer to **Guided by Indigenous Voices** section within the **Welcome to North Maple Regional Park** chapter.

Exploring a Governance Transition

If the City considers transitioning the park from municipal operations to third-party-led management, the following section outlines three possible but distinct operational phases. This public-private partnership model maintains City ownership while enabling non-profit fundraising, specialized expertise, and entrepreneurial flexibility to deliver world-class park stewardship.

Transitioning to a third-party or conservancy-led governance structure is a complex process with different steps specific to a municipality. This is a general guideline, and the City will need to evaluate multiple considerations before progressing.

Phase 1: Current Structure (Years 0-5)

The City's existing park Program structure continues managing all park operations. The Program Committee (Directors) provides strategic oversight, while the Collaboration Team handles day-to-day coordination. The City provides 100% of operational funding through municipal budgets, with Council maintaining ultimate decision-making authority. This traditional municipal governance model manages the park during its early development phases.

Phase 2: Transition Preparation (Years 5-10)

A newly incorporated third-party organization operates alongside continued City management in a dual governance structure. The City maintains responsibility for maintenance and day-to-day operations while the non-profit organization focuses on building organizational capacity through limited programming, volunteer coordination, and initial fundraising. A Memorandum of Understanding formalizes this partnership arrangement, defining roles, responsibilities, and shared accountability between both parties.

Phase 3: Third-party Operations (Years 10+)

The third-party organization assumes full operational leadership under a comprehensive Management Agreement. The third-party manages all maintenance, programming, volunteer coordination, and private fundraising, while the City retains land ownership and provides base-level operational funding (typically 15-25% of operating costs). The conservancy's Board of Directors provides strategic governance with dual accountability to both non-profit organization membership and the City.

Park governance three-phase transition pathway

Current Structure

years 0–5

- Program Committee and Collaboration Team manage all park operations
- City provides 100% of funding and staffing through municipal budget (ie. taxes, levies)
- Traditional municipal governance with Council oversight and departmental coordination

Transition Preparation

years 5–10

- City continues park operations while Non-profit builds organizational capacity
- City manages maintenance/ operations, Non-profit leads limited programming and fundraising
- Partnership formalized through Memorandum of Understanding with defined roles and shared accountability

Third-Party Operations

years 10+

- Non-profit manages day-to-day operations, maintenance, programming, and fundraising
- City retains land ownership and provides 15-25% base funding annually
- Board governs non-profit with dual accountability to membership and City

Governance Next Steps

The following actions provide a flexible roadmap for advancing toward third-party management, organized by timeframe and priority.

These steps align with the three-phase transition pathway but must be reviewed and adapted as conditions evolve. Before advancing to each new phase, the City and emerging partners will assess progress, evaluate changing circumstances, and adjust the approach to reflect current community needs, organizational capacity, and regional context.

Immediate Next Steps (Years 0-2)

Secure Council Authorization and Strategic Guidance: Propose a City Council resolution authorizing exploration of third-party partnership and allocating budget for consultant services and formation costs. Engage a specialized consultant to conduct feasibility study, assess community interest and capacity, develop formation roadmap, and draft model governance documents.

Establish Executive Leadership and Operational Capacity: Create a park Executive Director position to drive Master Plan implementation, build partnerships, and provide continuity through governance transition. Consider dual-role structure where this individual eventually serves both non-profit and City. Scale Parks operational resources to match expanded park assets and programming needs.

Formalize Landfill Transfer and Policy Framework: Execute Memorandum of Understanding with City of Toronto for Keele Valley Landfill Site land transfer. Conduct comprehensive municipal policy review identifying barriers to non-profit operations and begin pursuing necessary amendments through Council approval processes.

Build Community Support: Launch volunteer and stewardship program to build constituency and operational support. Assess community interest through consultations and surveys. Cultivate relationships with potential non-operating partners (Toronto Regional Conservation Authority, community organizations, educational institutions).

Confirm Catalytic Projects: Review and confirm catalytic projects as the first next steps for the park. Explore partnerships and funding opportunities.

Short-Term Next Steps (Years 2-5)

Develop Partnership Framework: Based on feasibility study results, establish internal City consensus on governance responsibilities to share versus retain. Document operational service standards and maintenance protocols for future partnership agreements. Formalize relationships with non-operating partners through preliminary Memorandum of Understandings.

Complete Policy Amendments: Finalize and implement municipal policy changes enabling non-profit operations, including revenue retention mechanisms, procurement flexibility, liability sharing, and programming authority.

Prepare for Non-Profit Formation: If feasibility demonstrates sufficient community capacity, begin preliminary Board recruitment discussions and identify potential inaugural leadership. Develop draft by-laws, articles of incorporation, and governance structure for Council consideration.

Transition Phase Next Steps (Years 5-10)

Incorporate Non-profit and Establish Governance: Subject to Council approval, legally incorporate the non-profit under appropriate legislation. Appoint or elect founding Board of Directors (e.g. Mayor appointing inaugural Chair who recruits founding members for 24-month initial term). Establish Board committees, governance protocols, and operational policies.

Execute Partnership Agreements: Collaboratively develop and execute Memorandum(s) of Understanding defining initial roles, responsibilities, funding commitments, and accountability mechanisms. The City continues park operations while non-profit builds capacity with limited programming and fundraising.

Build Organizational Capacity: Support non-profit in establishing operational systems, fundraising programs, volunteer coordination, and community engagement initiatives. Allow incremental responsibility transfer as the organization demonstrates capability and builds track record of successful collaboration.

Establish Accountability and Review Systems: Implement annual performance reviews, financial auditing, public reporting, and dispute resolution procedures. Regularly assess partnership health and adjust responsibilities as the non-profit matures toward eventual comprehensive Management Agreement.

Operational Framework

The Management and Operations Plan serves as a critical bridge between the Master Plan's physical vision and its long-term operational reality.

While the Park Governance Structure (see previous section) defines who will manage the park and how the transition to a third-party model will unfold, this section defines what operational systems must be established to support that governance evolution.

These four components are the essential building blocks that will be developed under current City management and then transferred to—or jointly managed with—a future third-party partner. They represent the operational requirements and provide the foundation for a successful public-private partnership.

Policy Framework

The **Policy Framework** addresses municipal policies that currently govern park operations and must evolve to enable non-profit partnership, including policies on revenue retention, service contracts with non-profits, liability sharing, programming permits, and decision-making authority. In the short-term (0-5 years), policy changes will enable non-profit or third-party formation and initial partnership. Medium-term policies (5-10 years) will support the transition as the third-party assumes expanded responsibilities, while long-term policies (10+ years) will govern full partnership operations. Without these policy changes, the governance transition cannot proceed legally or effectively.

Volunteering and Community Stewardship

Robust **Volunteer and Stewardship Programs** are essential for any conservancy model, as demonstrated by successful examples like Assiniboine Park Conservancy and City Park Conservancy. Building this program now under City leadership creates the community engagement infrastructure that a future non-profit will depend on for both operational support and grassroots advocacy. The program will encompass community-led conservation and ecological monitoring, programming support and event activation, and targeted engagement of Indigenous peoples, youth, and equity-deserving groups.

Operational Level of Service

The **Operational Level of Service** establishes clearly defined maintenance standards and service expectations that will be codified in future partnership agreements and Memoranda of Understanding. These standards ensure accountability and consistent quality regardless of who operates the park, differentiated by landscape type including hardscapes, softscapes, and natural areas with service levels adjusted by use intensity. The framework includes recommendations for in-house versus contracted services and identifies staffing, equipment, and facility requirements to support the approximately 52-58 full-time equivalent staff and multi-million dollar annual operating budget needed to maintain the 900-acre park at proposed service levels.

Master Plan Review Framework

The **Master Plan Review Framework** ensures that as the park evolves and the governance model transitions, the Master Plan itself remains a living document through a 10-year review cycle. This framework includes performance metrics and implementation tracking to assess progress, along with adaptation protocols for changing community needs. Regular assessment and adaptation will occur regardless of whether the City, a dedicated team, or an non-profit is managing operations, maintaining alignment between the park's vision and its operational reality over the long term.



Meadow of native flowers

Maintenance and Site Operations

The park's scale, ecological complexity, and specialized amenities demand maintenance standards and operational expertise beyond typical municipal park management.

The park's diverse landscapes—from restored prairies and wetlands to botanical gardens, sports facilities, and heritage sites—require specialized horticultural knowledge, ecological care-taking, and partnership coordination that traditional City operations cannot sustain alone, reinforcing the need for conservancy-led governance.

Maintenance Principles

Park maintenance provides high-quality service ensuring the site remains clean, attractive, and usable while maintaining special features including play areas, water features, natural landscapes, and heritage elements. Key principles include: classifying maintenance standards by landscape type and use intensity; implementing effective management processes; and ensuring staff possess necessary skills and equipment. Standards of care shape annual budgets and public perceptions of safety, requiring balance between quality and long-term sustainability.

Service Standards and Level of Care

Use intensity determines required maintenance levels. High-traffic areas like event lawns and plazas demand greater upkeep, while natural areas require less frequent intervention. Well-maintained spaces attract visitors and foster positive activity; poorly maintained areas discourage use and invite misuse. Growing season (April-October) requires intensive care with weekly mowing and frequent horticultural tasks, while winter months (November-March) shift to reduced frequency and snow management (estimated 30 events annually).

Landscape Classification and Maintenance Requirements

Landscapes are classified as Hardscapes (trails, plazas, parking, synthetic surfaces), Softscapes (lawns, plantings, meadows, forests, wetlands, ponds), and Site Features (play areas, dog parks, restrooms, maintenance yards). Hardscapes require cleaning, inspections, and structural repairs. Softscapes need horticultural expertise including pruning, irrigation, and invasive species management. Natural areas such as forests and wetlands require minimal intervention focused on ecological health, while high-use areas and botanical gardens demand intensive specialized care.

Table 2. Projected Maintenance Intensity (long-term implementation, 25+ years)

Zone	Area (sqm)	Total Estimated Hours	Hours/(1,000 sqm)
Zone 1	150,239	9,706	64.6
Zone 2	664,163	51,690	77.8
Zone 3	1,084,151	19,561	18.0
Zone 4	1,595,417	28,422	17.8
Total	**3,493,970**	**109,379**	**178.2**

Map 31. Projected maintenance intensity map



Low Maintenance:
1-25 hours/1,000 sqm

Mid-level Maintenance:
26-60 hours/1,000 sqm

High-level Maintenance:
61-125 hours/1,000 sqm

Intensive-level Maintenance:
126+ hours/1,000 sqm

Staffing and Resource Requirements

In the long-term implementation, maintaining the 900-acre park requires approximately 109,000 annual hours, equivalent to 52-58 full-time-equivalent positions (accounting for vacation, holidays, and administrative duties). The estimated annual operating budget is based on Vaughan staffing rates with typical fringe benefits for full-time and seasonal employees. Staffing distributes across groundskeeping, horticulture/ natural area maintenance, trades (irrigation, lighting), and contracted services (mowing, snow removal). The map illustrates the maintenance intensity levels across different park zones. For a full Maintenance Intensity Map, refer to **Technical Volume 7: Business Plan**.

Maintenance Delivery Models

A hybrid model balances in-house staff with contracted services. Core maintenance functions remain in-house for continuity and responsiveness, while specialized tasks requiring expensive equipment (large-scale mowing, tree care), seasonal peak demands, or technical work (irrigation, ecological restoration) are contracted. As governance transitions toward conservancy partnership, the non-profit may adjust this balance based on organizational capacity and equipment availability while maintaining service quality standards.

Equipment, Facilities, and Infrastructure Needs

Comprehensive maintenance requires a dedicated maintenance yard with vehicle and equipment storage, workshop space, offices, and potentially greenhouse/nursery areas. Essential equipment includes mowing equipment, grounds maintenance tools, utility vehicles, irrigation components, snow removal equipment, and hand tools. Fleet size and specifications depend on the final maintenance delivery model (in-house versus contracted) and landscape requirements across park zones. Partnership with volunteers or other organizations may supplement City resources.

Seasonal Considerations and Work Planning

Growing season (April-October) demands intensive work: weekly lawn mowing (approximately 31 times), regular pruning, irrigation operation, and frequent trash removal during peak visitation. Winter (November-March) shifts to snow removal (estimated 20 events annually), reduced mowing frequency (every 10-14 days, approximately 10-15 times), and winterization of water features and irrigation systems. Event-driven maintenance requires flexibility for preparation and restoration. The organization chart reflects the staffing necessary to operate and manage long-term implementation.

Navigating the Planning and Regulatory Landscape

The Master Plan aligns with current planning policy overall, but implementation requires targeted zoning approvals, City review of partnership proposals, and compliance with a layered regulatory framework.

Official Plan and Zoning Considerations

The park's lands are generally designated for open space, private open space, and natural heritage purposes under Vaughan Official Plan 2010 (currently in effect) and the adopted Vaughan Official Plan 2025 (pending provincial approval). Zoning across the site includes a mix of open space, environmental protection, and agricultural categories, several with site-specific exceptions tied to former landfill operations. The Master Plan's overall park, open space, recreation, and restoration intent aligns with this framework, though specific facilities (notably the proposed Zone 1 sports stadium) will likely require a site-specific Zoning By-law Amendment.

For a review of Official Plan designations, zoning categories, applicable exceptions, and a multi-jurisdictional policy framework governing the park, refer to the **Navigating the Planning and Regulatory Landscape** section within **Technical Volume 8: Management and Operations Plan**.

Working Together on Park Projects

The City may advance park-related projects or receive proposals or expressions of interest that support park development, amenities, or operations, including initiatives delivered internally or in collaboration with external consultants, stakeholders, and partners.

Any unsolicited proposals or partnership opportunities, as well as City-initiated projects involving external parties, are subject to appropriate City review and due diligence. Early consultation with City staff is required to ensure alignment with the objectives of this Master Plan, applicable municipal policies, and Council-approved processes.

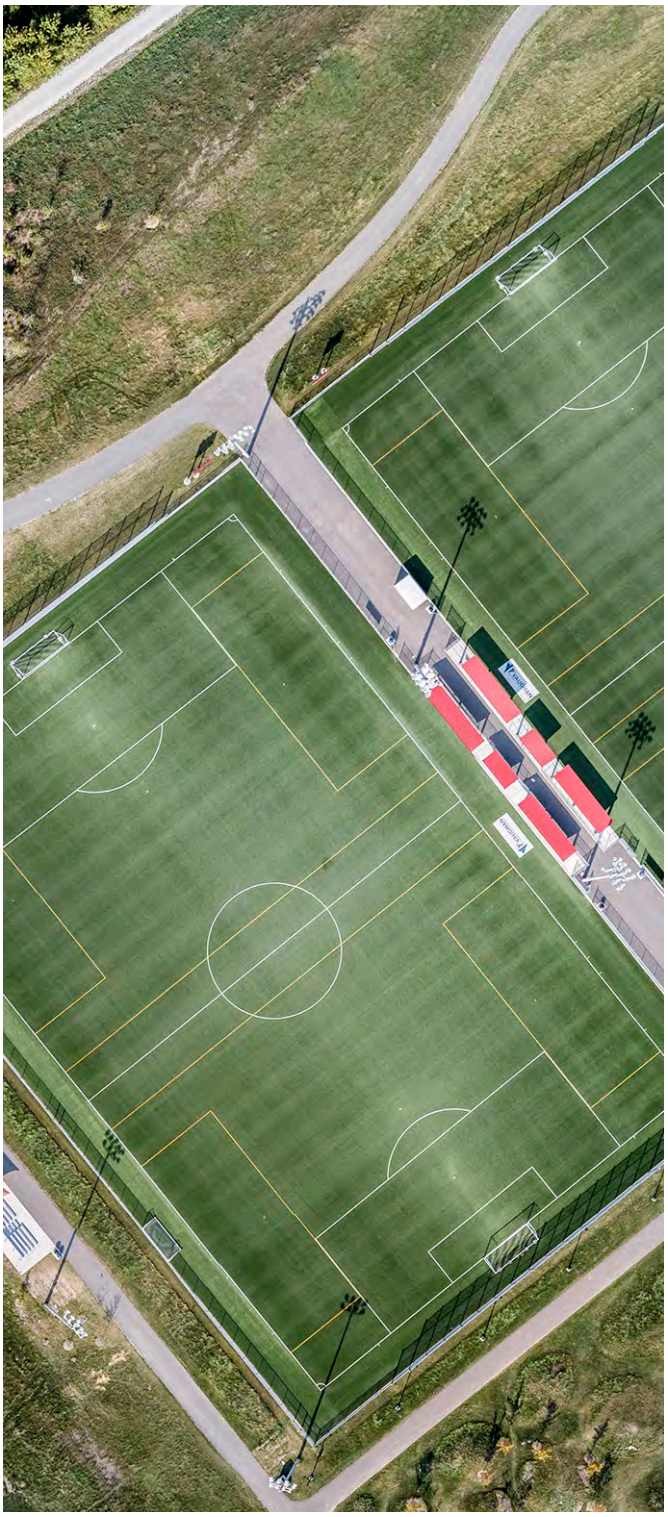
Depending on the nature, scale, and location of an initiative, specific policy, procurement, or approval requirements may apply. Projects may also be subject to site-specific planning, property, and development considerations, including land ownership, potential land acquisition or agreements with third-party landowners, land use permissions, zoning or by-law amendments, site conditions, environmental or technical investigations, geotechnical analysis, and other regulatory requirements. These considerations can influence feasibility, timing, and delivery and must be identified and assessed prior to advancing any partnership or development initiative.

Incoming Sponsorship and Donations

The City of Vaughan's Incoming Sponsorship and Donation Policy establishes a consistent, city-wide framework to encourage external contributions that support City services, programs, and events while safeguarding the City's corporate vision, image, assets, and interests.

Partnerships are governed by standards that ensure alignment with municipal goals, compliance with applicable legislation, and maintenance of public trust and integrity. The policy defines key terms, clarifies eligibility, and sets criteria for the acceptance, administration, and termination of agreements.

The City of Vaughan recognizes two key incoming partnership mechanisms: **Donate** and **Sponsor**. Across both, the City retains ownership and operational control of assets, agreements must not confer undue personal benefit or influence, and all arrangements must align with applicable City policies and legal requirements.



Aerial of existing soccer fields

1. Donate (Charitable Contributions)

Purpose and Principles

Donations are philanthropic contributions including cash or in-kind goods and services, that are voluntarily transferred to the City without expectation of return or commercial benefit. Where eligible under Canada Revenue Agency regulations, tax receipts may be issued to donors.

Scope of Donation Support

Donations may support a broad range of City programs and community initiatives, including recreation subsidies (RecAssist Program), animal shelter services, environmental and horticulture programs, fire and rescue community outreach, and heritage initiatives.

Policy Distinctions

Donation opportunities are coordinated through relevant program departments, subject to the approval thresholds established in Appendix B (09.C.02). The City has no obligation to accept unsolicited donations and may decline any offer that poses a conflict of interest or political risk.

2. Sponsor (Mutually Beneficial Support)

Definition and Purpose

Sponsorships are mutually beneficial business arrangements in which external organizations or individuals provide cash or in-kind support to the City in exchange for promotional consideration or commercial recognition. Because marketing benefits are conferred, sponsorships do not qualify for charitable tax receipts and values are negotiated between parties.

Scope of Sponsorship

Sponsorships may support a wide range of City-run programs and events, including community celebrations and cultural events (Canada Day, Winterfest, heritage month flag raisings), business and economic development activities (Small Business Week, entrepreneurship programs), recreation programs and tournaments, and horticulture and beautification initiatives.

Policy Controls

The City retains full ownership and control over all sponsored properties and activities. Sponsorship agreements must not limit or restrict Council's decision-making authority, create any expectation of future favours, or be perceived to influence the day-to-day operations of the City of Vaughan.

What Comes Next

The Master Plan is a moment along a continuum of change that started when the glacier retreated and gave shape to the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The continuum includes the rivers, tributaries, wetlands and forests that in turn shaped the culture of Indigenous communities living in this place for thousands of years before Europeans arrived and began to settle in the area. The continuum includes the cultural and ecological heritage that remains evident in the farmlands and forest. It is in the actions and memories of Vaughan C.A.R.E.S. and the unique topography that hides the history of mining and landfill operations that dominated the site in the 20th century. Over the last ten years, the City of Vaughan has been bringing the park back to life, assembling the land and bringing in people to play and explore. As a result, the park is a well-loved and cared for place with an incredible future.

Along the continuum of change at the park, the Master Plan is the product of over two years of research, design, and conversation. The team engaged with over 2,500 residents, First Nations, committees, interested stakeholders and a team of specialists to explore how the future of the park should be shaped. It was an iterative and interactive process that pushed the City of Vaughan to imagine how to do things differently.

The result of the Master Plan process is a document that reflects the land's continuum, the journey of this process, and a 25-year picture of the future. It is a vision of continued progress toward an ecologically and culturally rich place along with how the City of Vaughan can implement, govern, and operate a landmark park of 900+ acres.



View of the landfills facing south

A Living Plan

A 25-year vision cannot be a fixed document. The world will change. Vaughan will change. The land itself will change in both predicable and unpredictable ways.

The Master Plan establishes a review schedule to ensure the plan remains aligned with community needs and site realities. Each review will assess progress against implementation targets, evaluate the effectiveness of completed phases, and incorporate lessons learned into subsequent work.

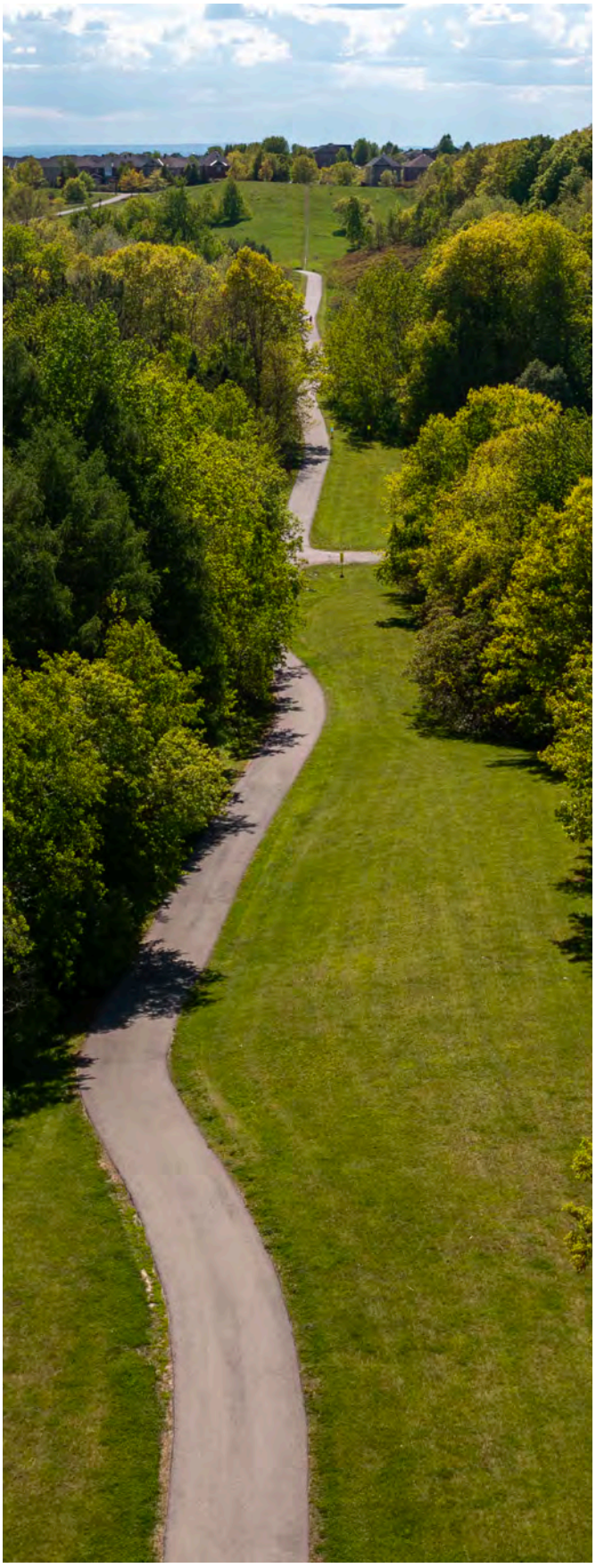
Recommended Review Schedule

Reviewing the Master Plan at key intervals is important to track progress and adjust priorities. As the timeline progresses, the recommended review timelines may be adjusted depending on multiple factors.

First Review (2031): Five years after the Master Plan is endorsed by Council, assess catalytic and short-term project delivery, opportunities for third-party governance, and emerging community priorities. Review completion of priorities and progress towards the vision.

Second Review (2036): Ten years after the Master Plan is endorsed by Council, evaluate transition to dual governance, adjust medium-term capital priorities, and update cost estimates for inflation and market conditions. Review overall master plan and develop an update.

Subsequent Reviews (Years 2046, 2056, and 2066): Comprehensive updates every 10 years incorporating landfill closure progress, regional infrastructure changes, and evolving recreational and ecological benchmarks.



View of Park Main within the Headwaters District

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References

The following documents and reports were used to support the development of the Master Plan.

1. **Our Foundations - Phase 2: Vision and Guiding Principles What We Heard Report**, O2, City of Vaughan (2025)
2. **Finding Our Way Forward - Phase 3: Concept Development What We Heard Report**, O2, City of Vaughan (2025)
3. **Shaping Our Park - Phase 4: Preliminary Master Plan What We Heard Report**, O2, City of Vaughan (2026)
4. **Stage 1 Archeological Background Study**, AMICK Consultants Limited (2022)
5. **Stage 2 Archeological Assessment**, AMICK Consultants Limited (2022)
6. **Phase One Environmental Site Assessment Part A**, Stantec Consulting Ltd. (2018)
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11. **Phase Two Environmental Site Assessment for 11141 and 11151 Keele Street**, PGL Environmental Consultants (2022)
12. **Individual Environmental Assessment for the Teston Road Area, Transportation Improvements, Highway 400 & Bathurst Street**, Morrison Hershfield, Stantec (2024)
13. **Final Report York Region - Comprehensive Environmental Assessment for the Teston Road Area Transportation Improvements**, Report No. 135800052, Stantec Consulting Ltd., (2025)

Technical Volumes

This document is **Volume 1** of the North Maple Regional Park Master Plan—a public-facing, story-driven overview of the park's vision, pillars, and key strategies. Seven supporting **Technical Volumes** (Volumes 2–8) provide the detailed engineering, environmental, cultural, and operational guidance needed to implement that vision.

For more details, visit **vaughan.ca/nmrp**

2. Landfill Restoration Engineering

3. Civil Engineering

4. Transportation

5. Cultural Heritage Research Report

6. Ecological Framework Plan

7. Business Plan

8. Management and Operations Plan


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