

1.0

CONTEXT

Edwards Gardens and Toronto Botanical Garden Master Plan and Management Plan builds upon a conceptual vision plan entitled Towards a New Garden: Integrated Conceptual Proposals, produced by Toronto Botanical Garden in 2015. The original vision proposed innovative strategies for expanding and improving the ravine system, parkland, Edwards Gardens and botanical garden complex, but was limited in public consultation and stakeholder input.

Toronto Botanical Garden is located within Edwards Gardens, a city park at the corner of Lawrence Avenue East and Leslie Street in Toronto's North York neighbourhood. Edwards Gardens and Toronto Botanical Garden share a maintenance strategy for the entire site, of which Edwards Gardens currently comprises approximately 14 hectares, while Toronto Botanical Garden manages approximately 1.6 hectares, including buildings. The site is located on Wilket Creek, a tributary of the Don River West Branch.

The Master Plan and Management Plan provides a holistic long term plan that is ecologically and fiscally sustainable and elevates the Toronto Botanical Garden to the level of other globally acclaimed botanical gardens. By creating a seamless boundary between Edwards Gardens and Toronto Botanical Garden this Master Plan re-imagines the existing gardens as a major cultural attraction with innovative programs, activities and events that will attract both Torontonians and tourists.

1.1 MISSION AND VISION



CITY OF TORONTO PARKS, FORESTRY & RECREATION

MISSION:

To improve the quality of life of Toronto's diverse communities by providing safe, beautiful parks, a healthy, expanding urban forest, and high quality, community focused recreational experiences.

VISION:

Toronto is a vibrant city offering safe, welcoming and well-maintained parks and trails, a sustainable and expanding urban forest, and quality recreation facilities and programs supporting diverse needs for active, healthy lifestyles and engaged communities.

TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN

MISSION:

Toronto Botanical Garden connects people to plants, inspiring us to live in harmony with nature.

VISION:

Toronto Botanical Garden will be renowned for its display of nature's beauty and as a dynamic hub for plant-centered learning, conservation and research.

1.2 THE STUDY AREA

The study area sits within a unique context for the city of Toronto as well as the Greater Toronto Area. Considered at three scales—the Region, the Watershed, and the Neighbourhood—the gardens serve a variety of users and functions.

REGION

The existing gardens provide a regional destination for Torontonians and attract users from outside the city boundaries through special programming and general displays. The proximity of the study area to major highways makes it accessible by car and a desirable option for visitors coming from the north and east.

WATERSHED

Within the context of the Don Valley ravine system, the study area connects to several natural and cultural heritage destinations. A continuous, publicly accessible open space network of trails and parks links the gardens south to Lake Ontario. The ravine system provides ecological connections for flora and fauna, providing opportunities for users to observe and immerse themselves in nature.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Within the neighbourhood, the gardens bridge two iconic Toronto communities, the Bridle Path to the west and Don Mills to the east. The future Sunnybrook Park (Leslie Street) Light Rail Transit stop on the Eglinton Crosstown line will be within a 20 to 30 minute walk of the gardens.

REGION



WATERSHED

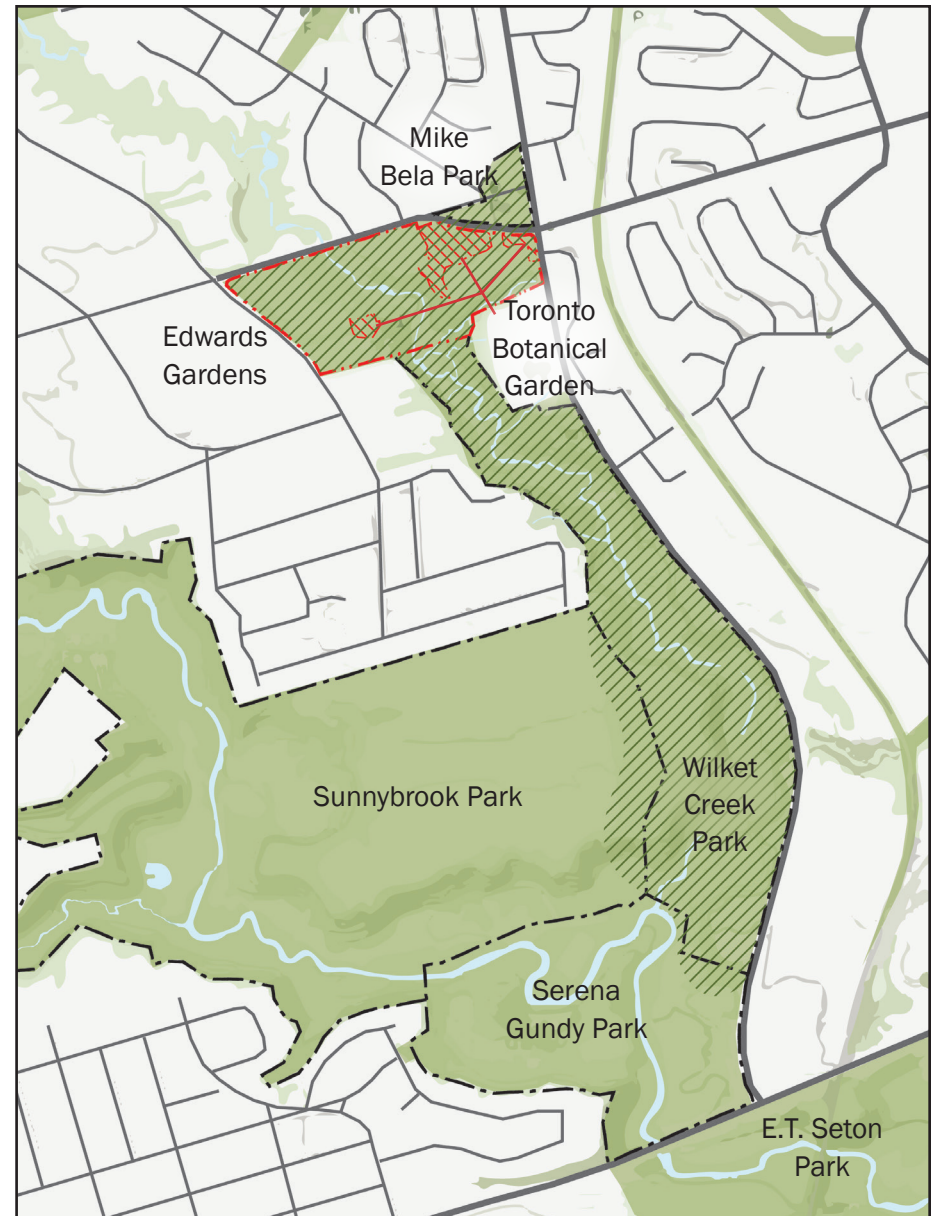


NEIGHBOURHOOD

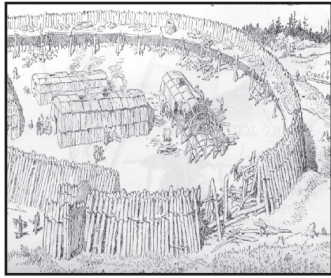


CONTINUITY OF PARKS AND GARDENS

The gardens are directly adjacent to two City of Toronto park properties, and immediately connected to three destination parks. When traveling along the connecting pathways, there is little indication that visitors have passed between the various parks. Instead, they are experienced as one large continuous open space. The larger space creates an immersive experience for the user and a more pronounced connection to nature.



First Nations Settlement

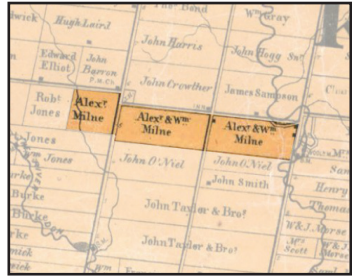


Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation

Iroquois

Wendat

European Settlement



Alexander Milne purchases property from Crown Lands Office (Lot 5, 3rd Concession, east of Yonge) and constructs mill on Wilket (Milne) Creek.



Rupert Edwards purchases 26-acre (10.5ha) portion of original Milne property on Wilket Creek, renaming it Springbrook Farm.



Metro Parks purchases several parcels of land including the property to the east of the greenhouses (part of the H.A.W. Paxton estate and lands owned by the Toronto Suburban Separate School Board).

The Civic Garden Centre becomes a registered not-for-profit corporation.

The Civic Garden Centre building opens, designed by Raymond Moriyama.



The Civic Garden Centre is relaunched as the Toronto Botanical Garden.

The George and Kathy Dembroski Centre for Horticulture opens.

4 acres (1.6ha) of contemporary themed gardens open at Toronto Botanical Garden.

1829

1832

1944

1955

1958

1959

Metro Toronto acquires Milne Cemetery from Gordon Milne for \$1 and an agreement to maintain the site in perpetuity

The Civic Garden Centre forms as an offshoot of the Toronto Garden Club

Rupert Edwards sells Springbrook Farm to the City of Toronto to be used as public park in perpetuity.

1960

1963

1964

2003

2005

2006

1976

1977

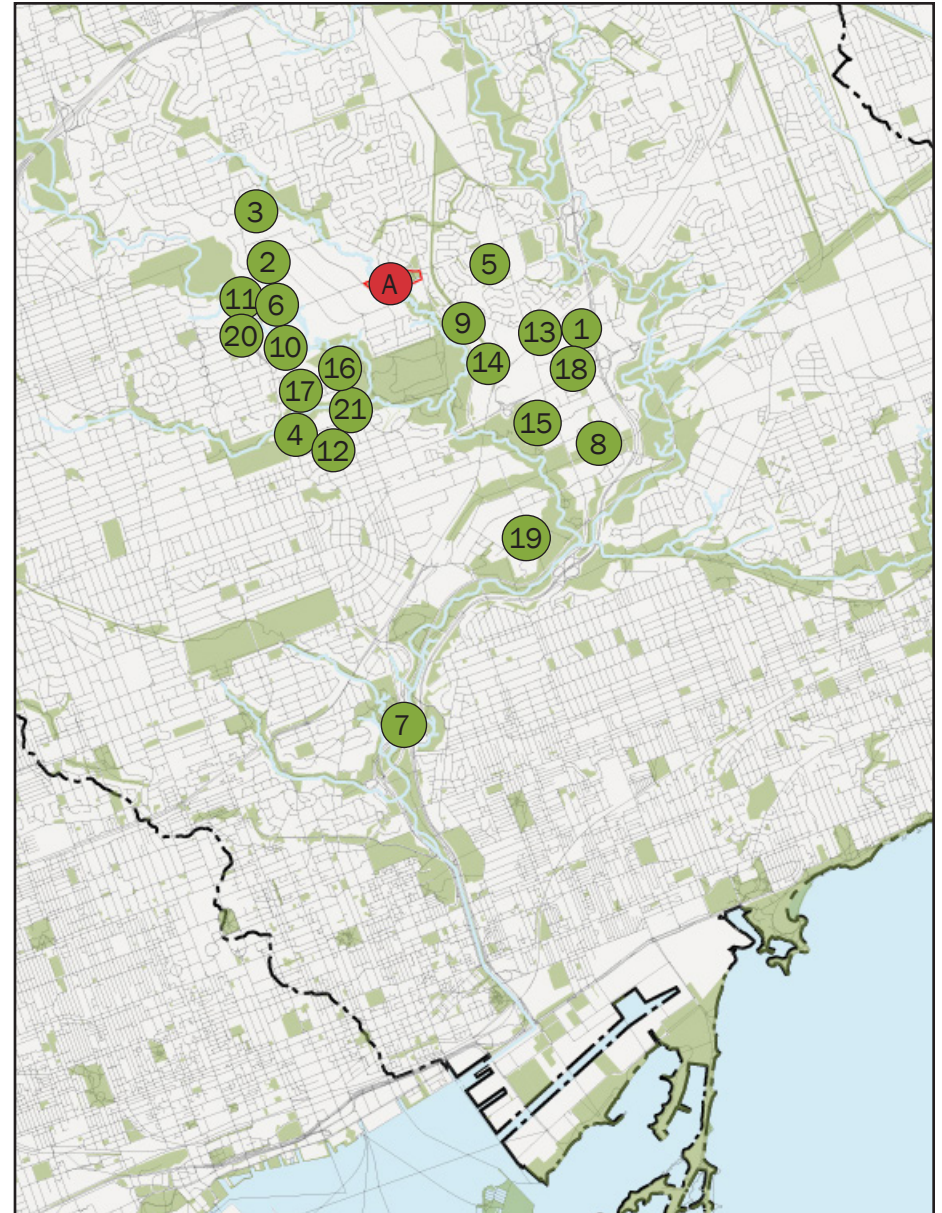
The barns and greenhouse areas are renovated to include the outdoor cafe patio.

The expansion and renovation of the Civic Garden Centre opens.

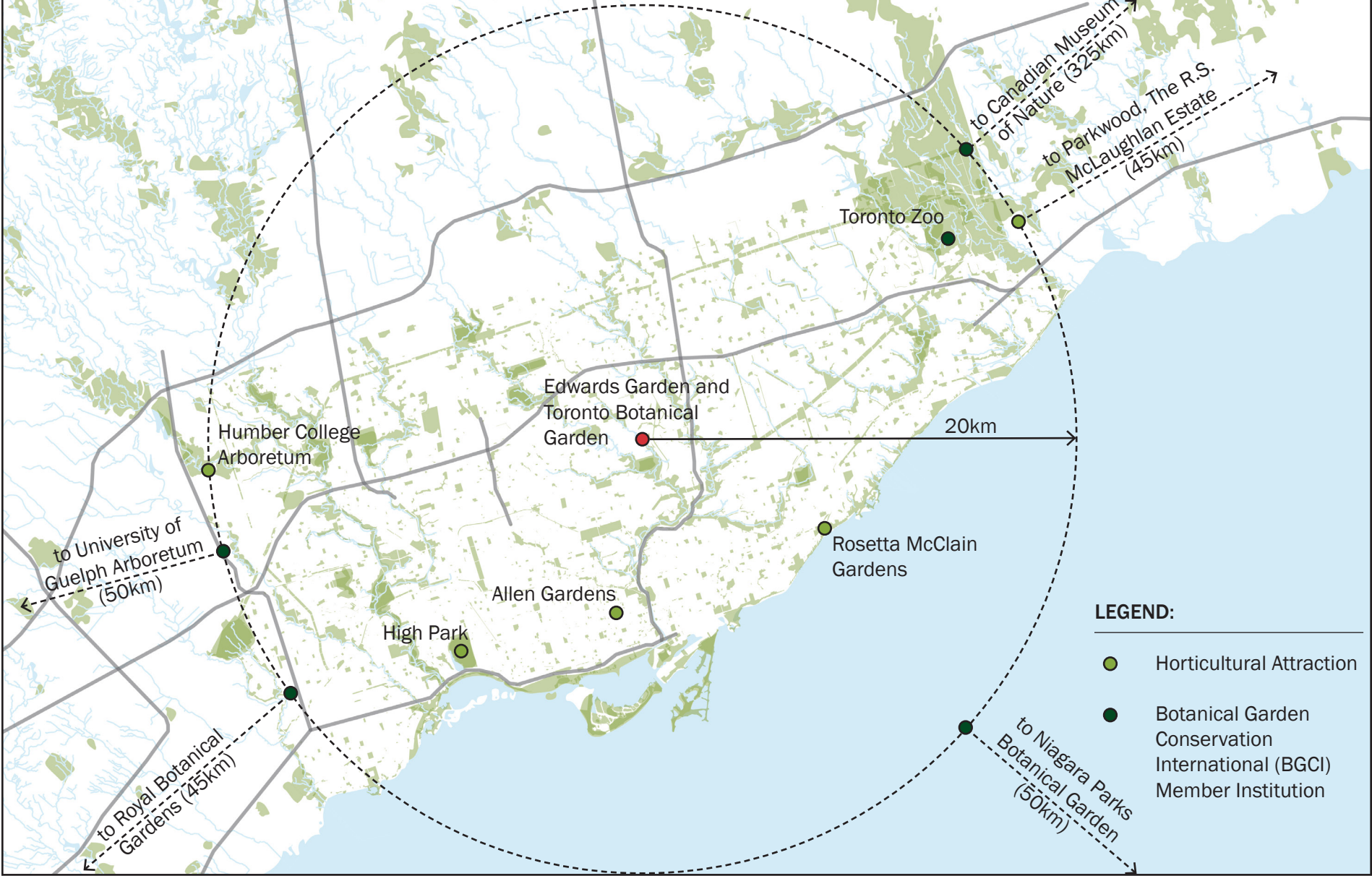
A EDWARDS GARDENS AND TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN

RAVINE AND CULTURAL NEIGHBOURS

- 1 Aga Khan Museum and Park
- 2 Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf
- 3 Canadian Film Centre
- 4 CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind)
- 5 CF Shops at Don Mills
- 6 Crescent School
- 7 Evergreen Brickworks
- 8 Flemingdon Park neighbourhood
- 9 Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts
- 10 Glendon College
- 11 Granite Club
- 12 Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital
- 13 Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre
- 14 Korean Canadian Cultural Association of the GTA
- 15 Ontario Science Centre
- 16 Sunnybrook Estates & The Coach House
- 17 Sunnybrook Hospital
- 18 The Ismaili Centre
- 19 Thorncliffe Park neighbourhood
- 20 Toronto French School
- 21 Toronto Rehabilitation Institute



HORTICULTURAL DESTINATIONS

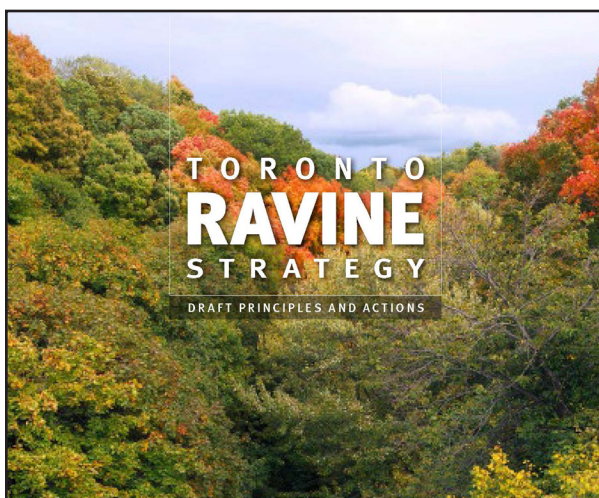


1.3 COMPLETED STUDIES AND APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

1.3.1 COMPLETED STUDIES

TORONTO RAVINE STRATEGY (APPROVED, 2017)

The Toronto Ravine Strategy looks to develop a strategic framework for addressing policy, investment and stewardship in Toronto's ravine systems. The study is being completed by the City of Toronto's City Planning, Water, and Parks, Forestry & Recreation Divisions, in collaboration with other City Divisions and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). The strategy outlines five guiding principles (Protect, Invest, Connect, Partner, and Celebrate) that will assist in balancing between protection of the ravines and promotion of suitable use within the sensitive areas.



WILKET CREEK RESTORATION MASTER PLAN (2011)

Prepared by Parish Aquatic Services for the City of Toronto and the TRCA, the Restoration Master Plan responded to flood damage resulting from two large storm events (August 19, 2005 and June 23, 2008) and provided a comprehensive plan to mitigate flood damage within the Wilket Creek ravine. Construction works for this project have been completed to Phase 3, which is immediately south of the study area.

For the purposes of this report, the Restoration Master Plan provides a foundation for considering additional flood mitigation measures within the study area.

CITY OF TORONTO MULTI-USE TRAIL DESIGN GUIDELINES (2014)

Developed by Victor Ford and Associates Inc. for the City of Toronto's Transportation Services and Parks, Forestry & Recreation Divisions, the guidelines provide guidance for multi-use trail design within the City of Toronto. The guidelines are tailored to hard-surface, off-road routes that connect into the City of Toronto's larger bike and

active recreation routes.

These guidelines inform the proposed design and layout of multi-use trails within the larger circulation strategy of the Master Plan and Management Plan.

CITY OF TORONTO PARKS PLAN (2013)

Developed by City of Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division, the Parks Plan provides a strategic vision for connecting parks and users, improving environmental sustainability, elevating the quality of parks and building a legacy park system for Toronto.

For the purposes of this study, the Parks Plan will inform that vision, and assist in evaluating design options and goals for the future of Edwards Gardens and Toronto Botanical Garden.

TOWARDS A NEW GARDEN: INTEGRATED CONCEPTUAL PROPOSALS (2015)

Prepared by W. Gary Smith Design and PMA Landscape Architects for the Toronto Botanical Garden (TBG), the document provides a vision for future opportunities of the TBG.

The report provides context and background for this study; however, given the limited public consultation and stakeholder input, the analysis and findings of the report have been reviewed against consultation input from this study to determine suitable direction.

TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN BUSINESS PLAN (DRAFT 2018)

The Toronto Botanical Garden Business Plan provides background for strategic planning and context in developing mission, vision and programming.

CITY OF TORONTO EDWARDS GARDENS / TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT (2016 PENDING FINAL APPROVAL)

This document outlines the terms and conditions under which the Toronto Botanical Garden can use the identified structures and lands within Edwards Gardens. The agreement indicates the responsibilities of both the City and the Toronto Botanical Garden in the management of the identified lands and structures.

The agreement identifies the existing maintenance structure and the requirements for

augmenting or changing various shared features within the study area.

TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN FUNDRAISING FEASIBILITY STUDY (2017)

TBG retained a highly regarded team of fundraising professionals in 2017 to conduct a campaign feasibility study. Their report demonstrated that the expansion plans for TBG and Edwards Gardens were well received by a number of individuals within Toronto's philanthropic community. TBG's ability to raise sufficient funds for the project were confirmed.

EDWARDS GARDENS CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

ASI was commissioned by the City of Toronto to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment and Cultural Landscape Assessment for proposed expansion to Edwards Garden and Toronto Botanical Garden.

SLOPE STABILITY INVESTIGATION FOR EDWARDS GARDENS PARKING LOT

This study was prepared by Orbit Engineering Limited. The purpose of this investigation was

to assess the subsurface conditions at the site, and provide geotechnical engineering advice and recommendations for the Long-Term Stable Top of Slope (LTSTOS).

STATE OF GOOD REPAIR AUDIT REPORTS - BRIDGES (VARIOUS)

Created and updated by all three branches of the City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division, the State of Good Repair Audit Reports form a critical resource for maintaining structures throughout the city.

For the purposes of this study, reports for six bridges were reviewed to determine potential opportunities for integrating maintenance and bridge replacement into the Master Plan and Management Plan.

CITY OF TORONTO ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS

ESAs (Environmentally Significant Areas) are spaces within Toronto's natural heritage system that require special protection to preserve their environmentally significant qualities. It is protected under City of Toronto Official Plan.

1.3.2 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

CITY OF TORONTO ACCESSIBILITY DESIGN GUIDELINES (DRAFT 2016)

Developed and considered independently of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the City of Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines provide solutions to optimize accessibility to City-managed or owned facilities.

Within this report, the guidelines inform best practices for designing accessible routes and spaces to provide optimal use of new and renovated facilities by users of all abilities.

ONTARIO REGULATION 166-06: TORONTO AND REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY: REGULATION OF DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINES AND WATERCOURSES

As part of the Master Plan and Management Plan, circulation improvements and slope restoration will require modifications to existing slopes. A permit will be required with detailed coordination with TRCA planners, and staff with expertise in the areas of geotechnical and environmental engineering, hydrological modeling and engineering and terrestrial and aquatic ecology. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/>

[regulation/060166](#)

TORONTO MUNICIPAL CODE — CHAPTER 658, RAVINE AND NATURAL FEATURE

As part of the Master Plan and Management Plan, planting bed locations, change in location of amenities, circulation improvements and slope restoration will require modifications to the site within the regulated RNFP area. A permit will be required with detailed coordination with City of Toronto Ravine and Natural Feature Protection planners. Typically a Ravine Stewardship Plan will be required as part of the permit process which would document the restoration proposed for the areas associated with the changes. https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184_658.pdf

SITE PLAN CONTROL APPLICATION

For any proposed new or relocated structures, Site Plan Control will likely be applicable. Coordination with City Planning early in the detailed design process for a Preliminary Project Review will help confirm what is applicable to Site Plan Control of the master plan. <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning->

[development/application-forms-fees/building-toronto-together-a-development-guide/site-plan-control-applications/](#)

ONTARIO BUILDING CODE

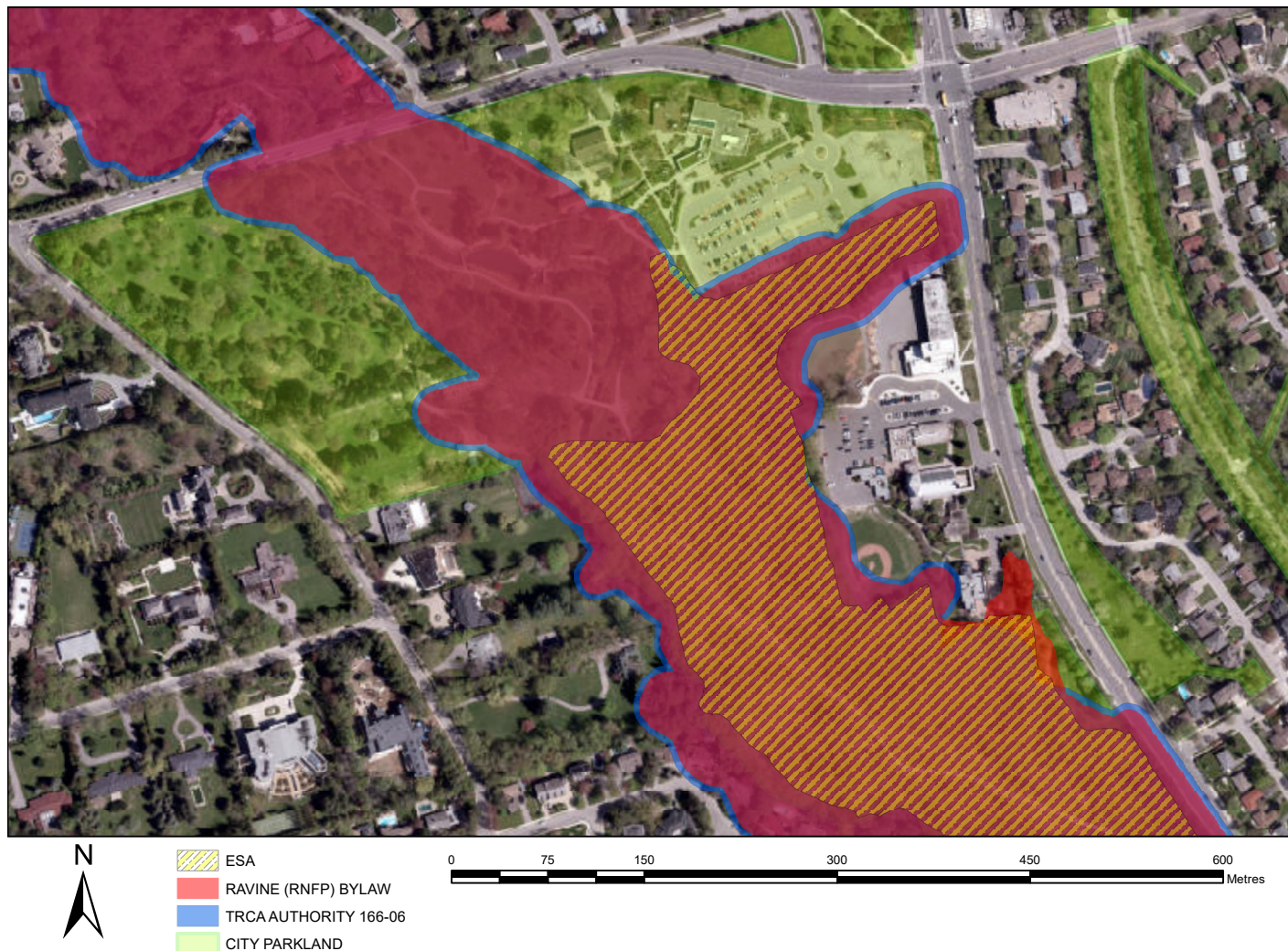
A Building Permit is a formal permission to begin the construction, demolition, addition or renovation on the property. For any proposed new or relocated structures such as the tree house, washroom and parking structure etc., an Ontario Building Permit will likely be required. <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/building-construction/apply-for-a-building-permit/>.

TORONTO MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 813, TREES

As part of the Master Plan and Management Plan, tree protection, removal and planting outside of the regulated RNFP area. A permit may be required with detailed coordination with City of Toronto Urban Forestry.

1.3.3 SITE MAP AND REGULATION BOUNDARY

City of Toronto Environmentally Significant Area
Ravine and Natural Feature Protection - Chapter 658 Bylaw Area
TRCA - Provincial Regulation 166-06 Limits within Edwards Gardens and South



1.4 THE STUDY AND PROCESS

WHAT IS A PUBLIC GARDEN?

As defined by the American Public Gardens Association (APGA)—whose membership includes more than 600 institutions across Canada, the US and 24 countries—a public garden is an institution that maintains collections of plants for public education and enjoyment. These institutions include botanical gardens, arboreta, zoological gardens, sculpture gardens, cemeteries, university campuses, historic landscapes, urban greening organizations, natural areas, as well as public parks.

More specifically, APGA guidelines state: “A public garden is an institution that maintains collections of plants for the purposes of public education and enjoyment, in addition to research, conservation, and higher learning. It must be open to the public, and the garden’s resources and accommodations must be made available to all visitors. Public gardens are staffed by professionals trained in their given areas of expertise and maintain active plant records systems.”

WHAT IS A BOTANICAL GARDEN?

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), an international organization with more than 700 members worldwide, including 500 botanical gardens, offers this definition. “Botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation, display and education.”

Furthermore, BGCI defines a botanical garden as any organization meeting the following list of criteria in part or whole:

- A reasonable degree of permanence
- An underlying scientific basis for the collections
- Proper documentation of the collections, including wild origin
- Monitoring of the plants in the collections
- Adequate labeling of the plants
- Open to the public
- Communication of information to other gardens, institutions and the public
- Exchange of seed or other materials with

other botanic gardens, arboreta or research institutions

- Undertaking of scientific or technical research on plants in the collections
- Maintenance of research programs in plant taxonomy in associated herbaria.

As defined by both APGA and BGCI, while all public gardens are open to the public, most charge admission and/or membership fees, which cover a significant part of their operating expenses. Some, including many of those that are part of public park systems, are open without admission fees.



A COMMUNITY RESOURCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Public gardens and botanic gardens are beloved and enjoyed by the communities in which they are located. As noted above, they are resources for education, conservation and research, but they also provide important cultural and recreational opportunities which contribute to cultural vibrancy, healthy lifestyles, and community wellbeing. In many urban areas, public gardens and botanic gardens are an oasis and refuge from the hustle and bustle of the city. Good for both mental and physical health, they are places where people can come together to spend time, share and socialize, enjoy purposeful movement and low impact activity, places where people can switch off, reconnect with nature, breathe deeply and relax.

WHO IS THE MASTER PLAN FOR?

The Edwards Gardens and Toronto Botanical Garden Master Plan and Management Plan has been prepared for the City of Toronto and its nonprofit partner, the Toronto Botanical Garden, with the purpose of developing a globally acclaimed botanical garden in Toronto. The primary challenge has been to think holistically about long-term planning for existing City

parkland along the Wilket Creek -- including the Edwards Gardens/Toronto Botanical Garden complex and associated ravine system -- to elevate the Toronto Botanical Garden to the level of other such botanical gardens in Canada and elsewhere throughout the world.

THE SCOPE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The following scope was undertaken throughout the planning process:

- Review of all relevant background materials, existing conditions, programming, and overall functionality of Edwards Gardens and Toronto Botanical Garden
- Facilitation and engagement with the City of Toronto staff, Toronto Botanical Garden staff, stakeholders and local residents
- Development of a Master Plan that promotes building a resilient ecosystem, upgrading park amenities, improving overall functionality and accessibility, and increasing public programming and opportunities
- Promotion of the evolution of Toronto Botanical Garden in its aspiration to become a significant and highly acclaimed botanical

garden

- Development of a Management Plan that promotes the long-term ecological, operations and fiscal sustainability of the site, including Edwards Gardens, Toronto Botanical Garden and the ravine lands.

THE STUDY PROCESS

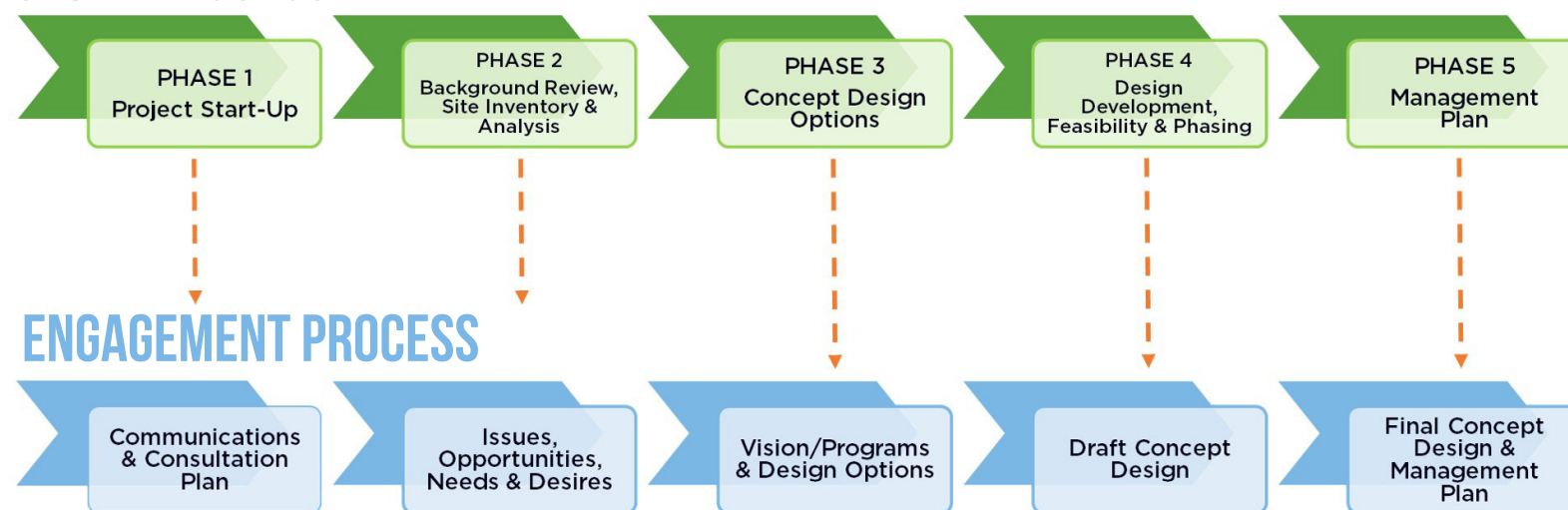
The Master Plan and Management Plan was completed between September 2016 and March 2018, as a five-phase process:

- Ph1 - Project Start up, Communications & Consultation Plan
- Ph 2 - Background Review, Site Inventory & Analysis
- Ph 3 - Master Plan - Concept Design Options
- Ph 4 - Master plan - Design Development, Feasibility & Phasing
- Ph 5 - Management Plan

The City of Toronto, in collaboration with Toronto Botanical Garden, oversaw the preparation of the Master Plan and Management Plan, and together will be responsible for its implementation. A consultant team, led by Scott Torrance Landscape Architect, a division

of Forrec, including W. Gary Smith Design, Lord Cultural Resources, Matrix Solutions Inc., Moriyama and Teshima Architects, Urban Forest Associates Inc., A.W. Hooker Associated Ltd. worked closely with City of Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation, and Toronto Botanical Garden staff to prepare this document.

STUDY PROCESS



YIMBY (YES IN MY BACK YARD) EVENT



PROJECT TEAM WORKSHOP



STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE



CONSULTATION PROCESS

Engagement is one of the key components in the City’s decision-making process. For the Edwards Gardens and Toronto Botanical Garden Master Plan and Management Plan study, the goal of the consultation process was to:

- Build awareness of the project and the proposed changes
- Communicate the project stages and milestones

- Understand the needs of all stakeholders
- Solicit input regarding satisfaction with the existing conditions, the overall functionality of the site and programming
- Compile a list of preferred potential new capital assets and programs that address the needs of all stakeholders
- Articulate the rationale for design, feasibility, phasing and management decisions
- Confirm the strategies, concepts and Final Master Plan and Management Plan and

ensure that it reflects realistic needs and aspirations

- Engender a sense of pride in the transformation of this significant public space

In developing the plan, the study team established a communications and consultation strategy that strove to be inclusive, transparent and responsive. A range of engagement and communication tactics were employed that allow us to:

INFORM & COMMUNICATE	LISTEN & LEARN	CONSULT OPENLY & OFTEN	COLLABORATE & EMPOWER
Share accurate and timely background information to assist stakeholders and the public to understand issues, opportunities and solutions/alternatives when considering the future development of Edwards Gardens.	Listen respectfully to each other’s views, plans, concerns and expectations, and to learn from this conversation.	Ensure that a variety of consultation opportunities are provided along with various methods throughout the process in order to gather feedback and ideas from a wide range of people and interest groups at each key milestone in the development of the Master Plan.	Incorporate stakeholders in the decision-making process by providing them with the information necessary to make informed decisions and with opportunities to collaborate on analyzing issues, building alternatives and making recommendations.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Engagement activities have included establishing a stakeholder advisory group and a project working group, attendance at the YIMBY (Yes in My Backyard) festival and a display at the Canada Blooms show, online surveys, public open houses, workshops with the Indigenous community, workshops with the stakeholder advisory group and project group, as well as continuous internal meetings and the contributions of our consultant team.

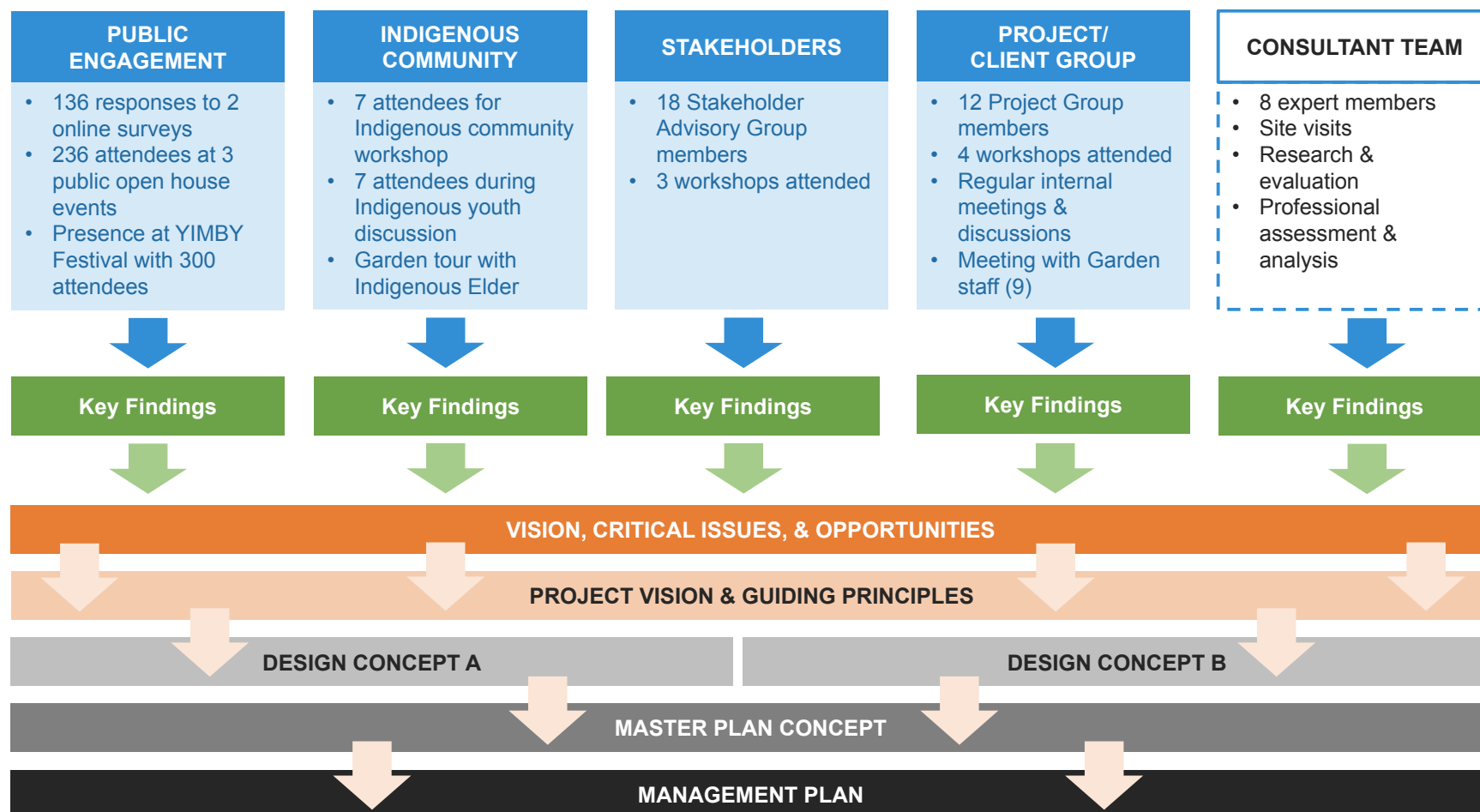




Photo: Gary Smith