



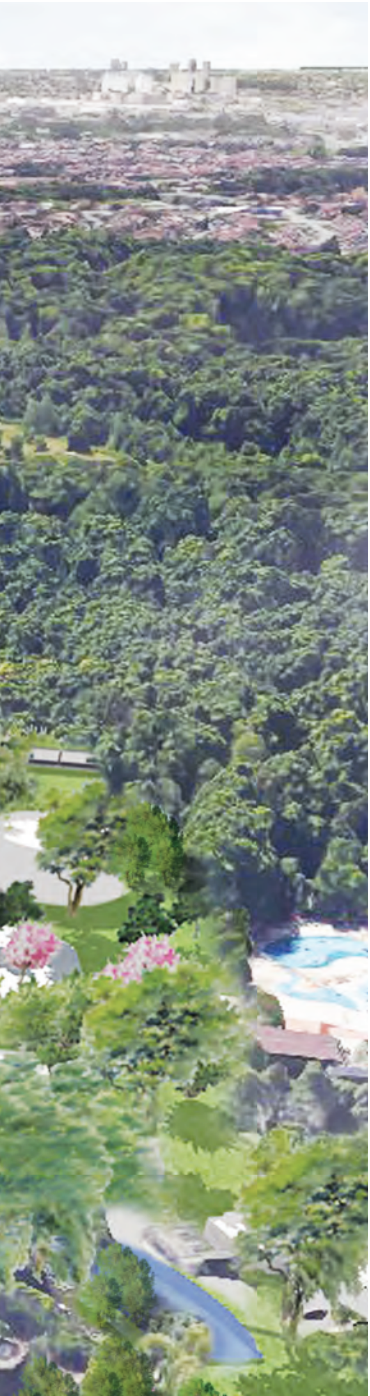
DRAFT

2016

# MASTER PLAN

Securing a Sustainable Future





# MASTER PLAN

prepared by:

**MMM Group Limited + Studio Hanson / Roberts**

in consultation with:

**Lord Cultural Resources**

**Schultz & Williams**

**Balind Architects**

**Oppenheim Lewis**



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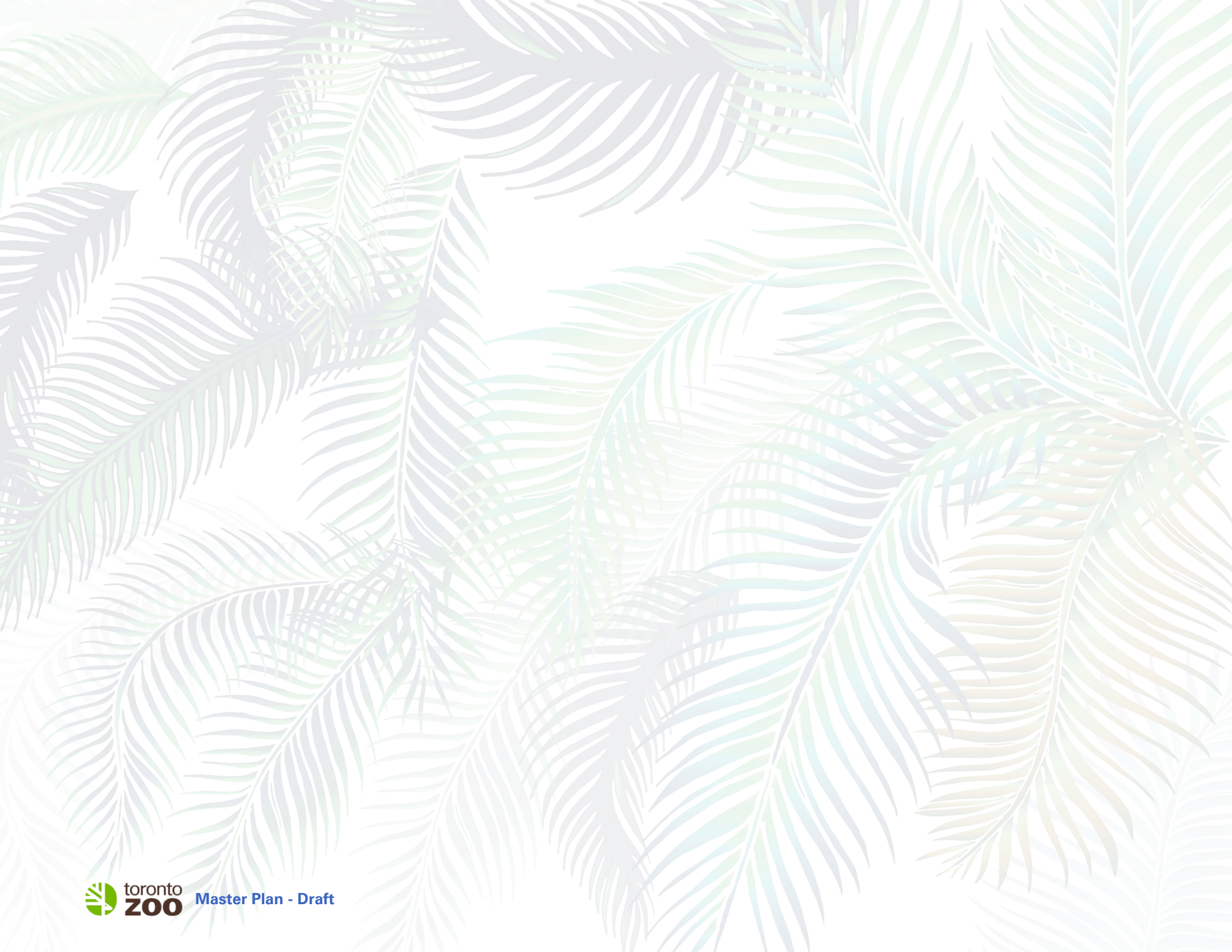
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# **INTRODUCTION**

# KEY MESSAGES

The Master Plan will:

- Work in tandem and alignment with the Strategic Plan and its objectives with a particular emphasis on magnifying the Zoo's conservation impact by:
  - o Providing exemplary care to the Zoo's wildlife population, both behind the scenes and in day-to-day engagement with our guests;
  - o Enhancing the guest experience to appeal to a more diverse – and increasingly urban – audience;
  - o Inspiring current and future generations to become active stewards of wildlife and wild places.
- Guide the capital and programmatic development of the Toronto Zoo and will assist the Zoo in maintaining its reputation as a leading zoological organization internationally by guiding focused and cohesive capital investment.
- Facilitate development in a manner that drives higher attendance, earned revenues and compelling educational content if adequate capital investment is made in alignment with the Master Plan.
- Help inform the fundraising objectives of the new Foundation.
- Refocus on Canadian wildlife species.
- Represent a unique piece of major infrastructure and facilitate an opportunity to compliment and integrate a mutual alignment of values, mission and objectives with the Rouge National Urban Park.
- Help build the Greater Toronto Area as a great Region providing easy access to wildlife education/learning and nature based experiences, and by engaging in important wildlife conservation endeavours.
- Benefit human efforts in mitigating the impacts of climate change and promote biodiversity, locally, nationally and internationally.
- Foster a climate of innovation and collaboration with key partners such as conservation and environmental NGO's, key academic institutions, government and private sector partners, and other wildlife organizations, who all wish to enhance the economic prosperity and cultural fabric of the region.
- Assist the Board and its staff in the essential quest to ensure that the Zoo's habitats and holdings continue to meet our evolving understanding of the welfare needs of the animals in our care.





Zebra Conservation Breeding Program

# BACKGROUND

The initial plan for the creation of a zoo for the City came about in 1966 when the Municipality of Metropolitan of Toronto approved the formation of a committee to investigate the feasibility of a large scale zoo located within its municipal boundaries. As a result, in 1969, a master plan was created by Johnson Sustromk Weinstein and Associates.

The Toronto Zoo opened in 1974, situated on 287 hectares (710 acres) of land in the picturesque Rouge Valley, in northern-eastern Toronto. The Zoo aimed to provide Torontonians with exposure to and an understanding of the world's zoogeographic regions and oceans. The Zoo created several representative zones, including Indo-Malaya, Africa, the Americas, Australasia, Eurasia and the Canadian Domain.

Part of the initial planning of the 1969 plan was completed by Canadian architect, Ron Thom, who also designed the Zoo's two signature structures, the Indo-Malayan and African Pavilions, in collaboration with structural engineer Morden

Yolles. These buildings represent "the last heroic, large-scale projects of post-war Canadian Modern architecture"<sup>1</sup> and aimed to create "spaces as non-building-like as possible in a continuous environment of humans, flora and fauna."<sup>2</sup> Today they form the Zoo's largest indoor habitats and are the prime destination for mid-winter visits.

In 1986 Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited (now MMM Group) updated the original Master Plan, and in 1990 the Capital Master Plan was approved by Metro Council and utilized over the following 25 years.

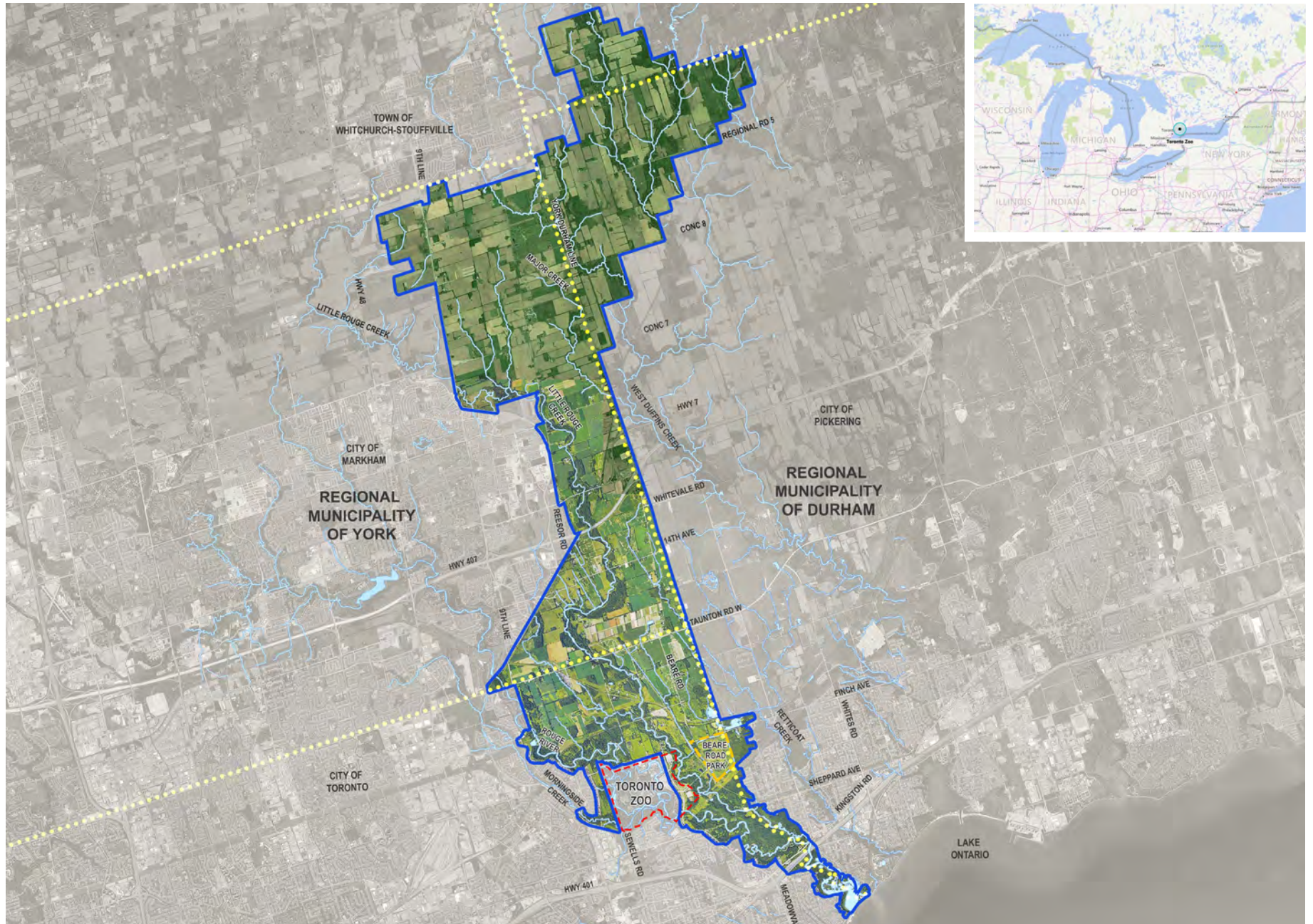
Subsequent major developments include the large, experientially integrated outdoor landscapes of the Savanna and Tundra Trek, however much of the interstitial exhibits and spaces remain relatively unconnected and with limited impact. The Canadian Domain has remained as a long hike down the hill to the banks of the Rouge River, and is comprised primarily of large hoofed stock enclosures. Given the environmental sensitivity of this area and the potential for flooding, future plans will be comprised

of low-impact uses, off-exhibit breeding areas and tour-guided experiences, with major visitor experiences and public learning opportunities moved to the 'top of the hill' on the tablelands.

The Zoo, which celebrated its 42nd anniversary in August of 2016 attracts an average of 1.3 million visitors annually, and is one of the largest and most progressive zoos in North America.

This current Master Plan takes the work of previous Master Plans, as well as a number of other plans and studies of the Zoo that have been undertaken over the years, into consideration as part of the background review. It also takes into account the new Toronto Zoo Mission, Vision and Core Values **as well as the seven strategic goals identified in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.**

During the Master Plan preparation, several projects are being undertaken concurrently. As part of the Master Plan a Market Analysis has been developed and the Toronto Zoo Building Audit was completed in 2015, and informs this report.



CONTEXT MAP FIGURE 1  
Existing Condition

# CONTEXT

The Toronto Zoo is home to more than 5,000 animals, representing more than 450 species and 300 exhibits with an even larger plant population. The majority of the site governed by the Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo, is currently owned by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), and a smaller portion (100 acres) is owned by the City of Toronto and managed under a tripartite agreement. The Zoo sits within the Rouge National Urban Park, north of Highway 401, on the forested slopes and tablelands that lie between the Rouge River and the Little Rouge Creek. The site is generally bounded by Old Finch Avenue to the north, Little Rouge Creek to the east, Rouge River to the west and Upper Rouge Trail Park to the south (see Figure 2). An expanded study area that includes the entire Toronto Zoo site and surrounding context of part of the Rouge Valley has been considered in some aspects of analysis. The surrounding area is composed of small farm holdings in the upland areas, as well as larger farms in the valley. There is still considerable agricultural influence in the area with large u-pick farms, as well as meandering forest lands along the rivers. Eventually, a trail system, combined with conservation and public

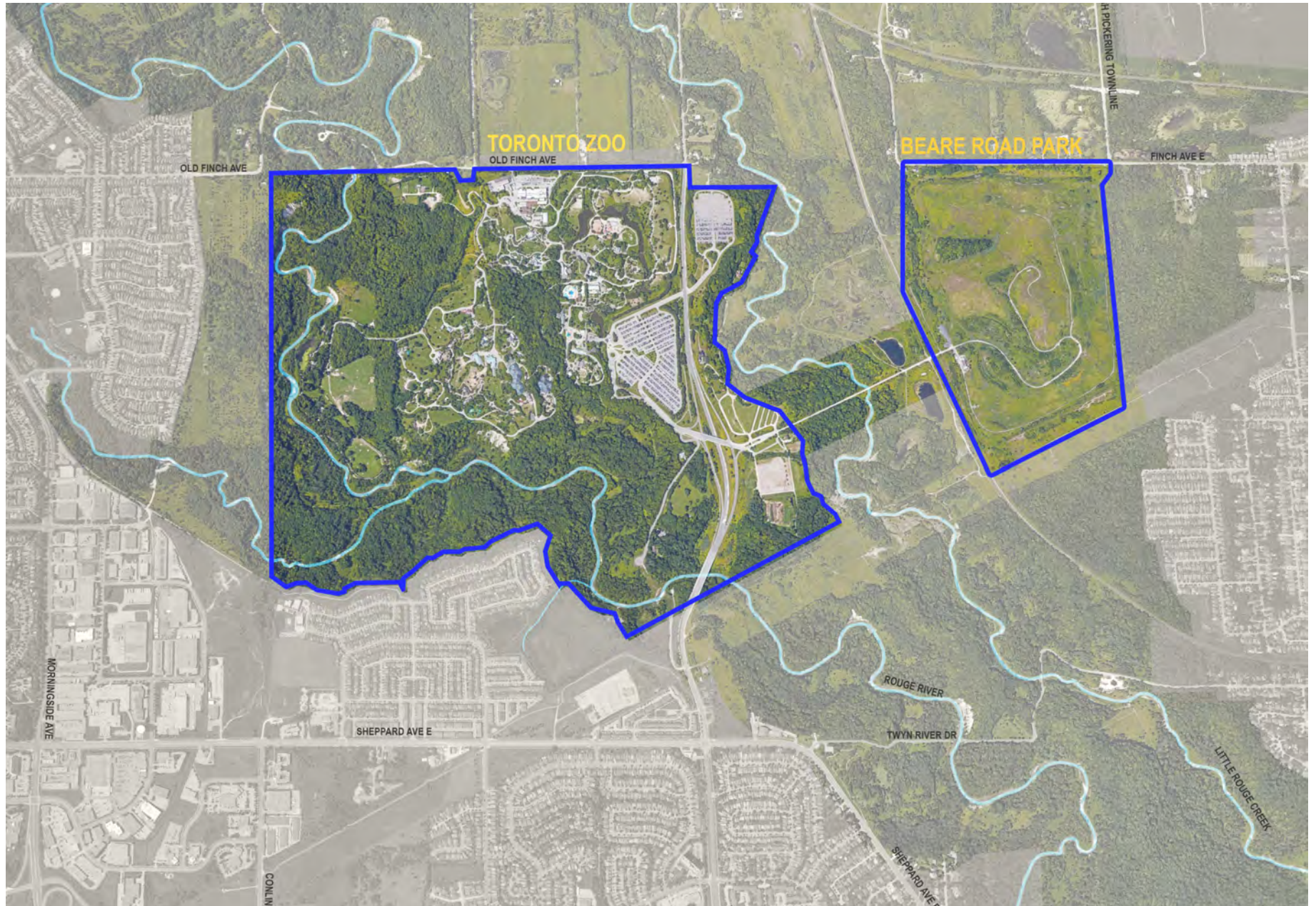
use programs, will unite the entire area and provide a fertile focus for the Toronto Zoo to collaborate with Parks Canada on native species conservation programs and educational outreach.

Future development under an updated tripartite agreement will include Zoo land to the east of Meadowvale Road where facilities, programming, and visitor experiences support both the Zoo and Parks' conservation and sustainability efforts. Also included is land area to the north of Old Finch Avenue, where relocated facilities will be provided for conservation breeding and reproductive research, and new areas will be lushly planted for browse and nutrition gardens.

In 2011, the Government of Canada announced the creation of the Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) as part of the national parks system. The Toronto Zoo is located adjacent to the RNUP, which creates a tremendous potential for synergies between the Zoo and the new park.

1. Beth Kapusta and John McMinn, "Engineering Canadian Modernism," *Canadian Architect: The National Review of Design and Practice*, April 1, 2001, <https://www.canadianarchitect.com/features/engineering-canadian-modernism/>

2. Ibid.



SITE CONTEXT MAP FIGURE 2  
Existing Condition

# METHODOLOGY

The master plan was produced from a ten step process as outlined below. The process was documented in three progressively more detailed reports, an Initial report in the fall of 2015, an interim report in February of 2016 and the final report in early October 2016.

## Step 1: Market Analysis Report

The Market Analysis is the first phase of the overall Master Plan that will guide the development of the Toronto Zoo over the next 15-20 years. The Master Plan is to reflect the new mission and vision statements for the Toronto Zoo.

A key difference from previous strategic plans for the Toronto Zoo is that the current plan makes conservation impact the primary focus.

The Market Analysis is set out in the following categories:

- The Toronto Zoo in the context of other zoos
- The Toronto competitive context
- Existing markets for the Toronto Zoo
- Potential markets for the Toronto Zoo
- Zoo, attractions and travel trends

## Step 2: Background and existing conditions review and site tour

At the outset of the master plan, selected background materials and data were reviewed, including the 2015-2020 Toronto Zoo Strategic Plan and documents related to Financial, Visioning, Programs / Human Resources, Visitors / Market, Standards / Guidelines, Adjacent Land Use and other zoo master plans.

An observational, photographic and background document review was conducted of existing Zoo facilities including:

- Exhibits
- Off-Exhibit Holding Areas
- Public Spaces & Amenities (washrooms, retail)
- Rental Spaces
- Operations Areas
- Visitor & Services Circulation
- Administrative & Staff Areas
- Programs

During the summer of 2015 master plan team members and Zoo representatives carried out an initial tour of the Zoo site. The tour provided the master plan team with an overview and familiarity with the Zoo prior to a three day staff workshop in September.

## Step 3: Identify and review trends

Current zoo planning & design trends and recent developments were presented at the September workshop.

## Step 4: Consultations

Over the duration of the master plan process a series of meetings was held with the Steering Committee regarding the emerging content of the Master Plan. In addition a series of face to face interviews with selected management staff and stakeholders was carried out prior to the preparation of the Interim Report.

Meetings were arranged with staff from all areas of the Zoo.

In addition, meetings were arranged with Parks Canada staff to determine opportunities for joint programs and capital projects. The consultation was informed by background reviews and the existing professional familiarity of the local team with the two institutions.



Indian Rhino Conservation Breeding Program

### **Step 5: Fall Workshop, Master Plan Training Session with Board and Initial Report**

The staff workshop brought together members of the master plan team with the Zoo team. Key Zoo staff as well as team members from MMM Group, Studio Hanson Roberts, Lord Cultural Resources, Schultz & Williams and Balind Architects were present.

A work-shop was held in December, 2015 with the Board of Management.

The information gained supplemented the review process and formed the basis for the Initial Report which included a conceptual design approach and initial thoughts about a high level plan.

### **Step 6: Workshop #3**

After completion of the Initial Report, a third workshop was held in February with selected Zoo staff and site design specialists from the MMM Group and Studio Hanson Roberts. Follow-up face to face interviews were conducted with appropriate Zoo staff and key individuals. This workshop considered alternatives to the conceptual design approach and resulted in a preferred alternative.

### **Step 7: Consolidation and Interim Report**

Define the Vision:

- “what is the Zoo in relation to the world of zoos and aquariums?”
- “what is the Zoo in relation to other cultural – green – community organizations in Toronto?”
- “what is the Zoo in relation to the world of animal welfare and conservation organizations?”

After completion of the Initial Report, the team members performed due diligence on the information gained, as well as conducted follow-up phone interviews with appropriate staff and key individuals.

Key aspects were documented and informed by the results of the building audit that is prepared by others. An Interim Report was prepared in February 2016. This report discussed findings, defined planning principles, defined “green” goals and strategies and documented approaches developed at the workshop in February 2016.

### **Step 8: Complete Development Plan & Prepare Draft Final Report**

The conceptual development plan was refined and provided to the Zoo for review and to the Marketing & Financial Planning Consultants for their use in developing recommendations.

### **Step 9: Complete Financial Plan**

A Financial Plan was developed after receiving comments from the Zoo on the Draft Final Plan.

### **Step 10: Marketing Plan and Final Report**

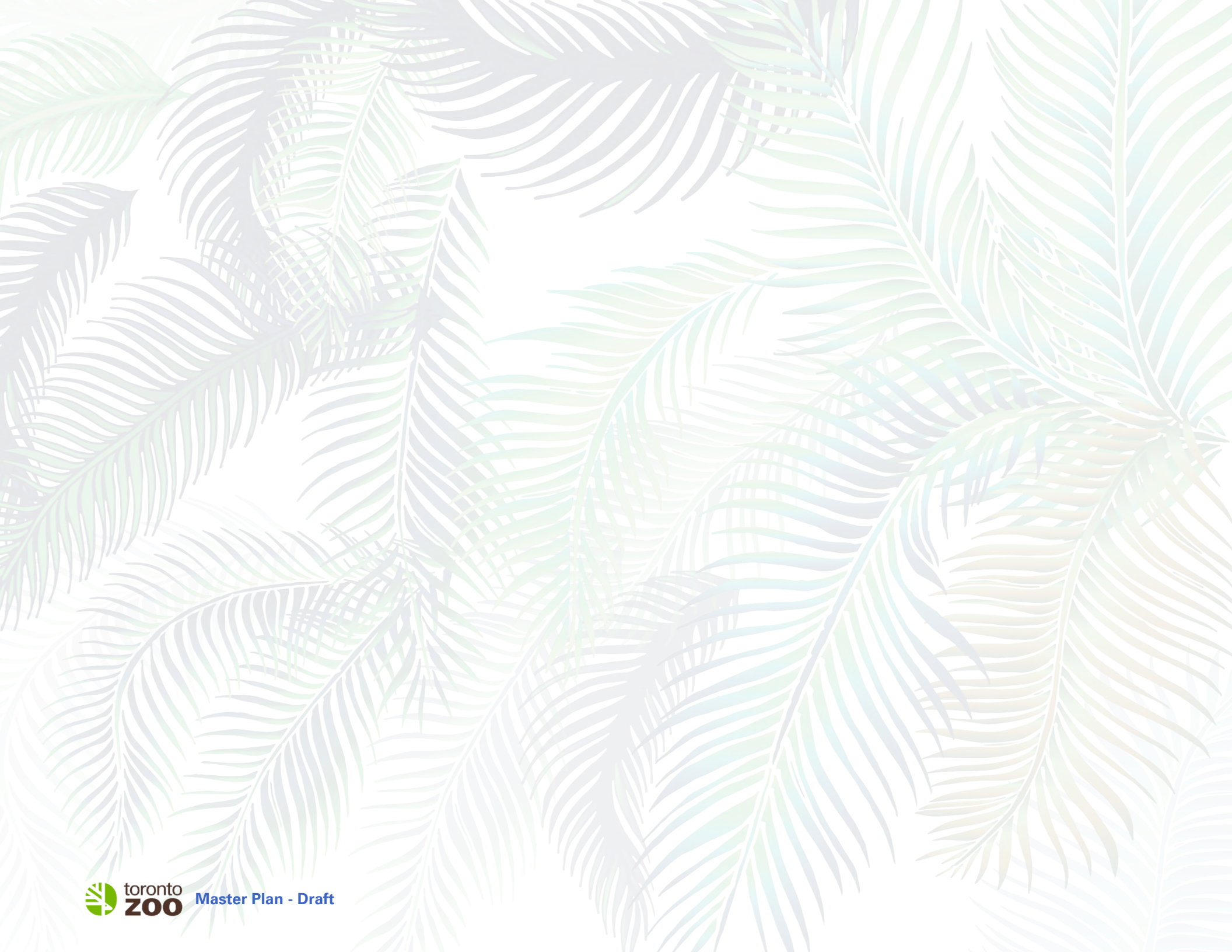
The Final Report refines the direction of the Master Plan and provides a picture of what the Zoo will look and feel like. It provides a list of achievable capital projects and project components within a 15-20 year horizon, and establishes a phasing strategy with associated costs and operational considerations.

A Marketing Plan was developed in parallel with the site design. This Final Report includes illustrative plans and sketches.





Red Panda





**THE VISION**

# THE VIEW FROM HERE

The Toronto Zoo, located on a high point of land and covering more than 700 acres between the Rouge River and Little Rouge Creek is poised to realize a transformational vision.

Building on its recently completed Strategic Plan and supported by this comprehensive Master Plan which lays out a developmental path for the next 15 years, it stands ready to take advantage of its history of innovation and move confidently forward with the next steps of reinvestment and renovation that will enable it to take even better care of its animals, its guests and the surrounding native forest that forms such a strong thread running through the Zoo.

With a focus on wildlife conservation and a determination to continue to expand partnerships with local citizens, as well as leading local and international organizations, the Toronto Zoo will strengthen and advance its reputation as a conservation centre of excellence that actively involves its guests and sends them forth with a renewed awareness of the needs of wildlife and wild places, and sense of purpose.

This Master Plan has been produced with input from the Zoo Board of Management and Staff, as well as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, City of Toronto, Parks Canada, the University of Toronto Scarborough and numerous other stakeholders. Through such broad outreach and consensus-building, the Toronto Zoo will be able to build upon its international reputation in wildlife conservation to step confidently into a role of one of the most significant places of regional conservation activities and sustainably-managed habitats in the Greater Toronto Area.

The Zoo will be a prime gateway to the ecosystems of the Rouge National Urban Park and the Rouge River watershed. With its evolving education and research facilities, it will be a national destination for research of species at risk and education about native and exotic species and habitat conservation. To support this, the Master Plan envisions not only expanded and enhanced habitat areas for the Canadian and exotic animals in its care, but a **revitalized welcome area that reflects the higher purpose of the Zoo**, a new learning centre and 4-season children's nature play area, restored wetlands and forests, and a variety of overnight facilities where Canadians can get closer to the nature that is in their midst.

The Master Plan reflects the need for an innovative 21st century wildlife conservation park that is **environmentally and fiscally sustainable for the long term**. To accomplish this, the Toronto Zoo will **move confidently into its role as a world leader** advocating for and advancing wild welfare, wildlife conservation and habitat preservation while also delivering enhanced and engaging guest experiences that inspire and educate present and future generations.

# LEGEND

## SITE

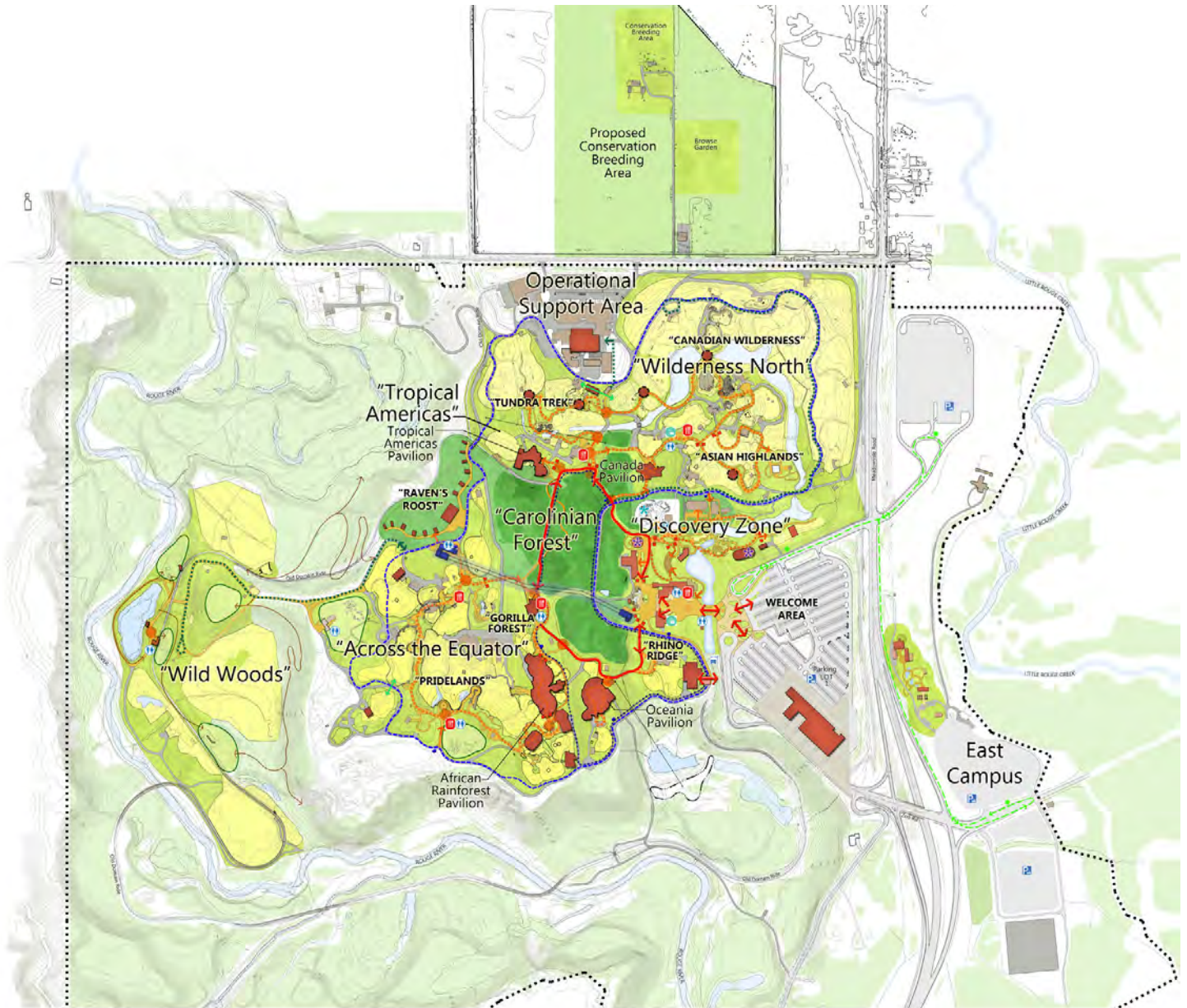
- Animal Area
- Building - New / Re-developed
- Building - Existing
- Service Area
- Water - Existing
- Water - New / Re-developed
- Landscape - Themed
- Landscape - Garden
- Landscape - Mapped Vegetation
- Landscape - Carolinian Forest
- Landscape - Core Woods
- Rockwork
- Existing Contour Lines
- Site Boundary

## CIRCULATION

- Visitor - Plaza / Decision Making Point
- Visitor - Gateways
- Visitor Pathway - General
- Visitor Pathway - Core Loop
- Visitor Pathway - Precinct Loop
- Visitor Pathway - Trails
- Service Road
- Public Road
- Gondola Route
- Zoomobile Route
- Zoomobile Station / Stop
- Zoomobile Winter Shuttle
- Special Tour Route
- Shuttle to Overflow Lots
- Shuttle Stop
- Multiple-use Route
- Parking - Visitor
- Parking - Bus

## VISITOR AMENITIES

- Water Play Area
- Play Area
- Washrooms
- Food
- Retail



**Master Plan**  
Toronto Zoo Master Plan

SCALE = 1:2500 at A4/E  
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 200 300 400 500  
November 2016



FIGURE 3

# MISSION AND VISION FOR THE ZOO

## OUR MISSION

A living centre for education and science, committed to providing compelling guest experiences and inspiring passion to protect wildlife and habitats.

## OUR VISION

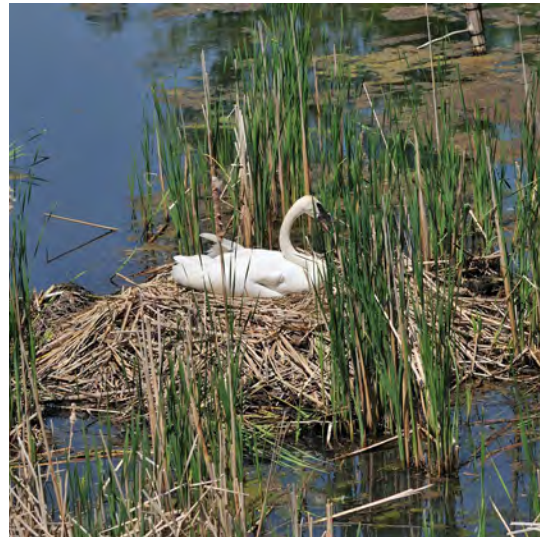
Canada's national leader in saving wildlife to ensure the rich diversity of nature for future generations.



*Lanius ludovicianus migrans* - Eastern Loggerhead Shrike



*Canis lupus arctos* - Arctic Wolf



*Cygnus buccinator* - Trumpeter Swan



*Mustela nigripes* - Black Footed Ferret

# CORE VALUES FOR THE ZOO

The following Core Values of the Toronto Zoo were developed in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan to ensure that the evolving plan for Toronto Zoo continues to be true to the Vision:



## EXCELLENCE

We ensure the highest standard of care for wildlife, provide excellent guest service and create fun and transformational experiences that connect people to nature.

## CONSERVATION

We are committed to practicing and promoting activities and actions that benefit wildlife and the environment.

## INNOVATION

We encourage creativity, strive to think differently and turn our ideas into actions.

## COLLABORATION

We conduct ourselves in a manner that fosters respect and teamwork among staff, volunteers and our partners to achieve our mutual goals.

## INTEGRITY

We are transparent and committed to best practices and leading by example.

## PASSION

We are proud, energetic and passionate about saving wildlife and will inspire others to value the critical role of our Zoo.

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Seven goals emerged in the strategic planning process and represent the Zoo's strategic direction for the next five years.

Fourteen selected objectives are addressed directly in this master plan.



## GOALS

### GOAL 1 - CONSERVATION IMPACT

Advance to a zoo-based conservation centre of excellence

### GOAL 5 - STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Maximize existing partnerships and identify new opportunities

### GOAL 2 - GUEST ENGAGEMENT

Enhance the guest experience to appeal to a more diverse audience and inspire conservation action

### GOAL 6 - PEOPLE

Create an organizational culture that attracts, engages and retains highly motivated staff and volunteers

### GOAL 3 - GOVERNANCE

Enhance the governance structure

### GOAL 7 - UNDERSTANDING & CARING

Increase awareness, understanding and support of the Zoo as a centre for conservation excellence

### GOAL 4 - FINANCIAL STABILITY

Build an organization that is fiscally and environmentally sustainable for the long term



## OBJECTIVES

Establish the Toronto Zoo as the national leader in wildlife conservation, with a focus on Canadian species and habitats.

Achieve a sustainable wildlife population with a high degree of biodiversity within the Zoo.

Provide exemplary care to the Zoo's wildlife population.

Invest in renewal of facilities and infrastructure to meet and exceed industry standards.

Revitalize existing exhibits and amenities and develop new memorable experiences, to increase support for the renewed mission of the Zoo.

Advance accessibility on the Zoo site.

Create various opportunities for new audiences to connect with and support the new mission and to increase revenue and attendance.

Increase earned revenue through the creation of new experiences and programs.

Develop a strong partnership with the Rouge National Urban Park.

Develop other strategic alliances using a diverse platform of conservation actions and stewardship programs.

Establish compelling opportunities for partners, sponsors and donors to support wildlife and habitats in our priority areas and our conservation focus.

Provide learning and development programs that meet the identified needs of staff and volunteers to allow us to excel in our roles.

Assess the Toronto Zoo brand and re-position to align with the new mission, vision and goals.

Through school and education programs, inspire current and future generations to become active stewards of wildlife conservation.

# PRINCIPLES

Moving towards the future, Toronto Zoo's Master Plan will enable the Zoo to continue to build upon the many successes of the last 42 years while concentrating on key directives of the Strategic Plan, namely focusing on the care, conservation and interpretation of Canadian animals and habitats while also nurturing a sustainable diversity of the world's wildlife and their attendant learning opportunities; advancing accessibility and the ability of the Zoo to meet the needs of Toronto's diverse residents; and creating a zoo-based conservation centre of excellence that can achieve tangible conservation outcomes on a number of inter-related fronts.

The Master Plan has been informed by the Strategic Plan, the Zoo's mission, its physical setting and the nature of the animals in its care, as well as a through understanding of international trends in zoo design. In addition, the Plan relies heavily on an understanding of the evolving market forces in Toronto and the world at large in order to continue to deliver meaningful experiences of discovery and learning for the region's changing families.

The goal of the Master Plan is to provide a capital improvements and program road map for the people and the organization to use in carrying out the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. The net outcomes of all of these efforts can be concisely summarized as follows (and as shown in the Strategic Intent Diagram):

- **Tangible Conservation Outcomes**
- **Excellent Care of Our Animals**
- **Inspiring Guest Experiences & Learning Opportunities**
- **Financial Sustainability**

The transformation envisioned in the Master Plan can be summed up in the following series of principles:

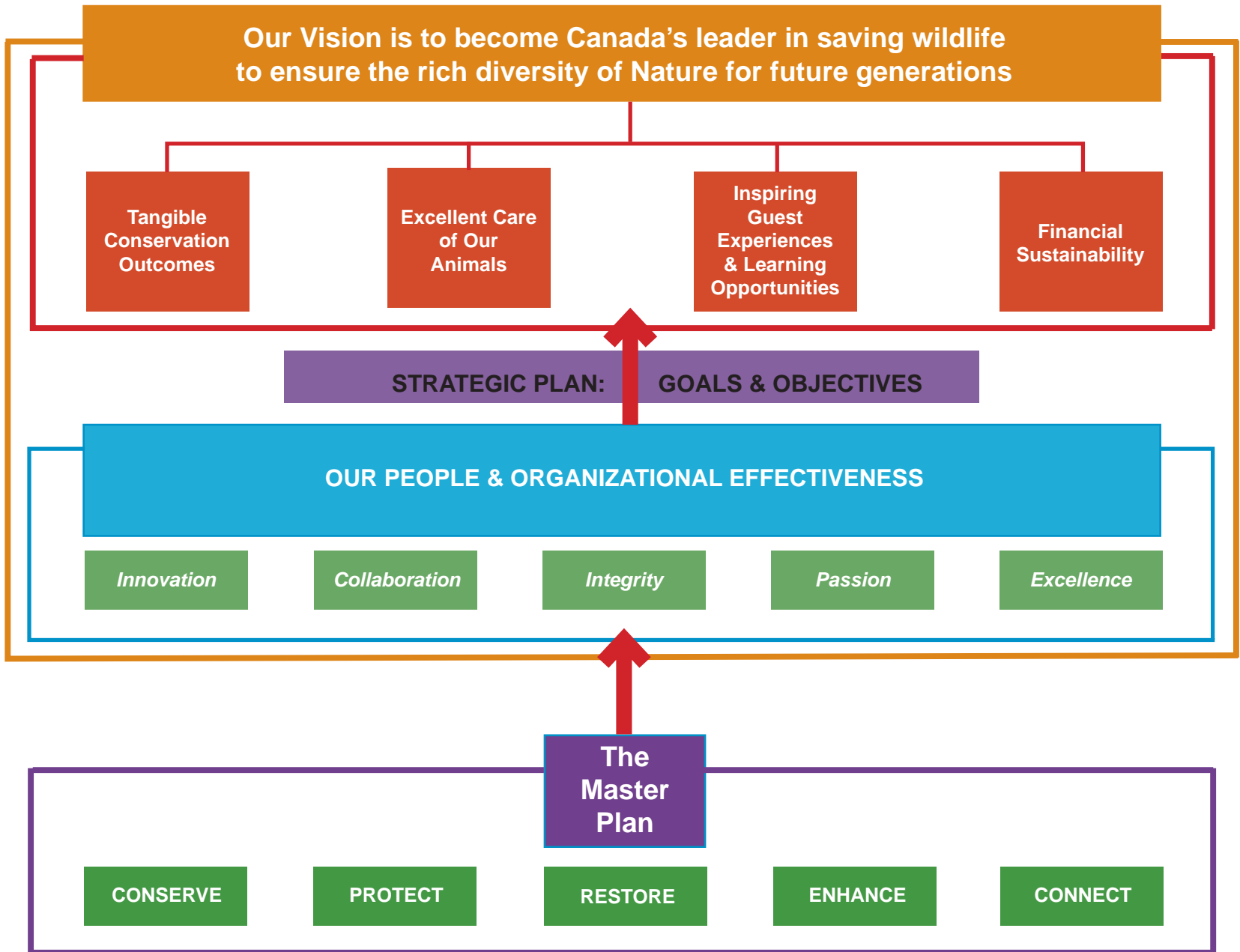
- **Conserve**
- **Protect**
- **Restore**
- **Enhance**
- **Connect**

These principles, more fully described below, tie the Master Plan back to the Strategic Plan through an overarching vision and action plan of CARE: Care for the animals | Care for the guests | Care for the environment | Care for Staff and the institution.

## **Conserve** essential Ecosystem Characteristics

Conservation is the primary function of what the Zoo does. It will conserve wildlife in wild places and inspire the community to understand and value wildlife and their habitats.

It will be recognized as the preeminent public park in Toronto rooted in a mission of conservation. Specific outcomes for biodiversity and ecosystem health will be established and tied to achievable targets that will be established and monitored throughout all areas of Toronto Zoo.



### **Protect** sensitive Habitat and Animal Welfare

Animal welfare is fundamental and the Zoo will manage and care for animals and habitat exceptionally. Ensure that all exhibits and upgrades are appropriate for the species and confirm this with up-to date science-based advice.

Sensitive habitats will be identified and designated for user experiences of research and conservation supplemented with interpretive signage. These will include Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI's) and identified species at risk habitat.

Consult scientific information available in other zoological institutions and academia. Consider multi exhibits for species such as social carnivores to allow for separation of animals as required for ensuring their welfare. Ensure that the animals' physical and psychological needs are met. Provide choice of access to the natural elements as well as natural change and environmental challenge that encourages curiosity and engagement. Ensure that staff members can safely and easily engage in maintenance, care and training, which enables animals to lead rich and fulfilling lives without undue stress or injury.

### **Restore** the Waterways and Natural Forest Habitat

The waterways, wetlands and natural forest habitat will be restored to a level of ecosystem health that is appropriate to a conservation-based institution. User experience of these domains will include all the permitted uses in the sensitive habitat plus foot paths, trails and other low-impact human use.

### **Enhance** the interface between Animal Habitats, Programs and Guest Experiences

The Zoo will provide a series of programmed and free-choice experiences and site based learning opportunities. It will accommodate opportunities for relaxed enjoyment as well as active engagement. The circulation system will be adaptive, flexible and fully accessible.

### **Connect** People to Nature

The Zoo will to maintain the highest quality visitor experience to connect visitors with animals, staff and mission. The Zoo will also connect its conservation work with the values and aspirations of the community by establishing a sensible plan that provides strategic and well-orchestrated investment over time.

The Zoo will connect with surrounding neighbourhoods, Rouge National Urban Park and the City. The Master Plan identifies opportunities for improved pedestrian connections from the Rouge National Urban Park and adjacent municipal infrastructure.

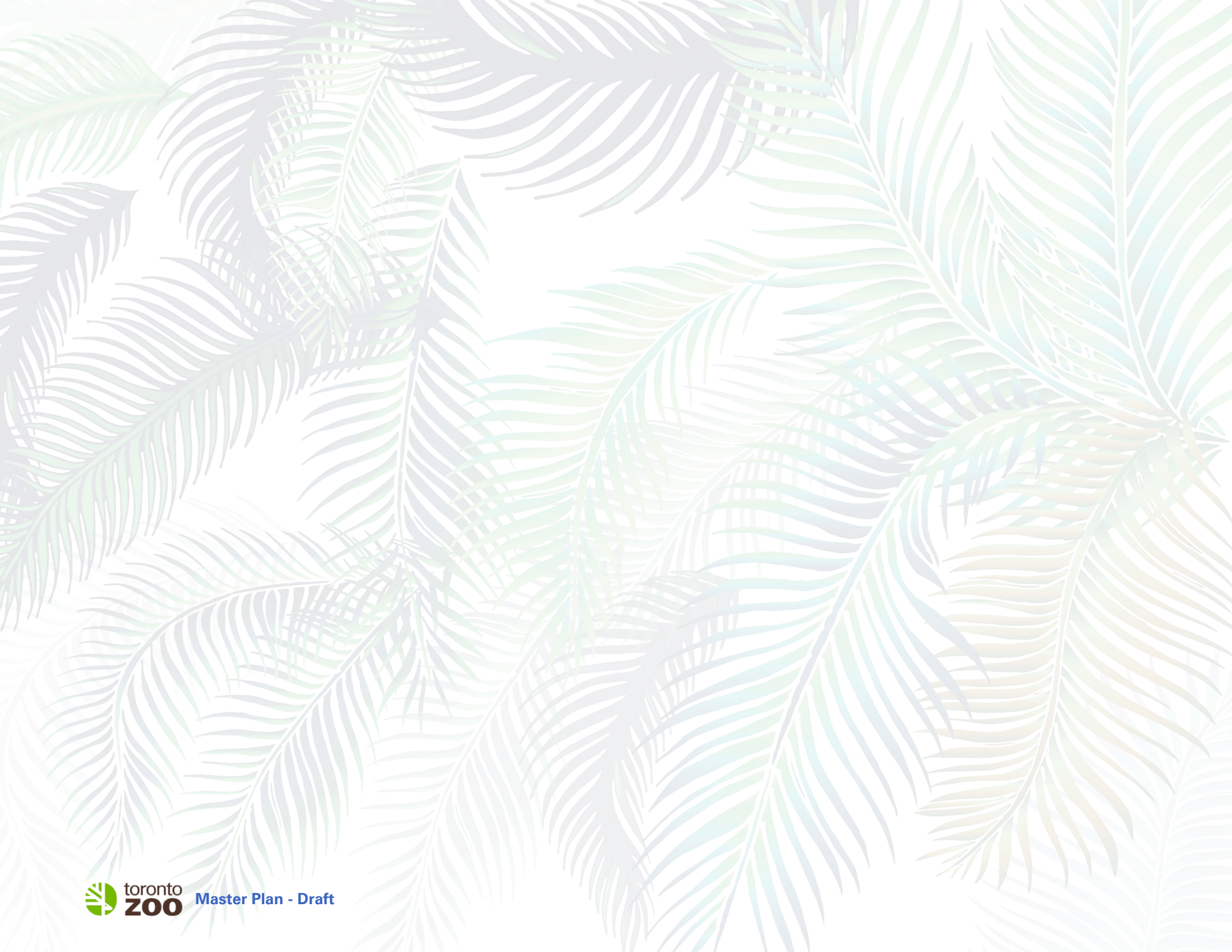
Improved bicycle and transit access that links the Zoo to existing municipal infrastructure is critical.

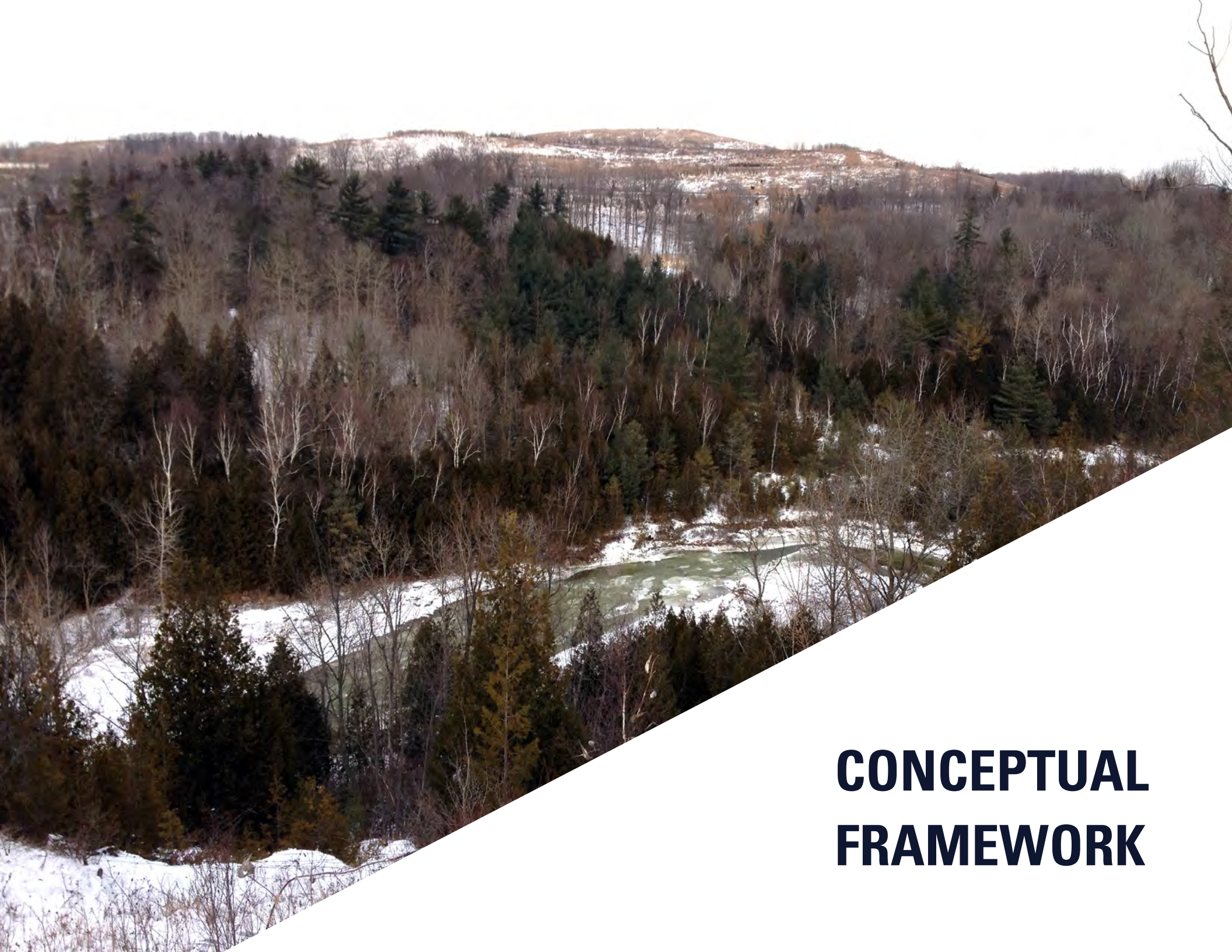
A Mobility Management Committee (MMC) should be created comprised of Toronto Zoo, Rouge National Urban Park, University of Toronto Scarborough Campus, Centennial College and others to communicate about upcoming events and coordinate the variety of activities and festivals that the Zoo and others will mount.

The MMC should coordinate shuttle services and bike share opportunities at municipal transit stops, the Rouge National Urban Park and other points of origin and destinations.



*Dendrobates azureus* - Blue Poison Dart Frog





# **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

# A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

Recent planning at the Toronto Zoo has enabled the Zoo to coalesce and condense some of the more far-flung exhibits and public experiences, and to clarify and simplify the service and pedestrian circulation systems. This Master Plan is designed to continue to build upon these earlier endeavours with specific areas of added emphasis, including:

- Clarify the story and main messages of the Toronto Zoo.
- Clarify the nature and extent of major animal habitat and experience zones.
- Further develop clear pedestrian circulation systems that are fully accessible and able to be expanded or contracted, depending on the weather.
- Resolve the Zoo entry and access issues to provide a smooth functioning and delightful experience for all.
- Incorporate “hot spots” throughout the Zoo to provide ample opportunity for Discovery and Learning staff to engage with guests via informal presentations. Such spots should also contain ample opportunity for seating and relaxation for adults, as well as “nature play” for kids.

- Recommend further revenue generation opportunities that are in keeping with the natural character, style and messaging of the Zoo.
- Build upon opportunities provided by the adjacency of the Rouge National Urban Park.
- Enable exceptional animal care, welfare and breeding programs, including providing the highest quality, flexible animal spaces and enrichment opportunities.
- Provide facilities that enable staff to function at the highest level of efficacy, safety and professionalism.
- Toronto Zoo and Parks Canada jointly entered into a process to assess joint needs and opportunities for the future in terms of a shared educational and visitor orientation facility. The facility would provide a much-needed venue to fulfill each organization’s requirement for education, conservation, and establishing a connection to nature for individuals, community and school groups, and residents.



Conservation and Care, Toronto Zoo



Nature Play and Discovery

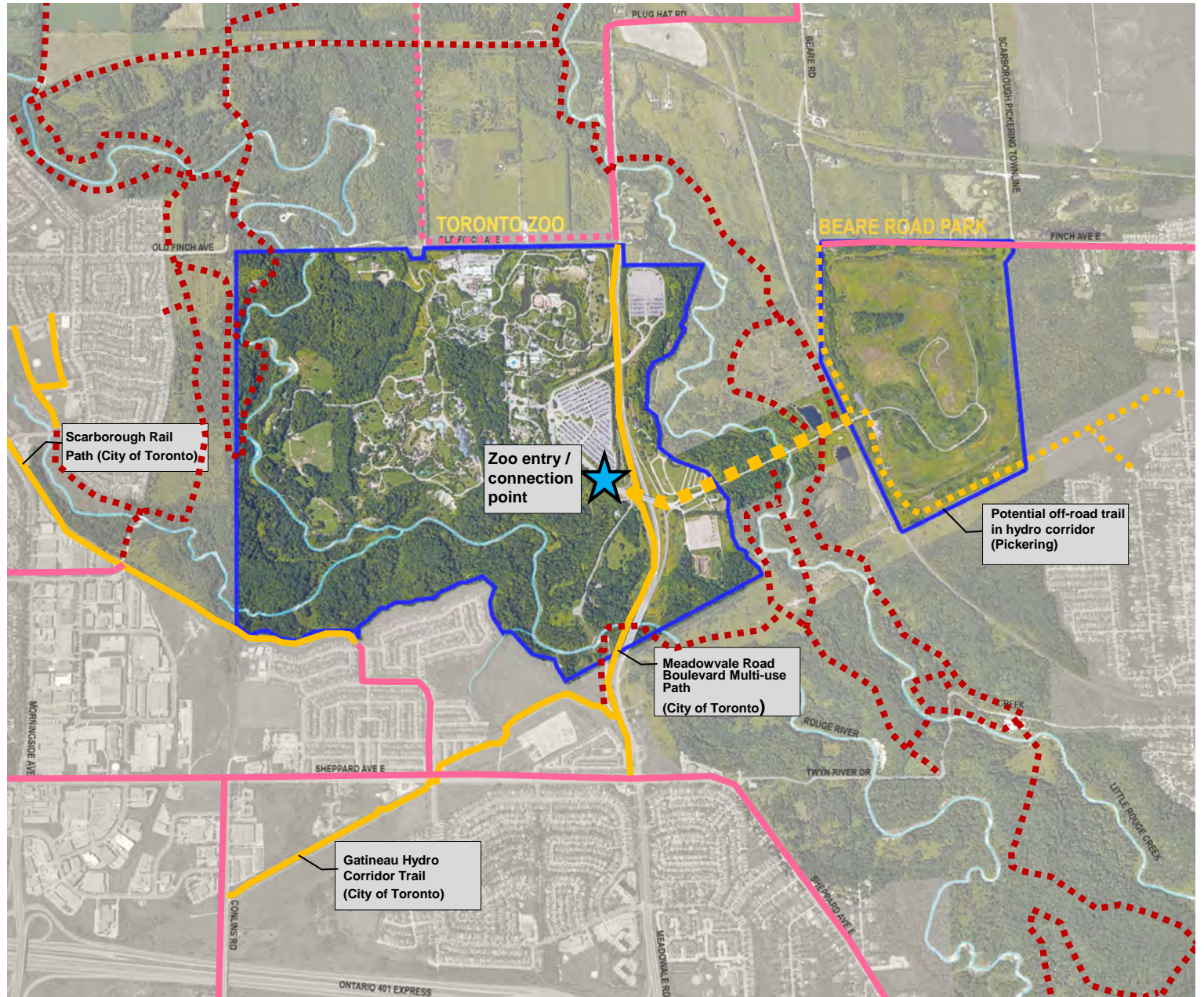


Wildlife Health Centre



# Legend

- Existing Off-road Multi-use Trail
- - - Potential Off-road Multi-use Trail
- On-road Cycling Route (from approved municipal master plan)
- - - Potential On-road Cycling Route (not currently part of municipal master plan)
- - - Existing Trails and Possible Opportunities
- Access Route



CONNECTIONS PLAN FIGURE 4

Existing Condition

# SUMMARY OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Zoo site has been divided into six focal areas that are differentiated on the basis of the following:

- The level of public access versus back-of-house operations;
- The degree of observable exhibit habitat for animals in our care versus free-range habitat for at-large native species;
- The focus on guest services versus animal habitats.

	Public Access	Back-of-House	Exhibit Habitat	Native Habitat	Guest Services Focus
<b>Welcome Area</b>	High	Low	Low	Low	High
<b>Core Habitat Area</b>	Low	High	High	High	Low
<b>Wild Woods</b>	Low	Low	Low	High	Low
<b>East Campus</b>	Low	Low	Low	High	Low
<b>Conservation Breeding Area</b>	Low	High	Low	Low	Low
<b>Operational Support Area</b>	Low	High	Low	Low	Low

Each area exists essentially independently of the others while being tied together by a carefully choreographed circulation system that enables them all to act in support of the Zoo's mission and vision.

These areas include the following:

- **Welcome Area:** The Zoo's front door.
- **Core Habitat Area:** The prime visitor experience and learning landscape.
- **Wild Woods:** An area set aside for guided group experiences, learning activities within the Zoo's Rouge River landscape.
- **East Campus:** Remote parking and opportunities for a festival area and lodging to support a better integration with the Rouge National Urban Park.
- **Conservation Breeding Area:** An off-public-view area for the Zoo's conservation breeding programs, as well as support for the Zoo's existing animal populations.
- **Operational Support Area:** Back-of-house maintenance, operations and administration areas required for the Zoo's smooth functioning.

The Master Plan will enhance and restore significant habitat for local and regional wildlife, provide camping and outdoor trails as well as improve the connectivity of the Zoo to neighbouring wildlife and urban systems. Opportunities exist for a boutique lodge and destination restaurant to be developed in partnership with the private sector. The existing arrival and entrance spaces will be redeveloped with a design approach that will introduce visitors to a reinvigorated public space that showcases living systems approaches to infrastructure shared Toronto Zoo / Rouge Park education / orientation facility. Sustainable food systems will be incorporated into the restaurant brand and together these publicly accessible amenities will provide a redesigned introduction and welcome to the Zoo.

The reimagined Welcome Area in conjunction with the East Campus Area on the tableland east of Meadowvale Road that overlooks the Little Rouge River will enhance the reputation of the Zoo in the local community who provide partnership and revenue opportunities outside of the pay-per-use experience of the Core Habitat Area.

Each of these six areas are comprised of several Zones, that are described in the following pages.

**LEGEND**

**SITE**

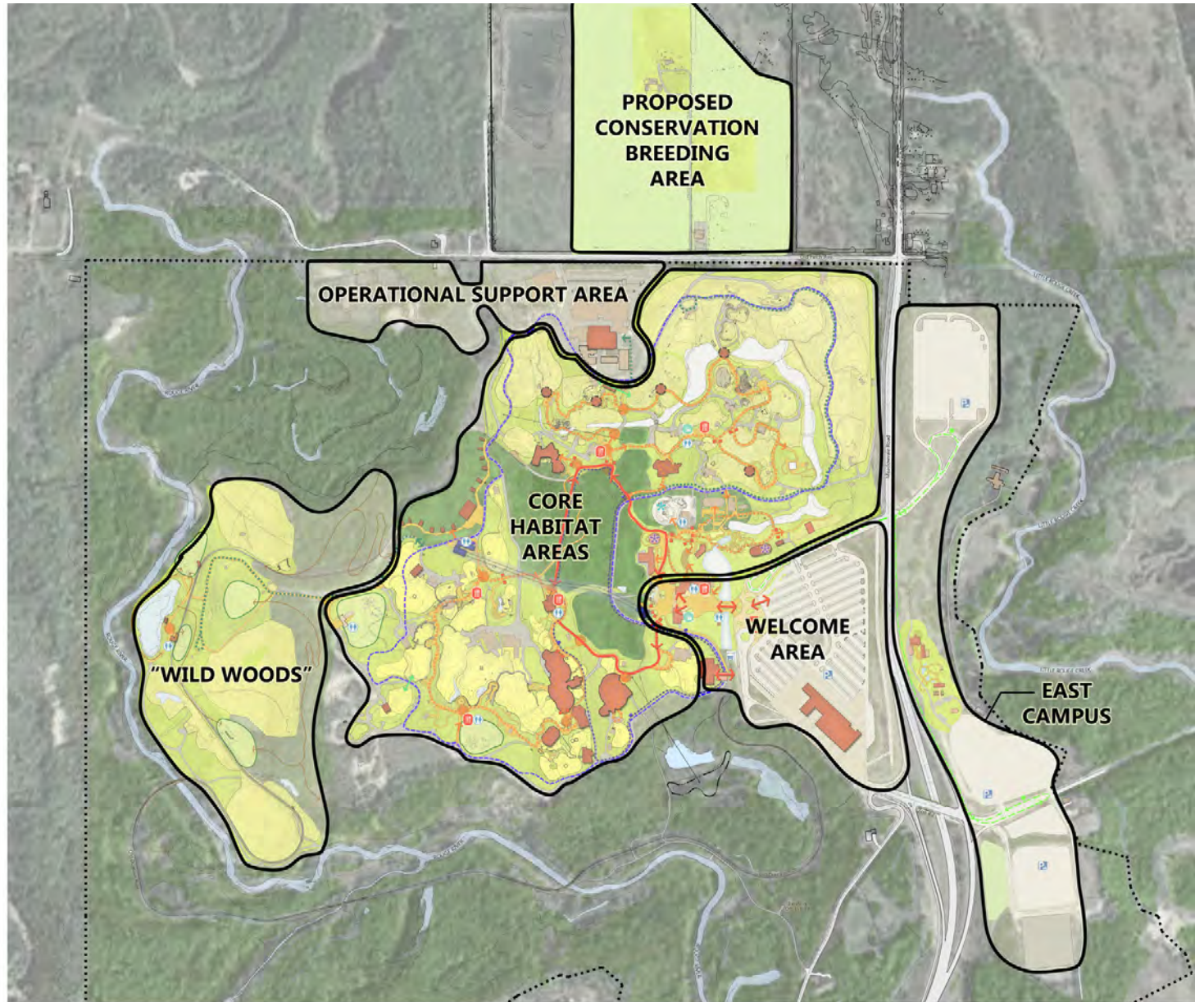
- Animal Area
- Building - New / Re-developed
- Building - Existing
- Service Area
- Water - Existing
- Water - New / Re-developed
- Landscape - Themed
- Landscape - Garden
- Landscape - Mapped Vegetation
- Landscape - Carolinian Forest
- Landscape - Core Woods
- Rockwork
- Existing Contour Lines
- Site Boundary

**CIRCULATION**

- Visitor - Plaza / Decision Making Point
- Visitor - Gateways
- Visitor Pathway - General
- Visitor Pathway - Core Loop
- Visitor Pathway - Precinct Loop
- Visitor Pathway - Trails
- Service Road
- Public Road
- Gondola Route
- Zoomobile Route
- Zoomobile Station / Stop
- Zoomobile Winter Shuttle
- Special Tour Route
- Shuttle to Overflow Lots
- Shuttle Stop
- Multiple-use Route
- Parking - Visitor
- Parking - Bus

**VISITOR AMENITIES**

- Water Play Area
- Play Area
- Washrooms
- Food
- Retail



**Master Plan - Zoo Focal Areas**  
Toronto Zoo Master Plan

SCALE = 1:2500 at A4/E  
0 100 200 300 400 500  
November 2016



FIGURE 5

# FOCAL AREAS OF THE MASTER PLAN

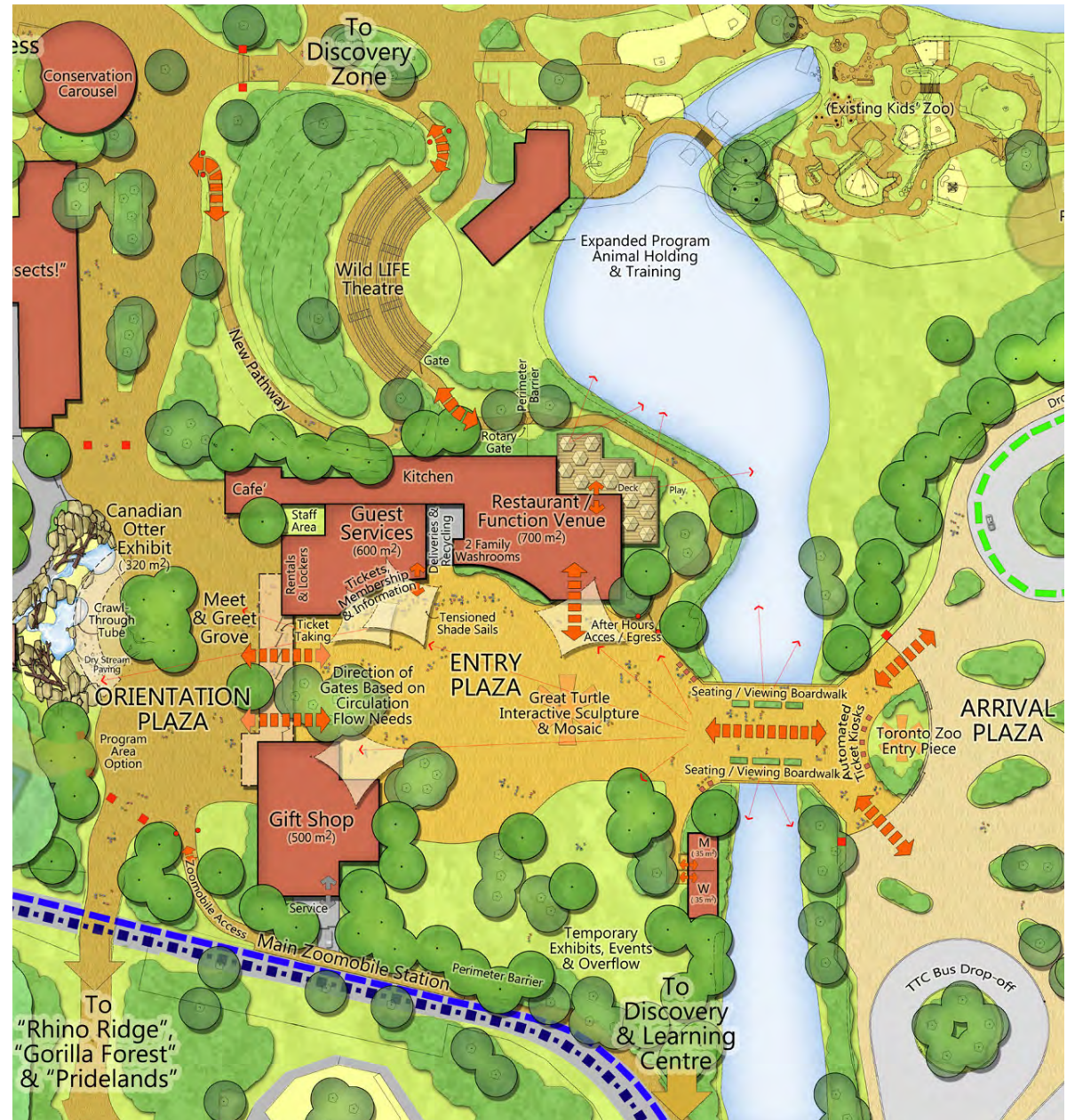
## WELCOME AREA

The Welcome Area is set up to provide essential guest services to both Zoo visitors and visitors to the adjacent Rouge National Urban Park. It is an area where functionality matters, as well as the quality of the experience, because it is the first and last “touch point” for guest engagement with both facilities and, as such, is the prime locale for expressing the Zoo’s mission and evincing the over-riding principle of CARE that has informed the development of the physical Master Plan.

Guests’ first experience of the Welcome Area is in the Parking Area, an area of coming and going and getting ready. Parking will continue to be handled within the main lot, as well as a series of remote, overflow lots that will be linked to the Arrival Plaza by a ZooTram that runs during peak visitation periods. This will ensure that, regardless of the final destination, visitors can gain easy access to the front doors of both the Zoo and the Park, as well as the refreshments and education facilities that lie in close proximity to the Zoo’s entry.

Additional areas of the Welcome Area include:

- Arrival Plaza
- Entry Plaza
- Orientation Plaza



**WELCOME AREA**

FIGURE 6

**LEGEND**

**SITE**

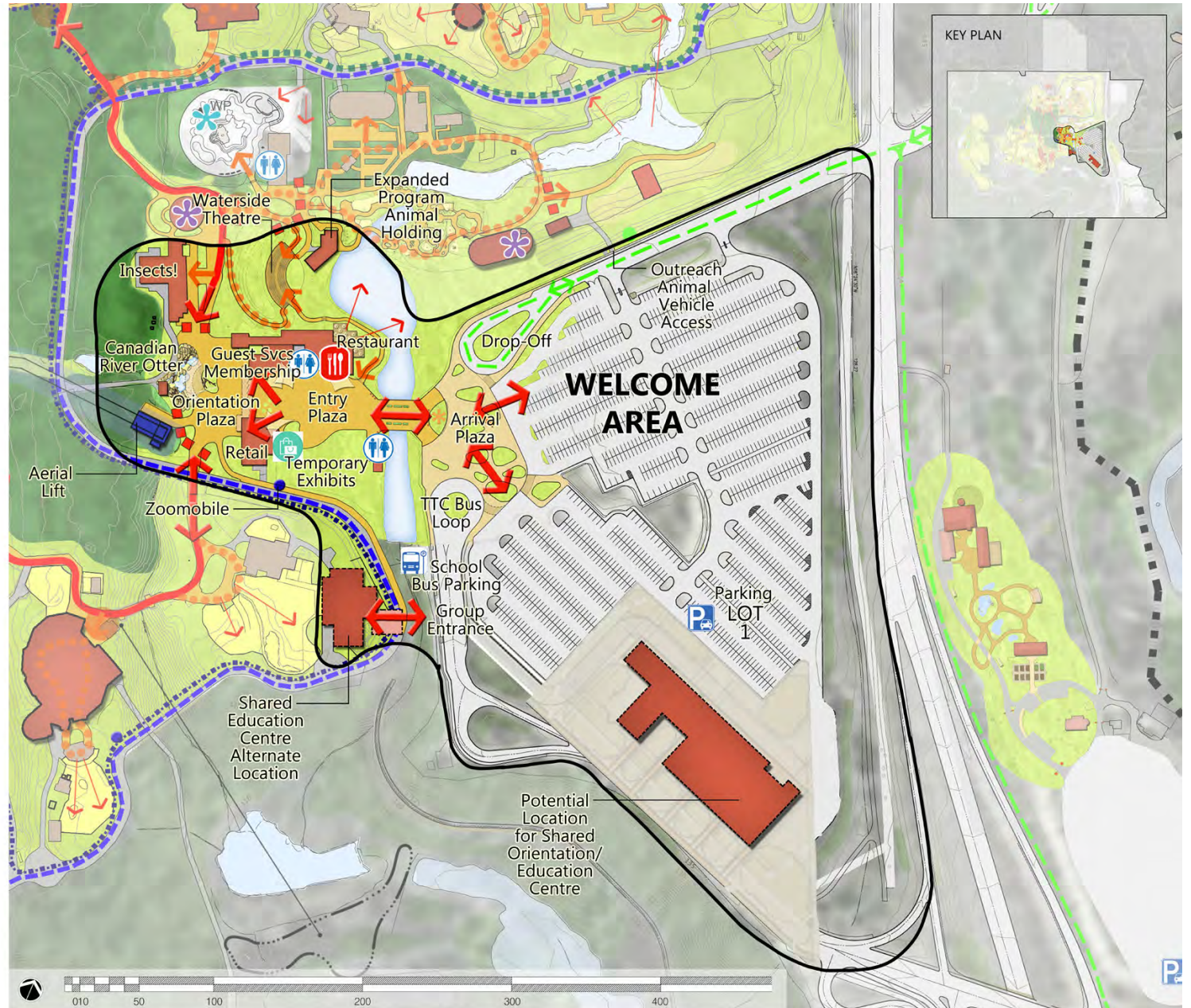
- Animal Area
- Building - New / Re-developed
- Building - Existing
- Service Area
- Water - Existing
- Water - New / Re-developed
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- Parking - Bus

**VISITOR AMENITIES**

- Water Play Area
- Play Area
- Washrooms
- Food
- Retail



**Master Plan - Welcome Area**  
Toronto Zoo Master Plan

November 2016



FIGURE 7

## ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE PLAZA

The Arrival Plaza is the main meeting place for people coming together out of their individual cars and public transportation vehicles, and taking on the communal role of "Zoo guest". It is a place that is firmly rooted in the surrounding Ontario landscape, and channels visitors effortlessly and graciously to and from the Entry Plaza.

Drop-off will be provided for regularly scheduled Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) bus service, as well as school buses and personal vehicles that includes the following:

- Convenient drop-off close to the Entry Plaza and Group Entry of the Zoo for private cars, public transportation and school buses.
- Waiting and pick-up areas for parent/guardians of children attending Zoo programs.
- Zoo Shuttle to overflow parking lots, and between the Zoo and Park entry during peak periods.
- Easy access for pick-up and drop-off of Zoo outreach animals from the Kids Zoo back of house.





Toronto Zoo Welcome Area

## ENTRY PLAZA

The Entry Plaza will operate as a “free campus” where visitors can arrive, make decisions about their day at the Zoo, purchase tickets, seek information and regroup prior to passing through the ticketed perimeter of the Zoo. Ticket sales and ticket-taking will continue to be further automated over time, but guests will always be able to count on a friendly face to welcome them.

The facilities that will be freely available include washrooms, ticket sales and information, a restaurant/café with an outdoor deck overlooking the lake and a second floor rentable event centre, gift shop and rental facilities, and a central iconic sculpture / gathering area.

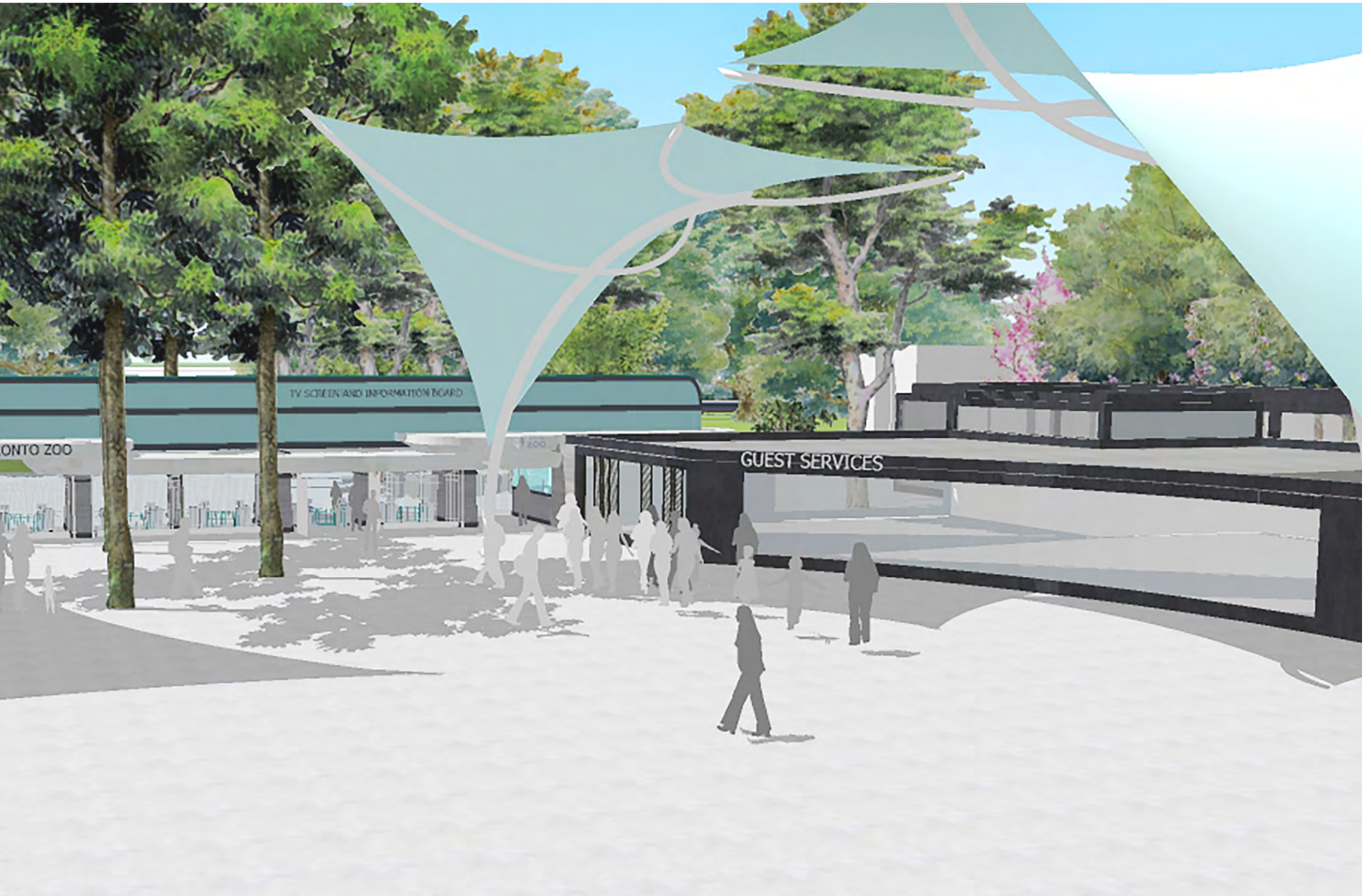
## ORIENTATION PLAZA

The Orientation Plaza lies just beyond the ticket-taking gateway and becomes a prime decision-making point for determining how visitors will start their day at the Zoo. As in all aspects of the Welcome Area, experience is critical and a lack of commercial clutter will reinforce the quality and commitment to the conservation efforts of the Zoo. A Canadian river otter family acts as the welcoming icon and, in concert with Zoo volunteers and guides, provides guests with the breathing space to start their journey.

At this point, visitors will have the option to continue on their walking journey around the Zoo, choose to board the Zoomobile for an introductory tour or access to more remote parts of the site, or avail themselves of an aerial tram that offers a shortcut to and from the upper ridge animal habitats. In the winter, the Zoomobile will offer a shorter trip through the core of the Zoo that enables visitors to quickly get to the Zoo's indoor pavilions or to visit the Canadian animals in their outdoor habitats.







Toronto Zoo Orientation Plaza

## CORE HABITAT AREA

- Across the Equator
- Wilderness North
- Tropical Americas
- Carolinian Forest
- Discovery Zone

The Zoo's core habitats will continue to be refined, defined, blended and merged in concert with the Zoo's commitment to animal and visitor well-being. The goal will be to condense the walk but not the visitor experience to provide a series of 20-30 minute loops that can be linked together as a linear sequence for first-time visitors, or as a series of free-choice experiences to visit "old friends" by repeat visitors and members. Such intensive experiences and site-based learning opportunities will be supplemented by generous shelter, shade rest, relaxation and refreshment options, as well as 'natural play' spots to encourage visitors to unhurriedly enjoy their time.

The experience loops will be comprised of primarily zoogeographic, immersive habitats (animals from similar geographic regions: African Savanna, etc.) that provide unique opportunities to Torontonians to the wealth of species in the tropical and temperate regions where the Zoo is actively engaged in situ and ex situ conservation work. In addition to being able to get up-close and observe animals in natural surroundings and dynamic social groupings, visitors will be able to learn more about the natural and human history that has brought us to "The Present", as well as personal stories, science and conservation activities, and policy work that is aimed at working together to save species from extinction.

The Zoo has extensive experience in caring for a range of animals with either a minimum of shelter (cold-adapted), or that require summer/winter ameliorations similar to those that make us comfortable.

Recognizing that we need to meet and exceed evolving animal care standards and guest expectations, it is intended that priority planning and phasing of habitat renovations and additions will remain flexible.

# LEGEND

## SITE

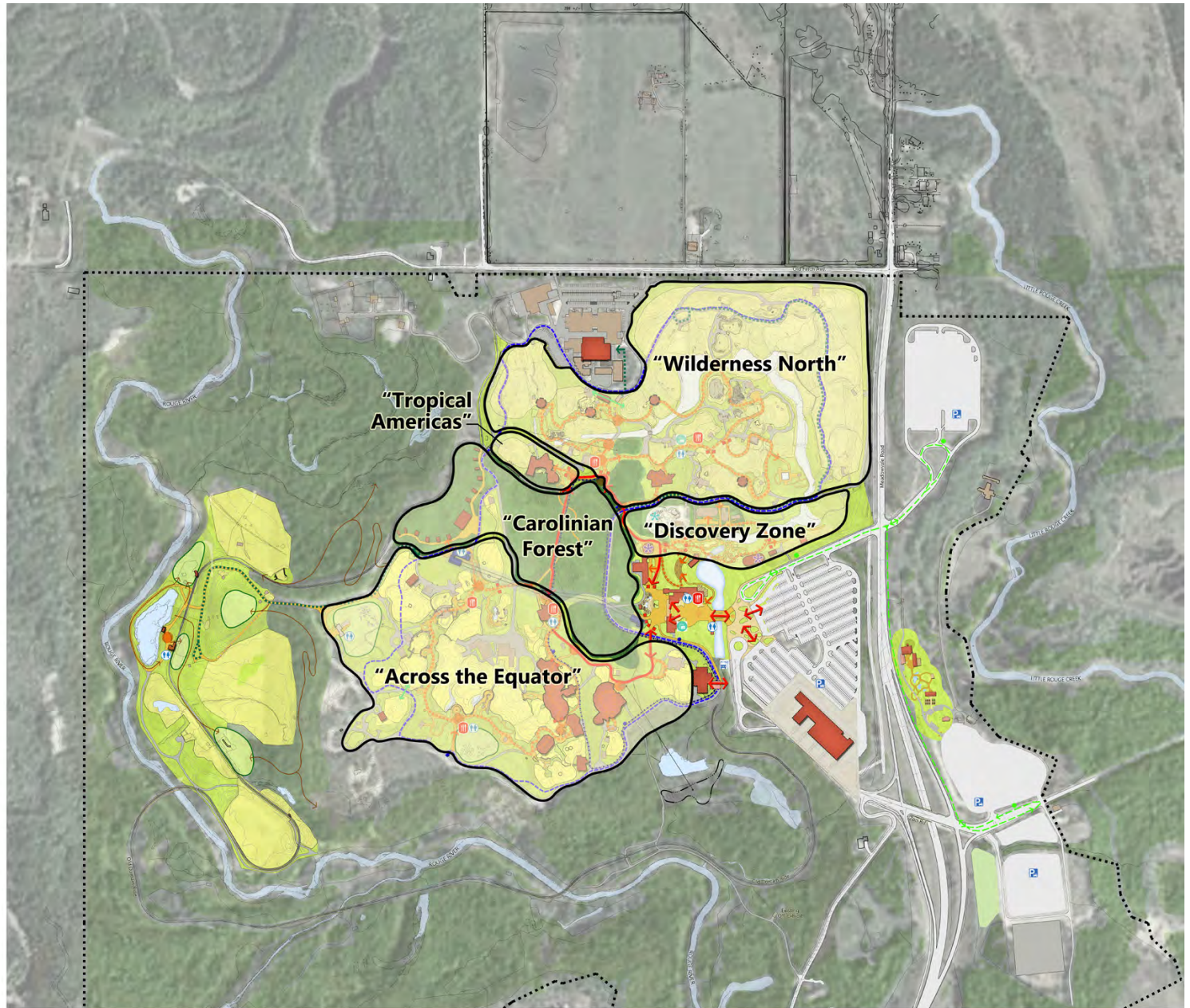
- Animal Area
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- Service Area
- Water - Existing
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- Site Boundary

## CIRCULATION

- Visitor - Plaza / Decision Making Point
- Visitor - Gateways
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- Multiple-use Route
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## VISITOR AMENITIES

- Water Play Area
- Play Area
- Washrooms
- Food
- Retail



Master Plan - Core Habitat Area  
Toronto Zoo Master Plan

SCALE = 1:2500 at Arch E  
0 10 50 100 200 300 400 500  
November 2016



FIGURE 8

## ACROSS THE EQUATOR

The southern portion of the Zoo's core habitat will maintain its focus on animals and habitats from warmer climates. Originally envisioned as focusing exclusively on the African Savanna and Indo-Malaya regions, the Master Plan envisions a broader definition of the latter to include all of the Oceania region so that the Zoo is better able to represent the animals and conservation activities of the Australasian as well and the Indo-Malayan region. In addition, the Savanna has been renamed "Pridelands" to reflect the enhanced stature of the Lion habitat and interpretation of the role of carnivores in maintaining the health of the herds and the landscape.

Renovations in both will include enlargement of selected habitat areas, the development of mixed species areas as appropriate, rotational exhibits to provide more overall space and enrichment for carnivores, back-of-house improvements, and accessibility and facility upgrade improvements.

The renovation of the two 1970'a-era Ron Thom pavilions are of particular interest: each requires substantial improvements to infrastructure to bring

the buildings up to energy and accessibility code while, at the same time, providing more indoor space and choice for a core group of animals. It is envisioned that the provision of more light for animals and plants plus better insulation values can be accomplished through the retro-fitting of the roof structure with a multi-layered ETFE membrane while maintaining the same structural approach and building aesthetics.

Rebuilding of the Indo-Malaya ramp will enable easy and direct access from the Pavilion to the ridgeline above where the African Rainforest Pavilion sits.

The creation of a winter tram circulation route that links together the Zoo's major pavilions and utilizes the service bridge as a year-round route will enable the Zoo to care for and better cater to its winter visitors, providing them with a condensed experience with animals in a close-in experience. It is envisioned that the bridge can be kept as a serviceable part of the circulation system through the use of regular applications of a calcium magnesium acetate or through the use of hydronic or electrical heat sources.

Ancillary buildings that no longer serve the needs of the animals, staff or visitors will be removed (Macaque building and "Malayan Woods"), thus allowing the edges of the existing ravine to be restored to enable the Carolinian Forest to continue to flow through the Zoo.

**LEGEND**

**SITE**

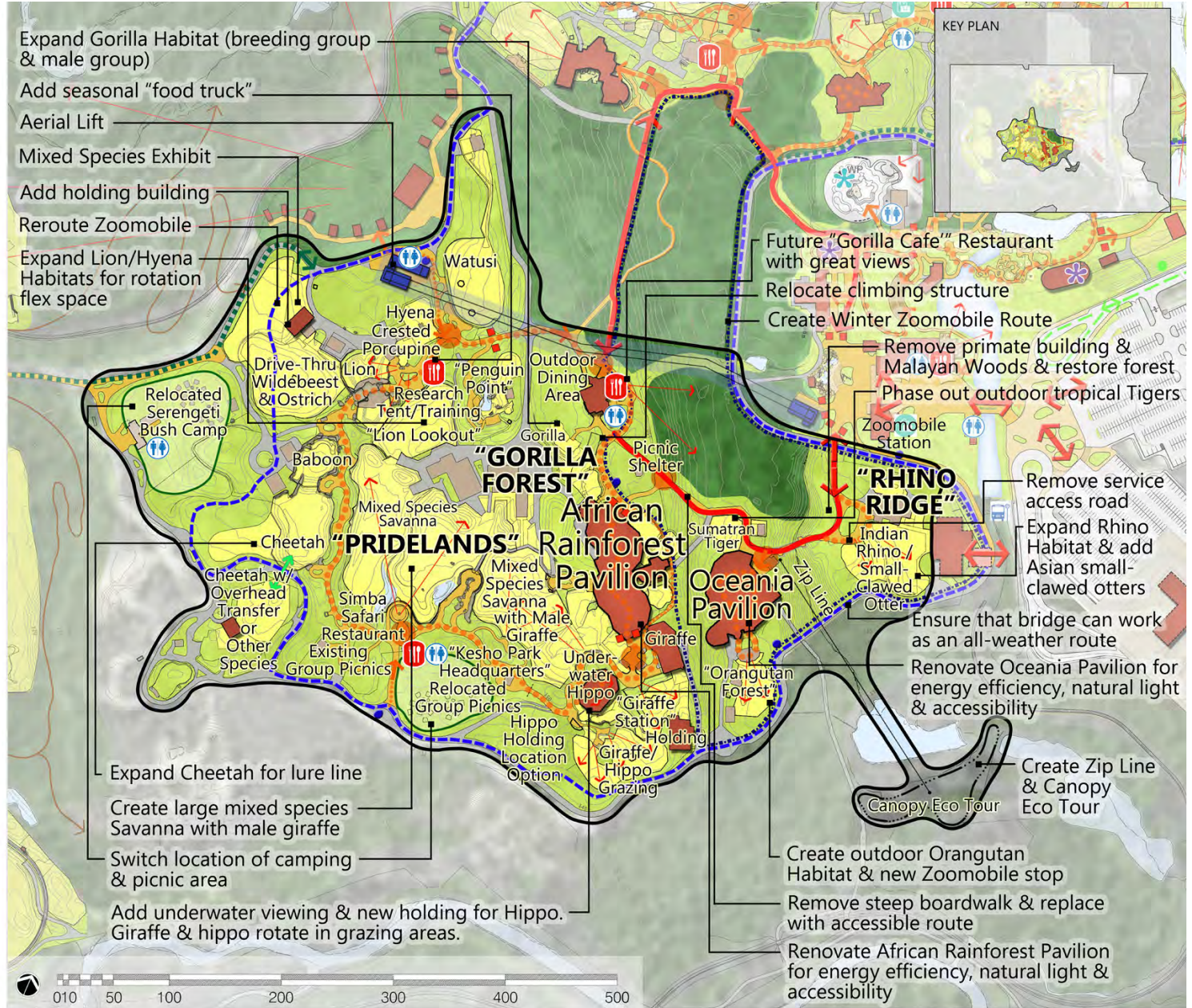
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**VISITOR AMENITIES**

- Water Play Area
- Play Area
- Washrooms
- Food
- Retail



**Master Plan - "Across the Equator"**  
Toronto Zoo Master Plan

November 2016



FIGURE 9

### **“African Rainforest” Pavilion**

The African Rainforest Pavilion demonstrates the rich biodiversity of this region, from terrestrial iconic species through the aquatic ecosystems that this region depends on. The focal species for this pavilion will highlight threats to the imperiled wildlife that rely on this critical habitat. The themes of this pavilion will draw attention to the extent of the Zoo’s involvement in conservation projects in this part of the world.

### **“Oceania” Pavilion**

The reinvented Oceania Pavilion will focus not just on Indo-Malayan species but also on other important areas of the South Pacific. This area will showcase the uniqueness of island flora and fauna, and will demonstrate the richness of these global biodiversity “hotspots”, including Komodo dragon and key species relocated from the existing Australasia Pavilion.

### **“Rhino Ridge”**

The existing Rhino habitat will be expanded to include more area, as well as a family of Asian small-clawed otters as part of a mixed species exhibit.

### **“Gorilla Forest”**

The existing exterior Gorilla habitat will be redeveloped and expanded to provide an extensive landscape that offers choice, retreat and stimulation for the Zoo’s resident family.

### **“Pridelands”**

This area was renovated and expanded in 1998 and continues to work well for visitors in the summer months when animals are outside and the Simba Safari lodge is open.

Proposed improvements include:

- Development of a major mixed species savanna through the consolidation of several single-species habitats. The species would include white rhinos, gazelle, zebra and younger male giraffe that are extraneous to the family herd. Concurrent with this redevelopment is the expansion of back-of-house holding area to enable superior care, especially during the winter.
- Expansion of the cheetah habitat to provide space for demonstrating more natural behaviours.

- Expansion of the lion habitat to allow for a large social pride, as well as a bachelor group, and rotational space for hyaena.
- Development of an indoor-outdoor habitat for hippos and visitors with underwater viewing and rotational shared grazing area with the giraffe herd.
- Establishment of giraffe and lion areas as mid-winter end-point destinations to shrink the space that visitors believe is open – only to discover that there are no animals in the habitats and nothing is open.



Mixed Species Habitat, Emmen Zoo

## WILDERNESS NORTH

### “Tundra Trek”, “Canadian Wilderness” & “Asian Highlands”

With the new Strategic Plan focusing on Canadian Species, the Toronto Zoo is launching Wilderness North Experience to enable more visitors to experience the vast diversity of species in their habitats native to Canada.

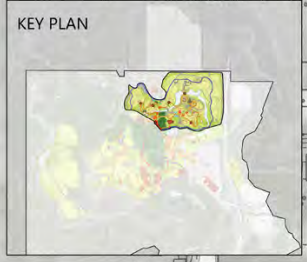
The northern portion of the Zoo will be renovated to accommodate the experience of all of the Canadian animals with a special subset that showcases comparative animals from the highlands of the Himalayas and Manchuria. Most of these animals will be supremely adapted to the Toronto climate and thus, the exhibits will be focused on the outdoors with warming structures to enable year-round use by visitors.

These separate destinations will be redeveloped as a coherent immersive experience that focuses on Canadian animals and their vulnerable counterparts from comparable boreal and high latitude/altitude regions of the Northern Hemisphere.

Proposed improvements include:

- Expansion of “Tundra Trek” to include more room for northern herd animals.
- Development of a Bear Centre that includes space for grizzlies and provides for greatly expanded space for the Polar bear by virtue of rotational exhibits and expanded holding for males.
- Drawing upon the CLR Plan for the “Canadian Wilderness”, the former Eurasia area will be redeveloped to provide a denser, more visitor-friendly/animal welfare-focused home for the Zoo’s Canadian, Manchurian and Himalayan species. There will be an additional weather-sheltered structure created that highlights the region’s smaller species and celebrates the Zoo’s conservation work on behalf of Northern species.
- Conservation herds will be maintained on the far side of the ponds, providing a rich visual backdrop, as well as an area for the Zoomobile tour and special excursion tours to encounter herds of animals.
- The purpose of the new ‘Canada Pavilion’ will be to draw attention to Canada’s species at risk and highlight the many current and future conservation programs the Toronto Zoo is undertaking, with various strategic partners, to save these species. Some examples of these programs include many excellent cooperative efforts on the breeding and release of such species as the black-footed ferret, Blanding’s turtle, Oregon spotted frog, Atlantic salmon, and eastern loggerhead shrike. With ever-changing and increasing threats to Canadian species, the focus of these programs will change and evolve to address needs as they arise.



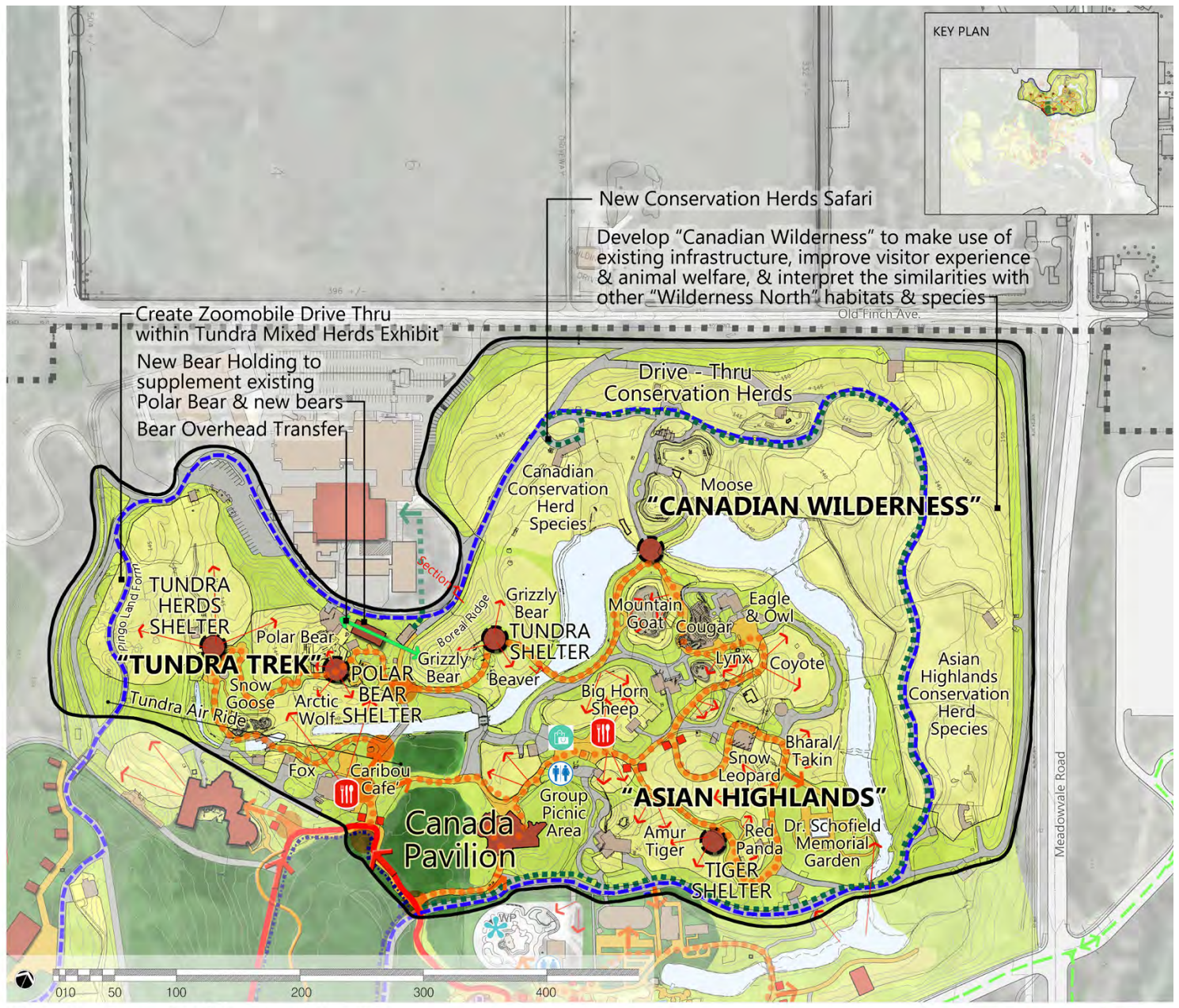


**LEGEND**

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- VISITOR AMENITIES**
- Water Play Area
  - Play Area
  - Washrooms
  - Food
  - Retail



**Master Plan - "Wilderness North"**  
Toronto Zoo Master Plan

November 2016



FIGURE 10