

Ravine Strategy Implementation Update

Date: May 10, 2022

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

From: General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation

Wards: All

SUMMARY

The Ravine Strategy (the "Strategy") presents an intentional and coordinated framework, vision and approach to management of Toronto's greatest natural resource through a series of 20 actions under the five guiding principles: Protect, Invest, Connect, Partner, and Celebrate. These actions aim to guide the management of the ravines and ensure the protection and stewardship of these irreplaceable lands is balanced with the city's growth and evolution, so that they continue to function and flourish for the next 100 years and beyond.

Toronto's ravines have significant ecological value, are places where people seek active and passive recreation, house critical grey and green infrastructure, and contribute significantly to the resilience of the city. They contribute \$822 million in ecological and recreational services annually.

The City, in conjunction with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and many external organizations, has taken significant steps to strategically advance the Ravine Strategy in the last two years, through operating funds to support invasive species management, litter picking, student internships, community engagement, Indigenous reconciliation through access to land and water programming, and capital investment to improve access to ravines, such as new or enhanced multi-use trails, and mitigate erosion and stabilize watercourses to protect watermains, stormwater infrastructure and sewers. Critical support through provincial and federal funding programs has augmented the City's investment in its ravine system.

This report provides the first three-year update to City Council on advancement of the Ravine Strategy and an update on the implementation of key next steps including:

- Accomplishments towards the Ravine Strategy guiding principles and actions, and achievements to date in ravine restoration and management, and capital coordination and delivery
- The strategic advancement of Toronto's Ravine Campaign, including the Loop Trail, InTO the Ravines, and recommendations for the Ravine Campaign Leadership Table

- Supporting Indigenous reconciliation through opportunities to connect to land and water through the Lodge at the Humber River, Memtigwaake Kinomaage Maawnjiding
- A multi-pronged approach to address litter and dumping in ravines that complements enforcement efforts with the City's ravine litter picking crew and community engagement initiatives

Since 2020, the Ravine Strategy has achieved:

- 720 hectares of land managed for invasive species
- 252 tonnes garbage and metal removed from 333 hectares of ravine land
- 42 students engaged through paid employment and training and mentorship programs
- 96 outdoor and virtual events for Ravine Days
- more than 6,200 participants in in-person and virtual City and partner events and programs
- \$47.9 million from partners (committed and submitted applications) from the federal and provincial governments

In 2022, the City plans to invest \$118.1 million in Toronto's ravine system through \$12.6 million in the 2022 Council Approved Operating Budget for Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) and \$105.5 million in the 2022 Council Approved Capital Budget across a variety of City divisions including PFR, Transportation Services and Toronto Water as well as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

Looking ahead, the City will continue its work to protect, maintain, and improve Toronto's ravine system to preserve its irreplaceable ecological functions so that all residents and visitors can connect with and celebrate these special places. The care and enhancement of Toronto's ravines and the success of the Ravine Strategy requires the City, individuals and organizations to work together in meaningful and sustainable ways. In this context, the continued support of external partners and engaged residents, as well as the ongoing leadership and support of multiple City Divisions is key to achieve this goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to explore a potential collaboration with Toronto Foundation to advance Ravine Strategy projects and goals, as described in Section 3 of the report (May 10, 2022) from the General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation, and to negotiate and sign on behalf of the City any required agreement on terms and conditions acceptable to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to negotiate and sign on behalf of the City the appropriate agreements with

Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig, Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying - ENAGB Youth Program regarding the Indigenous placemaking and placekeeping initiative in the Humber River Valley as described in Section 4 of the report (May 10, 2022) from the General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation, on terms and conditions acceptable to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The 2022 Budget includes \$118.1 million towards Toronto's ravine system through \$12.6 million in the 2022 Council Approved Operating Budget for PFR and \$105.5 million in the 2022 Council Approved Capital Budget across a variety of City divisions including PFR, Transportation Services and Toronto Water as well as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

The 2022 Council Approved Operating Budget for Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) includes \$12.6 million for activities in ravines, including specific funding to support the Ravine Strategy through:

- inTO the Ravines program–Park People: \$0.1 million, micro-grants to support community ravine leaders and engagement events
- Indigenous Engagement: \$0.1 million, to support greater participation in Ravine Strategy implementation
- Litter Picking: \$0.7 million
- Invasive Species & Volunteer Stewardship: \$1.5 million
- Student Internships: \$0.1 million, to support the Youth Ravine Team and Young Ravine Leaders programs

The 2022 Council Approved Operating Budget for PFR also includes a new net investment of \$0.4 million to advance the PFR Reconciliation and Indigenous Placemaking Work Program, which will have a positive impact on Indigenous communities, by increasing Indigenous access to and use of land including parks and ravines and by ensuring deeper Indigenous participation in the planning and construction of new parks, trails, and community recreation facilities. This investment, which is a component of the Reconciliation Action Plan, supports SafeTO Plan and the Ravine Strategy.

The 2022- 2031 Council Approved Capital Budget and Plan for PFR includes:

- \$0.5 million (\$5.0 million total over ten years) funded from Debt and Section 42 Parkland Dedication Cash-in-lieu Reserve Funds, through the City Wide Environmental Initiatives Program for Environmentally Significant Area planning and inventory and trail improvements in ravines.
- Capital funding also incorporates temporary staff positions that will coordinate the delivery of the capital projects funded through the various federal grants.
- \$5.6 million carry forward of the \$6.2 million cash flow funding from the 2021 Council Approved Capital Budget, for eight projects to be fully reimbursed by federal and provincial governments through Investing in Canada Infrastructure

Program (ICIP) COVID-19 Resilience Fund. One of the eight projects, Rowntree Mills Park (Humber River Recreational Trail) was completed in 2021.

- \$10.6 million total over 2022-2023 for ravine, waterfront and environmental work under the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF), with \$4.8 million total over 2022- 2023 to be reimbursed by the federal government.

The City has commitments and submitted applications for a total of \$47.9 million from the federal and provincial governments to support implementation of the Ravine Strategy through:

- Committed funding of \$6.2 million from the federal and provincial ICIP COVID-19 Resilience Fund, as noted above, for eight projects to be completed by December 31, 2023. A contribution agreement is being finalized.
- \$11.9 million from federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) for ravine, waterfront and environmental work to be completed by March 31, 2028. A contribution agreement has been signed.
- An application for \$20.0 million from the federal Natural Infrastructure Fund for five projects to be completed by March 31, 2024. The application was submitted in December 2021 and is under review by the federal government.
- An application for \$0.3 million from the federal Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund for one project to be completed by March 31, 2025. The application was submitted in January 2022 and is under review by the federal government.
- \$9.5 million for three ravine-based projects as part of the application for the federal Active Transportation Fund to be completed by March 31, 2026. The application was submitted in March 2022 and is under review by the federal government.

Once the City has received the federal and provincial commitment of \$47.9 million, \$148.5 million in further currently identified investments over ten years (or \$35.5 million over five years) is required. This includes \$99.4 million unfunded capital need specific to the ten Council Approved Ravine Strategy Priority Investment Areas identified in the 10-Year Capital Budget and Plan as Capital Needs Constraints.

Staff will continue to identify funding opportunities through federal and provincial programs and explore potential partnership with philanthropic partners and corporate sponsorships to raise external funds in advancing Ravine Strategy projects and goals.

Annual financial impacts and additional investments, including funding options, to continue implementation of the Ravine Strategy will be submitted for consideration as part of the future year budget processes

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as identified in the Financial Impact section.

RECONCILIATION AND EQUITY IMPACT

The City of Toronto values social equity and inclusion and aims to improve the quality of life for residents through the provision of a ravine system that is welcoming and accessible.

Even a modest increase in access to good quality greenspace has been proven to improve the health of residents. Evidence suggests that the health benefits of greenspace in areas near vulnerable populations, including those living on low incomes, racialized and Indigenous groups and seniors, are more pronounced.

The City of Toronto is committed to reducing barriers and ensuring equitable, safe access to ravines for all Toronto residents, through engagement programs, such as InTO the Ravines, and the Ravine Strategy's Priority Investment Areas. The City is also committed to incorporating both western and Indigenous knowledge in protecting and reimagining our ravines and will continue to identify opportunities to create authentic and ongoing relationships with Indigenous communities.

The actions outlined in this report, in particular for Memtigwaake Kinomaage Maawnjiding, demonstrate the City of Toronto's commitment to implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan. Memtigwaake Kinomaage Maawnjiding is a step toward developing with Indigenous communities a strategy that provides increased access to land and waters as well as a framework for co-management agreements between the City and Indigenous partners and other authorities and governments that have jurisdiction over waterfront and ravine areas.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of May 25, 2021, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee received IE22.4, Increasing Engagement in Ravines through Partnerships, and directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to increase engagement with the City's residents associations and Indigenous organizations interested in ravine stewardship and report back on progress.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.IE22.4>

At its meeting on September 30, 2020, City Council considered MM24.5, Exploring Indigenous Economic Opportunities in Toronto's Ravines, and directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the Director, Indigenous Affairs Office to provide an update on the status of the Ravine Campaign Leadership Table including a pathway for Indigenous representative.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.MM24.5>

At its meeting on January 29, 2020, City Council adopted the key next steps to implement the Ravine Strategy over the next ten years and directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, the General Manager, Toronto Water and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority report every three years on the advancement of the

Ravine Strategy's actions. City Council also directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards and the City Solicitor, in consultation with applicable agencies and divisions, to report on the opportunity and actions necessary to seek increased fines related to all offences pertaining to littering and dumping of refuse in ravines.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX12.1>

At its meeting on October 2, 3, and 4, 2017, City Council adopted the Draft Toronto Ravine Strategy.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX27.8>

COMMENTS

The Comments section of this report is organized as follows:

1. Background
2. Ravine Strategy Coordination and Collaboration
3. Ravine Strategy Achievements
4. Toronto Ravine Campaign
5. Supporting Reconciliation in the Humber River Valley
6. A Multi-pronged Approach to Litter and Dumping in Ravines
7. Conclusion

1. Background

Toronto's ravine system is part of the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

The ravines extend over 300 kilometers and cover 11,000 hectares, or 17 per cent of Toronto's land area. Over half (5700 hectares) of ravine system land is publicly owned parkland. This includes over 1100 hectares within Rouge National Urban Park, under Parks Canada jurisdiction. The remaining 40 per cent is owned by a patchwork of landowners, including public institutions and private property owners, and includes approximately 30,000 private addresses.

Ravines are important natural refuges in the city, containing forests, wetlands, floodplains, and many varieties of plants and animals, including 87 per cent of Toronto's Environmentally Significant Areas. They support biodiversity and provide essential habitat for wildlife, including globally important flyways for migrating birds.

Ravines are a major part of Toronto's grey and green infrastructure, required to support a climate resilient city. While they filter and convey stormwater and house a massive portion of Toronto's tree canopy, they also contain the city's critical grey infrastructure, such as utilities, sewer lines, trails, roads and transit that help to move people through and across the city.

Ravines also provide a critical opportunity to connect people in the city with nature. Approximately 30 per cent of Toronto's population lives within 500 meters of ravines, and some areas in close proximity to ravines will see considerable population growth in the coming years, such as Don Mills and Eglinton, the Lower Don, and more. Ravines play a vital role in connecting people with nature and provide essential access to urban greenspace and opportunities for passive and active recreation which contributes to the physical and mental health and well-being of residents. They offer unique tourism destinations, attracting visitors from across the region and elsewhere. Toronto's ravines provide \$822 million in services every year including ecological benefits, nature-based recreation, avoided health care costs due to inactivity and reduced rates of depression.

In October 2017, City Council adopted the Toronto Ravine Strategy which provides a long-term, system-based approach to protecting and managing the City's immense ravine system. Through a series of 20 actions under five guiding principles: Protect, Invest, Connect, Partner, and Celebrate, the Strategy guides the management of the ravines and ensures the protection of these irreplaceable lands is balanced with their use and enjoyment, so that they continue to bring nature to people and flourish for the next 100 years and beyond. In January 2020, City Council adopted the key next steps to implement the Ravine Strategy over the next ten years and directed staff to report every three years on the advancement of the Ravine Strategy's actions.

On May 25, 2021, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee 2021 received an update on the new and enhanced initiatives since January 2020 to increase engagement in ravines. The report outlined how the implementation of the Ravine Strategy is creating additional and more diverse opportunities for individuals and organizations to contribute to Toronto's ravines in meaningful and sustainable ways through student internships, economic opportunities for Indigenous businesses, new stewardship programs and fostering key partnerships and third-party collaborations to invest in the ravines.

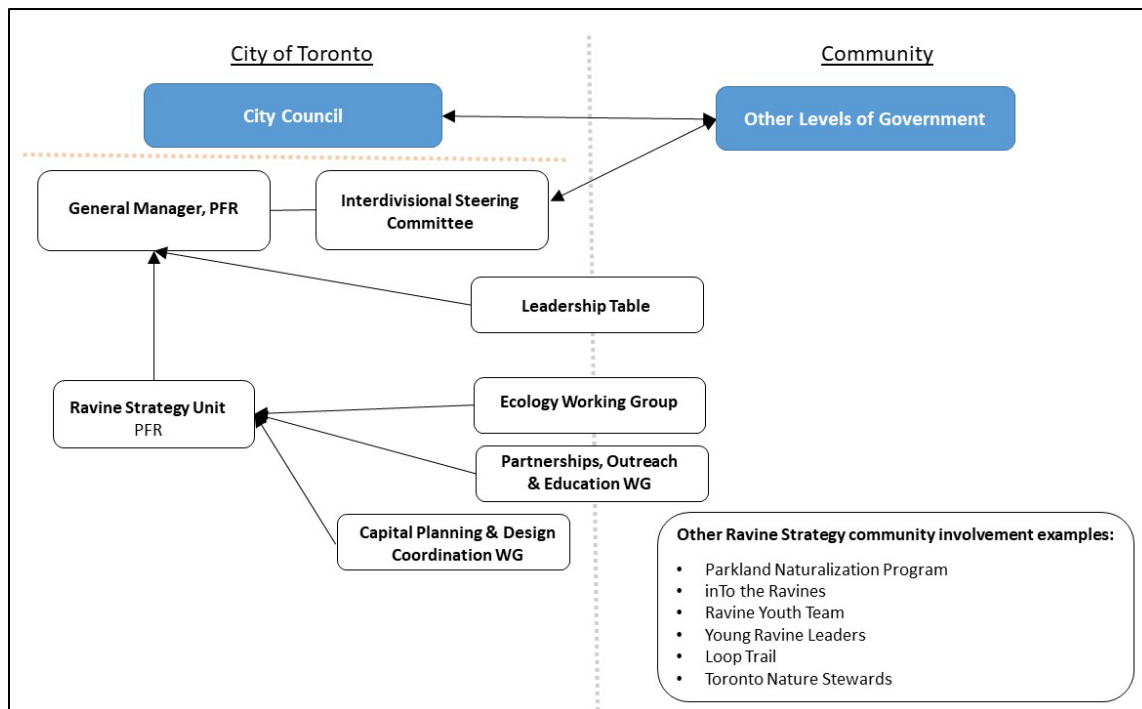
2. Ravine Strategy Coordination and Collaboration

The Ravine Strategy presents a long-term, system-based approach to protecting and managing the City's immense ravine system. The implementation of a long-term strategy requires a strong framework to provide key input, oversight and accountability, as outlined in Figure 1. This ensures that work is planned and delivered in a manner that is coordinated and collaborative. Recognizing that the City and the TRCA cannot implement the Ravine Strategy alone, interdivisional, multi-government and key external partnerships have been leveraged in the first three years to significantly advance Ravine Strategy actions and deliverables.

The City continues to improve coordination and collaboration for the benefit of Toronto's ravines through three key working groups: the Capital Planning and Design Coordination Working Group, the Ecosystem Services Working Group and the Partnerships, Outreach and Education Working Group originally identified in the Strategy and the 2017 staff report. The Capital Planning and Design Coordination Working Group serve as a vehicle to move toward greater alignment between City Divisions, as well as coordinated budget requests and funding applications to the federal and provincial governments. The improved coordination of capital projects has

leveraged investments and resources to maximize delivery of infrastructure, while minimizing construction impacts on the natural environment, park access, use and enjoyment. The Ecosystem Services Working Group has been initiated with membership from academic institutions, TRCA, and Parks Canada to identify research needs on matters relating to the management, ecology, restoration, and human use and interaction with natural spaces in Toronto. While programming and event delivery have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, a very successful 2021 Ravine Days program of virtual and in-person events, supported by many community organizations was launched through the Partnerships, Outreach and Education Working Group.

Figure 1. Overview of Ravine Strategy Input and Accountability Framework



Strong and creative collaborations have been critical to achieving the vision and objectives of the Ravine Strategy to date. In addition to the coordination and collaboration through the working groups, the City has invited a broad spirit of partnership with community champions, not-for-profit and charitable organizations, Indigenous communities, the provincial and federal governments, philanthropists and residents. This has expanded and accelerated the City’s work to implement the Ravine Strategy, resulting in significant achievements.

3. Ravine Strategy Achievements

The City has taken significant steps to advance the goals and deliverables of the Ravine Strategy in the last two years, through operating funds to support invasive species management, litter picking, youth internships, community engagement, and Indigenous reconciliation (through access to land and water programming) and capital investment to improve access to ravines, such as new or enhanced multi-use trails, and mitigate

erosion and stabilize watercourses to protect watermains, stormwater infrastructure and sewers. Much of this work has been undertaken in collaboration with other organizations in the spirit of the Ravine Strategy's 'Partner' principle.

Since 2020, the Ravine Strategy has achieved:

- 720 hectares of land managed for invasive species
- 252 tonnes garbage and metal removed from 333 hectares of ravine land
- 42 students engaged through student internship training and mentorship programs
- 96 outdoor and virtual events for Ravine Days
- more than 6,200 participants in in-person and virtual City and partner events and programs
- \$47.9 million from partners (committed and submitted applications) from the federal and provincial governments

In 2022, the City is planning to invest \$118.1 million in Toronto's Ravine Strategy through \$12.6 million in the 2022 Council Approved Operating Budget for PFR and \$105.5 million in the 2022 Council Approved Capital Budget across a variety of City divisions including PFR, Transportation Services and Toronto Water as well as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

An overview of key achievements is presented below. Additional details on the achievements to date under the five Guiding Principles can be found in Attachment 1: Ravine Strategy Achievements by Guiding Principle.

Invasive Species Management and Ravine Restoration

Invasive species pose a serious threat to the ecological health of Toronto's ravines. Management of invasive exotic species is a concern worldwide and a struggle for all cities, even rural and remote areas, across North America. The city's natural areas and ravines include multiple invasive plant species, and ongoing disturbance by human activity, as well as the changing climate, create conditions for invasive plants to thrive and spread.

Since 2020, the City has enhanced restoration and invasive species management by staff, contractors and volunteers through additional annual investments in the PFR Operating Budget. In the last two years, this has resulted in 720 hectares of land being managed for invasive species. This work is focussed on the most sensitive natural areas, such as the Environmentally Significant Areas, and managing invasive species such as dog-strangling vine, Japanese knotweed, garlic mustard, Norway maple, buckthorn and others through a variety of methods. Further, the City and the TRCA plant more than 100,000 trees, shrubs and native plants each year in Toronto's ravines through the efforts of staff, contractors and volunteers.

When people are engaged in Toronto's ravines, they can be inspired to take responsibility for the natural environment and become involved in affecting positive change. Every year, PFR engages over 3,500 volunteers in over 200 events through Urban Forestry's Parkland Naturalization Program. In 2020 and 2021, provincial and municipal COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines impacted the program through in-person event cancellations and capacity limits. Despite this, the program still engaged

more than 700 volunteers in 127 events to help restore Toronto's ravines and natural areas, plant over 6,500 native trees shrubs and wildflowers, and steward over six hectares of natural parkland.

In 2021, a pilot program was launched with Toronto Nature Stewards, following City Council direction to use their Manual for Stewardship in Public Ravines and Natural Areas as a model for unsupervised volunteerism in Toronto's ravines. Through the development of key criteria for site selection, work activities, and health and safety considerations, Toronto Nature Stewards delivered a successful program in its inaugural year through the reporting of robust key performance indicators. At the time of writing this report, PFR and TNS are planning for a significant expansion of the program for the 2022 season.

Student Internships

Engaging youth in Toronto's ravine systems is critical to the present and future health of the ravines. It is important for youth to be connected to nature and have access to opportunities to learn, train and explore careers in the field of ecology, land management and environmental studies.

The Ravine Youth Team, a partnership program between PFR and TRCA, has engaged 18 post-secondary students with paid summer employment over the past two years. The youth participated in litter clean-ups, invasive species management, planting, maintenance of newly planted sites, and ecological monitoring. A total of 35 hectares of ravine land was improved through direct work and contributions of the Ravine Youth Team.

The Young Ravine Leaders program, a partnership between PFR and LEAF, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting urban forests, provided free ravine-focussed mentorship and training to 24 youth last year. This program has a focus to support Toronto youth from underrepresented groups within arboriculture and urban forestry, including but not limited to women, non-binary people, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, 2SLGBTQ+ people and racialized individuals and prioritizes the selection of youth from Neighborhood Improvement Areas. The program provided opportunities to learn about the Ravine Strategy, challenges and management of Toronto's ravine system, and careers and pathways to employment in the sector and the chance to build connections with their peers, as well as guest lectures with ravine leaders and experts through virtual training sessions and an outdoor tour.

The City and its partners will continue to explore opportunities in 2022 to diversify connection to employment and career opportunities and pathways to training and education in ravines and the natural environment.

Ravine Litter Picking

Litter and illegal dumping can harm ravines and natural areas by smothering vegetation and damaging wildlife habitat. The appearance of litter not only facilitates a general lack of respect for natural areas but it discourages residents from entering and enjoying the ravines.

The City established a dedicated ravine litter picking program in 2020, and in the last two years, this has resulted in the collection of 252 tonnes garbage and metal from 333 hectares of ravine land. This program compliments the multi-pronged approach to addressing litter in parks and ravines, and more details are outlined in Section 6 of this report.

Capital Investments across the Ravines and Priority Investment Areas

Multiple City divisions, TRCA, other partner organizations, along with other levels of government invest millions annually to protect and improve natural areas and infrastructure within the ravine system and provide opportunities to connect people to ravines. This year, the City plans to invest \$118.1 million in Toronto's ravine system through \$12.6 million in the 2022 Council Approved Operating Budget for PFR and \$105.5 million in the 2022 Council Approved Capital Budget across a variety of City divisions including PFR, Transportation Services and Toronto Water as well as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. This high-level estimate of investment will support the principles and actions of the Ravine Strategy and will implement projects across the ravine system that will increase climate resilience, improve safe and sustainable access to ravines, restore ecological health and function, and engage communities.

The 2020 Implementation Report identified a \$104.9 million high-level estimate of investment need that would not be met through the existing planned investment across Divisions in the first ten Priority Investment Areas (PIAs) for a variety of projects for resilience, access improvements and natural restoration. The PIAs were identified using a Council-approved Ravine Strategy Prioritization Framework that identified areas with:

- existing high ecological value
- substantial existing or planned infrastructure that needs to be maintained, repaired, protected from erosion or upgraded
- anticipated adjacent population growth
- high levels of existing use
- surrounding areas of high need, such as Neighbourhood Investment Areas, and lower levels of existing access to greenspace, transit and walkable spaces.

The City is working toward addressing this investment need through identifying efficiencies and opportunities for integration of capital projects across Divisions through the Capital Planning and Design Coordination Working Group, as well as through annual budget submissions, intergovernmental funding programs, and philanthropy.

In the last two years, the City has invested \$5.5 million towards the Ravine Strategy, reducing the investment need to \$99.4 million. This included an increase to the 2021-2030 PFR Capital Budget and Plan by City Council in 2021 by \$0.5 million for the Capital Asset Management Programs (State of Good Repair) Trails, Pathways, Bridges capital sub-project for the purposes of advancing the implementation of the Ravine Strategy to support the enhancement of existing trails and pathways and user experience of Toronto's ravine system.

Recognizing that multi-government support is crucial to achieving common goals of climate resiliency, protecting biodiversity, connecting people with nature and strengthening partnerships with Indigenous peoples, City Council directed staff to seek intergovernmental funding for the Ravine Strategy through the 2020 Ravine Strategy Implementation Report.

Under the leadership of Toronto's Ravine Advocate, Councillor McKelvie, the City has commitments and submitted applications for a total of \$47.9 million from the federal and provincial governments to support implementation of the Ravine Strategy through:

- \$11.9 million from federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) for ravine, waterfront and environmental work to be completed by March 31, 2028. A contribution agreement has been signed.
- Committed funding of \$6.2 million from the federal and provincial ICIP COVID-19 Resilience Fund for eight projects to be completed by December 31, 2023. A contribution agreement is being finalized.
- An application for \$20.0 million from the federal Natural Infrastructure Fund for five projects to be completed by March 31, 2024. The application was submitted in December 2021 and is under review by the federal government.
- An application for \$0.3 million from the federal Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund for one project to be completed by March 31, 2025. The application was submitted in January 2022 and is under review by the federal government.
- \$9.5 million for three ravine-based projects as part of the application for the federal Active Transportation Fund to be completed by March 31, 2026. The application was submitted in March 2022 and is under review by the federal government.

Once the City has received the federal and provincial commitment of \$47.9 million, \$148.5 million over ten years (or \$35.5 million over five years) remains of currently identified Ravine Strategy unfunded projects across Toronto's ravine system. This figure includes the remaining \$99.4 million specific to the first ten Ravine Strategy Priority Investment Areas in the 10-Year Capital Budget and Plan. Looking ahead, the additional capital investments required to support and enhance Ravine Strategy projects, including funding options, will be reviewed, evaluated, estimated and submitted for consideration as part of the future year budget processes.

4. Toronto's Ravine Campaign

The Ravine Strategy Implementation staff report adopted by City Council in January 2020 identified that a philanthropic Ravine Campaign would serve to raise awareness and generate additional funds to protect, maintain and improve Toronto's ravine system. With the scale of required investment, diversity of potential projects, and number of partners in ravines, the campaign requires a coordinated, multi-faceted approach. The Ravine Campaign will build the relationships and generate the bold ideas necessary to unlock philanthropic support for the Ravine Strategy. This campaign is the first of its kind for Toronto's ravines and with it will bring the added flexibility required to pursue new initiatives and innovations. Two initial projects have already begun, as part of the Ravine Campaign: the Loop Trail project and the 'InTO Ravines: Nature at your doorstep' Community Engagement Program.

The Loop Trail

The Loop Trail, a collaboration between the City, Toronto-based national charity Evergreen, and the TRCA, is the first major activation and fundraising initiative to advance actions in the Ravine Strategy. The Loop Trail seeks to create a continuous, 65 kilometre off-road, multi-use ring trail, knitting together five Ravine Priority Investment Areas, 17 Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, the Humber River and Don River ravine systems, the Waterfront and neighbourhoods along the Finch corridor. It also connects to and supports the Meadoway, the continuous multi-use trail and meadow restoration project that will ultimately link downtown to the Rouge National Urban Park.

The Loop Trail is mobilizing municipal, regional, public and philanthropic energy to close trail gaps and enhance trail amenities to create a seamless trail loop, as well as create opportunities for ravine engagement, education and connections with nature at hubs along the trail.

Since the Loop Trail was proposed in the Ravine Strategy Implementation staff report in January 2020, the City of Toronto, Evergreen and the TRCA have formalized the collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding and identified and scoped trail gaps and enhancements, as well as potential programming and activation for hubs that will bring the Loop Trail to life. In 2021, Evergreen published a family-focused Ravine Activity Guide distributed online and in print to hundreds of families in the Thorncliffe Park and Flemingdon Park neighbourhoods. Evergreen anticipates to pilot in-person community engagement and activation in 2022, including a visioning workshop. The City, led by Transportation Services, is also working toward filling 3.4 kilometres of gaps in the Loop Trail in 2022 through trail study, design or construction at three locations.

PFR has supported this work through reallocation of funding raised by Evergreen for the 2015 - 2020 City-Evergreen Lower Don partnership (a portion of the Loop Trail will include the Lower Don). Additional funding is planned to further advance this work through a portion of the City of Toronto's \$20 million application for the Ravine Strategy to the Federal Natural Infrastructure Fund (application under review by Infrastructure Canada).

InTO the Ravines

To amplify existing engagement opportunities, the City of Toronto and Toronto-based national charity, Park People, launched a two-year pilot program in 2020 to connect the people of Toronto to the city's rich ravine system through public education opportunities, community-led programming and micro-grants, with a focus on people who have not visited ravines before or who experience barriers in accessing ravines, including those in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas and Ravine Strategy Priority Investment Areas.

Over the last two years, InTO the Ravines has directly engaged over 2,700 people, through community-led events organized by InTO the Ravines "Ravine Champions" and microgrants, as well as self-directed and virtual events such as customized maps for local exploration, a Black history month commentary, and a Forest Therapy event with an Indigenous teacher. Despite the challenges of launching a community engagement program during the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, InTO the Ravines has

successfully fostered the development of a deeper understanding of ravine ecology, Indigenous knowledge and the connection between nature and health, emphasized the guiding principles of the Ravine Strategy, and built the foundation for a long-term sense of connection and care for the city's ravines with Toronto residents.

At its meeting of May 11, 2022, City Council authorized the General Manager, PFR to extend the InTO the Ravines Program through 2022 with the option to further extend the program for up to three additional years.

The Meadoway

TRCA and Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation (TRCF) also work to raise funds through signature events, corporate sponsorship, other levels of government and philanthropic investment to support TRCA and its partner municipalities' shared environmental initiatives throughout their jurisdiction (which includes York, Peel and Durham Regions and Dufferin County), including millions of dollars included in the holistic capital investment across Divisions in Toronto's ravines. They collaborate directly with communities on important conservation campaigns and sustainability projects with a focus on stewardship of Tommy Thompson Park, restoration and maintenance of Black Creek Pioneer Village heritage assets, and The Meadoway.

The Weston Foundation has worked with TRCA and through the TRCF has pledged up to \$25 million to help realize The Meadoway as a vibrant expanse of urban greenspace and meadowlands that connects four ravines in the east end of Toronto. PFR has supported this work through portions of the multi-government support for the Ravine Strategy, including the ICIP COVID-19 Resilience Fund (approved) and the Natural Infrastructure Fund.

Next Steps for the Ravine Campaign

Across Canada and around the world, there is an intensifying interest in philanthropists investing in parks and the public realm to achieve better outcomes for residents, the environment and the city as a whole. Private funding through philanthropy and corporate sponsorships, as has started through the Loop Trail and InTO the Ravines, can build on investments from the City and provincial and federal governments, enhance parks and park assets, and further facilitate activation and engagement. Harnessing this philanthropic energy will help fully realize the principles and actions of the Ravine Strategy.

Fundraising for public spaces is still in its infancy in Canada. A campaign of this magnitude and complexity led by the City will be the first of its kind for Toronto's ravines, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the City. Further, the City of Toronto would be among the few cities in the country to undertake a philanthropic initiative of this magnitude and, possibly the largest campaign envisioned.

To ensure this work is undertaken in an informed and thoughtful way, the City retained leading fundraising advisors and strategists, KCI Philanthropy, to provide advice on development of the campaign. A review of the philanthropy landscape, internal staff capacity, and connections with the philanthropic community, including interviews with philanthropists and charitable partner organizations, preliminarily identified:

- a strong interest in support for Toronto's ravines and the Ravine Strategy
- a need for the City to take a lead role in a Ravine Campaign, based on its role in managing the land and the critical infrastructure in ravines
- the "Campaign" to be comprised of a series of separate smaller campaigns based around the capital investment need for the Priority Investment Areas, in addition to the Loop Trail and InTO the Ravines campaigns already launched
- partnerships, resources and internal support are required for Campaign success
- a separate governance structure for philanthropy outside of City of Toronto infrastructure would strengthen donor confidence and enable the attraction of philanthropic support.

Based on these recommendations, staff have initiated discussions to explore a potential collaboration with the registered charity Toronto Foundation to advance the next phase of the Ravine Campaign.

Toronto Foundation plays a critical role in Toronto's philanthropic community. Donors partner with Toronto Foundation for the strategic investment and administrative services it offers, as well as its community insights. Toronto Foundation has developed impactful relationships with many leading Toronto civic organizations, including the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council, the United Way, Philanthropic Foundations Canada, as well as the City of Toronto including the #TorontoStrong Fund and the Rockefeller Foundation-funded 100 Resilient Cities global initiative.

There are opportunities for PFR and Toronto Foundation to work together on advancing Toronto's Ravine Strategy that may also align with and support Toronto Foundation's commitment to the Canadian Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change. Our work together on ravines is a key part of this commitment and a potential model for other cities. Toronto Foundation's core expertise is managing endowment and donor-advised flow-through funds. The long-term nature of these funds aligns with the Ravine Strategy's principles of protecting and investing in Toronto's ravines in perpetuity.

The City of Toronto Act and Official Plan provide authority to establish these kinds of funding collaborations for City Council priorities. The recommendation through this report to explore a potential collaboration with Toronto Foundation would give the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, authority on behalf of the City to collaborate with Toronto Foundation to support the Ravine Strategy in mutually beneficial ways. Additional reports to City Council may be required based on Campaign progress, such as Donation Acceptance Reports under the Donations to the City of Toronto for Community Benefit Policy.

Ravine Campaign Leadership Table

The 2020 Ravine Strategy Implementation Report envisioned a Ravine Campaign Leadership Table, comprised of influential and passionate leaders, to act as an advisory body to provide insight on matching philanthropic resources with projects that address climate resiliency, access to nature and improving infrastructure.

Staff are building on the insights of KCI Philanthropy's recommendation to create a Leadership Table of invited participants including elected officials, philanthropists and

Indigenous representative(s) to participate in a series of facilitated engagements to provide guidance and test assumptions around projects attractive to philanthropy (categories, targets, narrative) to shape Ravine Campaign goals for future sequenced campaigns. In coordination with existing campaign outreach, invitations for the Ravine Campaign Leadership Table will commence in spring 2022.

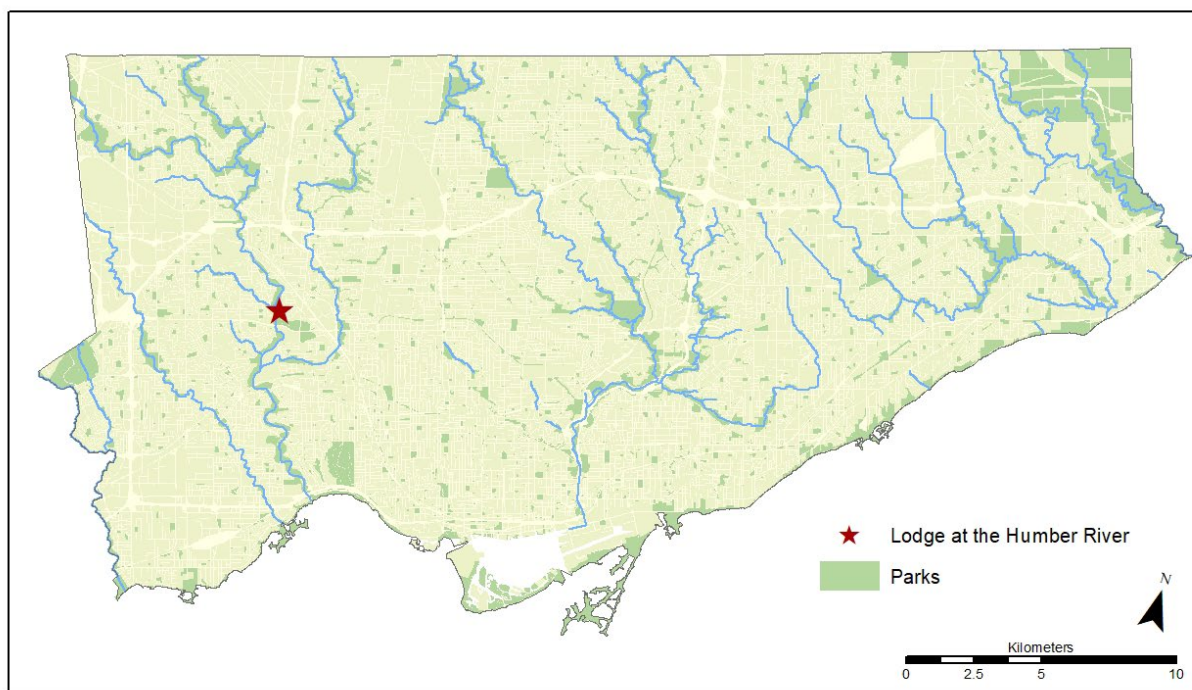
5. Supporting Reconciliation in the Humber River Valley

Toronto's ravine system provides significant placemaking and placekeeping opportunities to reflect the integral connection that continues today between Indigenous communities and Toronto's natural spaces and waterways. Indigenous placemaking and placekeeping, including the components of the Ravine Strategy that supports this work, are important steps towards Indigenous self-determination, improved health and community well-being, access to ceremonial space and connection to economic opportunities.

Through the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), adopted by City Council in April 2022, the City acknowledged the importance of Indigenous placemaking and placekeeping in creating and nurturing space for ceremony, teaching and community; strengthening Indigenous connections with lands and waters; and building cultural competency and capacity for land-based Indigenous engagement, as well as the inherent right for Indigenous communities to lead and deliver initiatives that are for and about Indigenous People. Through the RAP, the City committed to engaging Indigenous Nations, communities and community leaders in the co-development of protocols, practices, and agreements surrounding Indigenous use of and access to land and water within the City of Toronto.

The Lodge at the Humber River, Memtigwaake Kinomaage Maawnjiding, located in the ravine along the Humber River near Eglinton Avenue West in the Mount Dennis neighbourhood as outlined in Figure 2, is a place that enables Indigenous communities to practice traditions and customs associated with their heritage and cultures, including storytelling used in part to connect Elders with youth and to reconnect people to the land. The Lodge has facilitated the partnership of different Indigenous communities by giving them a place to celebrate, heal, gather and unite and has provided a gathering place to support land stewardship events in the area using traditional knowledge. Many ceremonies and events have been held in the Lodge since it was constructed in the fall of 2020.

Figure 2. Location of the Lodge at the Humber River



Staff are seeking authority to negotiate and sign on behalf of the City the appropriate agreements with ENAGB Youth Program (“Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig - A Place for Healing Our Youth” – “Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying – Where Did We Come From?”) to expand the current area of use for the Lodge and associated land and to explore opportunities for co-management of spaces developed in partnership between the City and Indigenous partners. This supports and aligns with the Reconciliation Action Plan which identified as a key deliverable to engage with Indigenous communities to develop a strategy that provides increased access to land and waters as well as a framework for co-management agreements between the City and Indigenous partners and other authorities and governments that have jurisdiction over waterfront and ravine areas.

ENAGB is an Indigenous-led Toronto-based registered charity that focuses on providing cultural, employment, life skills, holistic wellness and recreational opportunities to Indigenous youth ages 12-29. Programming is designed through Indigenous youth participation and works to build self-esteem, confidence, skills and self-determination.

This initiative and agreement(s) also supports the Picture Mount Dennis Planning Framework Study (EY29.2) adopted by Etobicoke York Community Council on January 5, 2022. Through extensive community consultation, this study identified and recommended areas for traditional Indigenous traditions or celebrations be including in parks programming and use; support for Indigenous ceremonial usage of the ravines, including working with the Indigenous community and TRCA on a permanent ceremony space on the Humber, with lodge, washroom facilities and parking area; and ensuring an accessible access to the ceremony space for Elders.

Through the co-management agreement(s), the City will support community use of the space by ENAGB and their partners, as well as commit to provide improved site access, washroom facilities and equipment storage structures to support land stewardship, traditional gardening, ceremony and other important cultural activities. This important project will advance the Ravine Strategy and the Reconciliation Action Plan, and is an important early step toward relationship building and Indigenous placemaking and placekeeping that is integral to truth, justice and reconciliation.

6. A Multi-pronged Approach to Litter and Dumping in Ravines

Waste discarded in ravines includes litter left by park visitors such as plastic bottles, coffee cups, wrappers and related items, as well as dumped debris such as tires, shopping carts, propane tanks, household waste, commercial garbage, automotive hazardous waste and other debris. These unwanted materials smother vegetation, damage wildlife habitat, impede waterways and reduce residents' benefit and enjoyment of these natural areas.

Like other North American municipalities, Toronto takes a multi-pronged approach to address illegal dumping and littering in parks and natural areas, including ravines. The combination of enforcement efforts, community education and engagement initiatives, and the expansion of the City's ravine litter picking program, have been increasingly effective in addressing litter and dumping in ravines.

Enforcement Efforts and Related Offences and Fines

Offences related to littering and illegal dumping in ravines can be found under five different chapters of Toronto's Municipal Code:

- Chapter 548 – Littering and Dumping
- Chapter 608 – Parks
- Chapter 658 – Ravine & Natural Feature Protection
- Chapter 841 – Waste Collection, Commercial Properties
- Chapter 844 – Waste Collection, Residential Properties

More details on these bylaws, including set fine amounts, can be found in Attachment 2: City of Toronto Municipal Code Offences & Set Fines for Litter and Dumping in ravines.

When a littering and dumping offence has occurred in a ravine, MLS Bylaw Enforcement Officers may either issue a set fine (Part I offence), which a recipient may choose to pay or dispute by means of a trial, or a Part III Summons, where the recipient must appear before a Justice of the Peace, as the charge cannot be resolved through the payment of a set fine. Set fines are typically used for less serious offences, while Part III summons may be used for more serious offences and/or repeat offenders.

Set fines are available for littering and dumping offences under all Municipal Code chapters listed above, except Chapter 658, Ravine & Natural Feature Protection, and currently range from \$100 to \$500. The City may review and apply to the Province of Ontario to increase set fine amounts (up to maximum of \$1000) at any time.

For cases where a Part III Summons is laid, the fine amount can range from \$500 to \$100,000 under the Chapter listed above, depending on the offence. Under the City of Toronto Act, 2006, the City has authority to establish Part III fines under its bylaws including setting higher fine thresholds (no more than \$100,000), establishing a daily fine for a continuing offence (where the total of all daily fines may exceed \$100,000) and making every director or officer of a corporation liable to a fine in addition to the corporation. To issue a charge, Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) Division must be able to identify a littering or dumping offender. Identification of offenders is particularly challenging in the case of ravine littering and dumping due to the significant geographical scale and remoteness of Toronto's ravine system. Although the Provincial Courts have generally accepted the practice of searching dumped waste for evidence to link the dumped waste to specific individuals, this practice is resource intensive and can have a low rate of return.

While MLS does not collect data specifically about littering/dumping complaints or charges in Toronto's ravine system, the following data was compiled for the purposes of this report. From January 2016 to June 2021, MLS received:

- 24 service requests (complaints) for illegal dumping in ravines under waste bylaws
- 295 service requests (complaints) for illegal dumping in ravines under parks bylaws
- 141 littering and dumping charges were laid within 500 metres of a ravine, indicating the offence likely occurred in ravine lands or in close proximity. 118 of these charges were laid under Chapter 548, Littering and Dumping, 20 charges were laid under Chapter 608, Parks, and 3 charges laid under Chapter 844, Waste Collection, Residential Properties.

City's Ravine Litter Picking Program and Community Initiatives

Although steep slopes, dense brush and remote access make clean-up efforts challenging, regular clean-ups mitigate the negative impacts of waste in ravines, as well as discourage further littering, dumping and other harmful behaviors.

In January 2020, City Council approved the creation of a dedicated ravine litter picking program, as part of the implementation of the Ravine Strategy. In the first year of operation, despite the challenging terrain and the additional challenges of working during the COVID-19 pandemic, a team of 13 staff successfully removed nearly 74 tonnes of garbage and 14 tonnes of recyclable metal from 97 hectares of ravine land. In 2021, City Council increased the 2021 PFR Operating Budget by \$0.5 million, \$0.2 million of which was used for a one-time increase in the ravine litter picking program. This additional investment achieved a significant increase in litter cleared with a team of 17 staff removing 119 tonnes of garbage and 45 tonnes of recyclable metal from 236 hectares of ravine land.

To complement enforcement and clean-up efforts, engagement and education programs about ravines help community members understand the impacts of litter and dumping on ravines and develop a sense of ownership and care for these special spaces. Every year, City programs engage over 3,500 volunteers in ravine stewardship, in addition to the thousands of participants learning about and caring for ravines through programs offered by the TRCA, school boards, and partner organizations.

The City has also published 'A Property Owners Guide to Healthy Ravines' (available at <https://www.toronto.ca/data/parks/pdf/property-owners-guide-to-healthy-ravines.pdf>) that provides advice to the owners of the 30,000 private addresses that are part of Toronto's ravine system, including avoiding dumping yard waste (e.g. grass clippings, leaves, branches, sod) on ravine slopes on their property or on adjacent parkland.

Bylaw Enforcement Officers are front line partners of ravine protection. Officers aim to educate individuals about ravine protection and littering and dumping regulations as part of any enforcement activity.

Solid Waste Management Services (SWMS) also runs annual public education campaigns aimed to raise awareness about the impacts of litter (e.g. harm to wildlife and the environment) and applicable fines. The campaigns encourage people to properly dispose of their waste into receptacles in public spaces or at home. The campaigns in 2020 and 2021 focused on reducing litter, including personal protective equipment like masks and gloves, on streets, parks and the waterfront and used a variety of tactics including digital ads (including multi-lingual ones), animated truck signs near Toronto beaches and high-traffic parks, radio and social media (including Instagram Influencers).

Continuing to encourage the community to be part of the solution will help increase public awareness about the sensitivity of the ravines and contribute to changing behaviors and norms related to littering and dumping.

7. Conclusion

This report outlines the advancements since January 2020 to implement the Ravine Strategy. Through a robust framework of oversight and accountability that ensures the Ravine Strategy is implemented in a coordinated and collaborative manner, the City will continue its work to protect, maintain, and improve Toronto's ravine system while balancing its use and enjoyment as the city grows and evolves. As the City drives to advance implementation through the Ravine Strategy's goals, actions and principles, Parks, Forestry and Recreation will provide required and necessary report-backs through regular updates to City Council.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Ravine Strategy Achievements by Guiding Principle
Attachment 2: City of Toronto Municipal Code Offences & Set Fines for Litter and Dumping in ravines