

# Our Plan Toronto: Final Environment and Climate Change Official Plan Policy Updates

**Date:** May 11, 2022

**To:** Planning and Housing Committee

**From:** Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division

**Wards:** All

## SUMMARY

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This report recommends approval of Official Plan Amendment 583 (OPA 583) which includes updated Official Plan policies related to the environment and climate change. These proposed policies have been revised from the draft released for consultation based on the results of public consultation and comments from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. OPA 583 is a component of the City's Growth Plan conformity exercise and the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). These Official Plan updates continue Toronto's strong legacy of bringing forward leading-edge policies that protect the natural environment, support and enhance biodiversity, and address climate change.

OPA 583 will bring the Official Plan into conformity with A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) (the "Growth Plan"); the Provincial Policy Statement (2020); the Greenbelt Plan (2017); and the Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement (2018) as it relates to the City's environmental and climate change policies. OPA 583 also reflects City Council's 2021 directions made in adopting the City's updated TransformTO Net Zero Strategy, Toronto Green Standard Version 4, the 2019 declaration of a Climate Emergency, and the Long Term Waste Management Strategy.

Pursuant to Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, two statutory public Open Houses were held on April 12, 2022 to discuss the draft Official Plan revisions presented at the March 25, 2022 Planning and Housing Committee meeting. Two Open House sessions held in the afternoon and evening of April 12, 2022 were a major component of the consultation. This outreach process also included meetings focused on environment and climate change updates with expert stakeholders, a presentation to members of the development community, and broader engagement through the Our Plan Toronto banner. Feedback was also received from the Province through their One Window Review process.

The proposed updates presented in this report are organized under three key themes: 1) Net Zero and Climate Change, which includes updates related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in land use decisions and guiding new development on a

pathway to achieving net zero emissions by 2040; 2) Resilience and Adaptation, which includes updates related to biodiversity, natural heritage, water resources, stormwater management, and our urban forests; and 3) Waste and Circular Economy, which includes updates related to reducing waste and achieving Council's aspirational goal of zero waste and a circular economy. These updates will make changes to Chapters 2-5, Chapter 7, Schedule 3, and updates to Map 9, Map 12A and Map 12B.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, recommends that:

1. City Council adopt Official Plan Amendment 583 substantially in accordance with Attachment 1 to the report dated May 11, 2022 from the Chief Planning and Executive Director, City Planning.
2. City Council resolve and declare that the revisions to the Official Plan through Official Plan Amendment 583:
  - a. conforms with and does not conflict with the relevant provincial plans, as defined under the Planning Act;
  - b. has regard to the matters of provincial interest listed in section 2; and
  - c. is consistent with the policy statements issued under subsection 3 (1) of the Planning Act.
3. City Council authorize the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to seek approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing of Official Plan Amendment 583 under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*.
4. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendment, as may be required.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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The City Planning Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year.

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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The Official Plan provides a vision for the City grounded in principles that assure a successful and healthy future. A founding principle of the Official Plan is that Toronto's future must be diverse, inclusive and equitable. Official Plan policies addressing net zero emissions, climate adaptation and resilience will help prepare the city for the future.

New development that is built to the highest standards and quality with reduced energy, emissions and environmental impacts will result in a more affordable, resilient, sustainable and liveable city for all residents.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting on April 27, 2022, the Planning and Housing Committee approved Draft Official Plan Employment Policies and Chapter 1 Directions for Consultation. The draft Chapter 1 Directions and Principles will be used as the basis of ongoing consultation. This report can be accessed at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.PH33.13>

At its meeting on March 25, 2022 Planning and Housing Committee adopted Our Plan Toronto: Draft Environment and Climate Change Official Plan Policy Updates (Item PH32.6). This report presented draft Official Plan updates for the purpose of initiating consultation. This report can be accessed at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.PH32.6>

At its meeting on February 2, 2022 City Council approved the Our Plan Toronto: Update on Growth Plan Conformity and Municipal Comprehensive Review (Item PH30.6). This included a request made by Council to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to set an alternative timeframe by which the City of Toronto's Official Plan must conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. This report can be accessed at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.PH30.6>

At its meeting on December 15, 2021, City Council adopted TransformTO - Critical Steps for Net Zero by 2040 (Item IE26.16). This decision included a request for City Planning to continue to ensure the Official Plan, Zoning By-laws, planning policies, and various planning guidelines support the recommendations in the Net Zero Strategy. This includes discouraging vehicle trips, enhancing building energy efficiency, reducing embedded carbon during construction, and encouraging active transportation and transit for short trips.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.IE26.16>

At its meeting on July 14, 2021, City Council adopted the Toronto Green Standard, Version 4 (Item PH25.17). This decision directed City Planning to consider whether additional Official Plan policies are required to improve waste diversion from new development.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH25.17>

At its meeting on June 29, 2020, City Council approved the recommended approach and work plan for the Growth Plan Conformity and Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) - Work Plan (Item PH 14.4).

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.PH14.4>

At its meeting of October 2, 2019 City Council adopted item MM10.3 - Declaring a Climate Emergency and Accelerating Toronto's Climate Action Plan. This motion was

passed for the purpose of naming, framing and deepening the City's commitment to protect the economy, ecosystems and the community from climate change. The City Council decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.MM10.3>

At its meeting on July 12, 2016, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 346 (Item PG 13.4) to bring the Official Plan into conformity with the 2005 Greenbelt Plan. The proposed amendments identified the Greenbelt Protected Countryside and Urban River Valleys on Map 2 and in Chapter 2 of the Official Plan. Council approved Site and Area Specific Policies 135 and 141 to reflect Greenbelt Plan policies in the Rouge Valley area, including providing detailed direction about how natural and hydrologic features and functions should be protected. The City Council Decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PG13.4>

At its meeting on June 10, 2015 City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 262 (Item PG 4.5). This included updated environmental policies to bring the Official Plan into conformity with the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement, including the designation of new Environmentally Significant Areas.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.PG4.5>

## COMMENTS

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On March 25, 2022, Planning and Housing Committee authorized the Chief Planner to consult on draft Official Plan updates related to environment and climate change. This report generally describes OPA 583, including comments received through consultation. The proposed revisions to the Official Plan can be found in Attachment 1.

This report provides:

- a background summary of the Official Plan's approach to addressing the dual crisis of biodiversity loss and climate change;
- a summary of the consultations and feedback received on the draft Official Plan updates presented at the March 25, 2022 Planning and Housing Committee meeting; and
- an overview of next steps related to updating the Official Plan's Chapter 1 text as it relates to environment and climate change themes.

The proposed Official Plan updates presented in this report are organized under three key themes: 1) Net Zero and Climate Change, which includes updates related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in land use decisions, and guiding new development on a pathway to achieving net zero emissions by 2040; 2) Resilience and Adaptation, which includes updates related to biodiversity, natural heritage, water resources, stormwater management, and urban forests; and 3) Waste and Circular Economy, which includes updates related to reducing waste and achieving Council's aspiration goal of zero waste and a circular economy.

## Background

The City of Toronto has a strong legacy of introducing leading-edge policies that protect the natural environment, support and enhance biodiversity, and address climate change. Existing Official Plan policies include many examples of successful implementation related to environment and climate change action and include: introducing and updating the Toronto Green Standard to require new development to meet sustainable performance measures; adding requirements for green infrastructure, energy conservation and energy strategies; identifying and protecting Environmentally Significant Areas; and including references to Council's declaration of the climate emergency.

In June 2020, City Council approved the work plan for the City-initiated Growth Plan Conformity and Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) ([Item PH 14.4](#)). This report covers updates and revisions to the Official Plan related to environment and climate change. The Planning Act requires that municipalities revise their Official Plan to ensure conformity with provincial plans, including the Growth Plan (2020).

### Drivers for Official Plan Environment and Climate Change Updates

The Official Plan articulates the City's vision for the future, directs land use, and guides city building decisions that can help address our goals as we plan within a climate and biodiversity emergency. In preparing the draft updates to the Official Plan, staff were mindful of the global context of the dual crisis related to biodiversity loss and climate change. In April 2022, the United Nation's International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a component of their Sixth Assessment Report further re-enforcing the urgency of address the climate crisis. In presenting their report, the IPCC Chair stated "the decisions we make now can secure a liveable future" ([IPCC, 2022](#)).

The proposed Official Plan update presented in Attachment 1 address a number of policy drivers, including: Provincial requirements; City Council direction; and input received through consultations.

Staff's review of Provincial policy related to the environment and climate change indicate that the Official Plan is generally in conformity with the A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) (the "Growth Plan (2020)", Greenbelt Plan (2017), Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and the Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement (2018). Modifications to the Official Plan were made to ensure consistency in language and terminology, address new mapping requirements, and advance climate change policies to reflect added urgency.

In 2019, City Council declared a Climate Emergency for the purpose of "naming, framing and deepening our commitment to protecting our economy, our ecosystems and our community from climate change" ([Item MM10.3](#)). This was followed up more recently with the adoption of Toronto Green Standard Version 4 ([Item PH25.17](#)) and the TransformTO Net Zero Strategy ([Item IE26.16](#)). The proposed Official Plan updates reflect these Council decisions and reinforce the targets of the TransformTO Net Zero Strategy, to achieve net-zero emissions in Toronto by 2040. The proposed updates also address City Council commitments to update Environmentally Significant Areas during

the previous five-year review; and to further align the Official Plan with the Long Term Waste Management Strategy.

## **Public and Stakeholder Engagement**

The outcomes of MCR consultation as they relate to the environment and climate change are summarized below. Feedback received through public and stakeholder consultation helped shape refinements, policy updates, and identify gaps in existing Official Plan policies. Public and stakeholder feedback has been collected since the MCR work plan report was presented to Committee on June 29, 2020.

### **Our Plan Toronto Engagement (May 2021 - February 2022)**

As part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review and under the banner of Our Plan Toronto, staff have been implementing a virtual citywide engagement strategy. This engagement program was initiated in May 2021 with a series of targeted stakeholder meetings that continued throughout the summer and included a video to explain the process. The video can be accessed at this link: <https://youtu.be/-3ITFf1Oea8>. The Phase 1 Engagement Summary Report can be accessed [here](#).

The Phase 2 engagement took place between September and December 2021 and included two virtual town halls hosted on October 20, 2021 and four stakeholder meetings, one of which focused on environment and climate change. The Phase 2 engagement focused on building awareness and participation in meaningful discussions about planning priorities for Toronto 2051. The Phase 2 Engagement Summary can be accessed [here](#).

The ongoing Phase 3 engagement has included targeted meetings on environment and climate change (summarized below), and will include: four district Town Halls, one city-wide Open House, and three additional policy focused meetings in the late spring 2022.

### **Engagement with equity deserving groups**

Staff and the consultant team have initiated a Community Leaders' Coalition (CLC) comprised of representatives who are affiliated with community, advocacy, and Indigenous groups working in communities across the city. The CLC is intended to provide staff input on the challenges faced by marginalized communities within the city. To date, staff have hosted four meetings with the CLC. The organizations participating in the CLC can be accessed through [Item PH30.6](#).

### **Indigenous engagement**

Staff and the consultant team have identified and engaged with Indigenous Treaty Rights Holders and Organizations over the course of the MCR; this includes the City's Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee. The focus on these engagement meetings have been centred on amplifying Indigenous voices into the engagement process, building and strengthening relationships with Indigenous groups, along with discussing ways in which Official Plan policies can help achieve Reconciliation objectives. To date, staff have held five meetings with Indigenous Rights Holders and care-takers. The Treaty

Rights Holders and Organizations to whom staff have reached out can be accessed through [Item PH30.6](#).

## **Youth engagement**

Staff and the consultant team designed an online exercise that has been distributed to Grades 7-12 teachers within Toronto's school boards. This student exercise was intended to help youth better understand climate change and identify adaption measures found within their respective communities. The online student exercise was distributed to teachers in November 2021 and can be accessed at this link: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/7b2c6d77bac64c3eb713f1af6d31cbff>. Students were encouraged to observe climate action in their communities, compare climate change impacts on different populations, and share solutions for improving climate resilience in their community.

Many of the students focused on the health impacts of increasing temperatures, especially in areas of the City with high recorded surface temperatures. Students identified links between surface temperature and neighbourhoods with higher average income. Many of the solutions discussed related to improving climate resilience through planting street trees equitably across neighbourhoods. Other responses included feedback supporting the City's transition towards net-zero emissions and using renewable energy sources like ground-source heat pumps. The Our Plan Toronto Youth Engagement Summary, prepared by Maximum City can be found at [www.toronto.ca/ourplan](http://www.toronto.ca/ourplan).

## **Targeted Consultation on Environment and Climate Change Draft Updates (March 2022 - May 2022)**

Following Planning and Housing Committee's consideration of draft Official Plan updates on March 25, 2022, staff undertook a series of targeted consultation meetings.

## **Public Consultation and Feedback**

Two public Open Houses were held on April 12, 2022 in the afternoon and evening, with more than 170 members of the public participating. These were Statutory Public Open Houses, and were held pursuant to the Planning Act for the Municipal Comprehensive Review, under Section 26 of the Planning Act. Both of these virtual Open House sessions presented the same information and were facilitated by a consultant. The objectives of the Open House meetings were: to provide an overview of the draft environment and climate change updates to the Official Plan; to receive feedback and input from those in attendance; and to outline next steps and additional opportunities to engage.

The two Open Houses were widely promoted: more than 600 email invitations were circulated to those that have subscribed for email update on the Our Plan Toronto webpage; 395 mail-out letters were sent to the City's Neighbourhood Associations; and social media outreach was undertaken in the weeks leading up to the meetings.



A wide range of input was received in the two Open Houses through a live facilitated Q&A discussion, and through the typed-chat functions. Summarized below are some of the key points discussed as they relate to the draft Official Plan updates presented by staff. Input relating to net zero and climate mitigation policy updates ranged from suggesting particular low-emissions technologies (e.g. electric heat pumps), suggestions to consider future weather projections, and questions about whether the Official Plan policies on net zero would ensure the City reaches its targets. In the discussion on adaptation and resilience policy updates, participants noted the value of natural spaces for mental health, support for increased tree planting and in particular street trees, suggestions to focus funding on ecological restoration, supporting nature-based solutions to climate change, and asked that a 'food lens' be applied to resilience considerations. During the discussion on waste and circular economy, support for the circular economy approach was brought forward, especially in support of the City's circularity efforts related to the organic waste stream.

Beyond the Open House sessions, feedback has been received through the Official Plan Review's dedicated email account. This has included detailed policy suggestions from stakeholders and members of the public.

### **Stakeholder Consultation and Feedback**

In April 2022, staff hosted two targeted stakeholder meetings to solicit feedback on the draft policies and to identify gaps in the proposed Official Plan updates. On April 5th, staff held a facilitated a meeting with 15 invited participants with experience and perspectives related to climate change action, Toronto's biodiversity, urban ecology, environmental planning, natural heritage conservation, environmental advocacy, and community organizing. Feedback received during this meeting included: increasing population density in Toronto's neighbourhoods to reduce strain on upstream municipalities; align urban design guidelines for new development with climate change goals; increase the visibility of biodiversity in the Official Plan; support for expanded net-zero policies; refine language to outline what is meant by 'environmentally friendly' and 'sustainable'; support for policies discouraging the demolition of existing buildings; and examining buildings as material banks for future resource use when demolition occurs.

On April 13, 2022, City Planning staff presented the proposed updates to the Official Plan related to environment and climate change to 35 members of the Toronto Chapter meeting for the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD). Feedback received during the meeting was positive and the members did not raise any issues with the updates as presented.

### **Feedback from the Province**

The draft environment and climate change Official Plan updates were circulated to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on January 27, 2022 to address the requirements of the Planning Act. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing provided comments through their One Window Review of draft OPA 583 in a meeting on April 26, 2022. The consolidated comments from the Province were focused on the Official Plan's conformity with the Growth Plan (2020), the Greenbelt Plan (2017), the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), and the relevant Source Water Protection Plans.



Their comments focused on the implementation of policies related to water management, natural heritage and water resource mapping.

The Province's Open Window review included specific comments related to:

- Consistency with the Growth Plan (2020) and Provincial Policy Statement (2020) as it related to water resources and source water protection, ensuring alignment with the relevant Source Water Protection Plan and applying salt management measures in designated vulnerable areas
  - *City staff response:* The City's Official Plan aligns with the Credit Valley, Toronto and Region and Central Lake Ontario (CTC) Source Protection Plan (SPP) as approved and in effect on March 2, 2022. Existing Policy 3.4.1 g) of the Official Plan addresses protecting existing and future municipal drinking water sources. Policy 3.4.1 g) states: protecting, improving or restoring the quality and quantity of water and drinking water sources. Proposed modifications to the Official Plan through revised policies and mapping also address the ecologically significant groundwater recharge areas, significant groundwater recharge areas and highly vulnerable aquifers and are generally aligned with the CTC SPP.
- Minor wording changes to draft climate change policies to strengthen the requirement from "consider" the impacts of climate change, to "prepare" for the impacts of climate change
  - *City staff response:* Updates have been made to proposed policy 2.2.3 Avenues 2 vi); 3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods; 1g) and introductory non-policy text of 3.4 The Natural Environment.
- Consistency with the Growth Plan (2020) and Provincial Policy Statement (2020): adding references to *significant coastal wetlands* and *coastal wetlands*; directly referencing species listed on the Species at Risk in Ontario List; and identifying best management practices that should be utilized for excess soils
  - *City staff response:* New references to the Species at Risk in Ontario List has been added to explanatory text within the 'Biodiversity' sidebar; the proposed excess soils policy has been refined to address the Province's concerns
- Consistency with the Greenbelt Plan (2017) in SASP 141 to align with the Rouge National Urban Park Management Plan
  - *City staff response:* The Rouge National Urban Park Management Act and Management Plan have been identified as the guiding documents for lands that have been transferred to Parks Canada. A policy was added to require that any new development within a key hydrologic area will protect, and where possible improve hydrologic function.

## **Recommended OPA 583 -- Environment and Climate Change Updates**

Official Plan Amendment 583 (Attachment 1) presents Official Plan updates organized under three key themes: 1) Net Zero and Climate Change; 2) Resilience and Adaptation; and 3) Waste and a Circular Economy. These updates will make changes to Chapters 2-5, Chapter 7, Schedule 3, and updates to Map 9, Map 12A and Map 12B.

The changes below also incorporate revisions to the Official Plan, where appropriate, to address comments received throughout the consultation process. A version of the Official Plan updates showing differences from the in effect Official Plan can be found in Attachment 2.

## **Net Zero and Climate Change Mitigation**

Official Plan updates related to net zero and climate change mitigation align with Council's updated targets to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. The updated elements of the Official Plan presented in Attachment 1 build upon previously approved Official Plan Amendments (OPA 66 and OPA 262). The proposed updates will bring the Official Plan in conformity with the Growth Plan's (2020) policies in section 4.2 "Protecting What is Valuable" and in particular policies under 4.2.10 Climate Change.

Updates related to net zero and climate change mitigation include:

- Updated sidebar text reflecting the City's declaration of a climate emergency and net zero 2040 strategy; the links between stormwater management and risks associated with climate change; and outlining the process of Community Energy Planning (Chapter 2);
- Updated policies requiring assessments for opportunities to achieve net zero development, including embodied carbon emission (2.2.2 Centres, 3.3 New Neighbourhoods, 5.2.1 Secondary Plans);
- Updated policies requiring assessments for opportunities related to low carbon energy solutions and renewable energy production (2.2.2 Centres; 3.3 New Neighbourhoods, 5.2.1 Secondary Plans);
- Updated policies requiring assessments for low carbon energy solutions and reducing emission from transportation (2.2.2 Centres; 3.3 New Neighbourhoods, 5.2.1 Secondary Plans);
- Updated policy supporting the use of heat recovery and/or rejection in the City's water, wastewater and stormwater management infrastructure (2.2 Supporting Growth in the City);
- Updated policy requiring assessments for reducing emissions associated with transportation (2.2.2 Centres);
- New policy requiring development to be sustainable, low carbon and resilient to climate change through the orientation of new buildings to maximize passive heating and cooling, improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions (3.1.2 Built Form)
- Updated language to include "preparation for the impacts of a changing climate" (2.2.3 Avenues; 3.4 The Natural Environment);
- New policy requiring the consideration of orientation and massing of new buildings to improve energy performance (3.1.2 The Built Form);
- Updated policy references to "net zero emissions" (3.4 The Natural Environment)
- Updated policy encouraging geothermal and connecting to low carbon energy sources (3.4 The Natural Environment).
- Updating the name of the "Energy Strategy" to the "Net Zero Emissions Strategy" to reflect an updated Terms of Reference (Schedule 3);

## Resilience and Adaptation

Resilience to environmental stressors and adaptation to a changing climate is addressed throughout the Official Plan with new additions and refinements presented in Attachment 1. Updates within this theme area that were presented to Planning and Housing Committee on March 25, 2022 include: the identification of a water resources system; elements of stormwater management, including promoting Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development; enhancing policies related to enhancing the urban forest; and recognizing challenges related to higher heat conditions. These updates will bring the Official Plan into conformity with the Growth Plan's (2020) policies in Chapter 4 "Protecting What is Valuable", and in particular the new section 4.2.1 Water Resources Systems.

Updates related to resilience and adaptation include:

- Identification of a Water Resources System, including key hydrologic features and key hydrologic areas (Maps 9A, 9B, and 9C in Attachment 3), where Map 9 is relabelled as Map 9A and Maps 9B and 9C being new maps;
- Expanded the natural heritage system (Map 9A) to include water resource features and ravine and natural feature protected areas and to add a contributing areas layer and explanatory sidebar (3.4 the Natural Environment);
- Added four new Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA), expanded the boundaries of two existing ESAs and added two new Provincially Significant Wetlands (Maps 12A and 12B in Attachment 4);
- Removed Conlin's Pond from the ESA designation as it is a storm water management facility necessary for water quality control purposes and hence cannot be managed for natural heritage protection and enhancement (Map 12A);
- Updated policy recognizing the need to ensure appropriate sized infrastructure to accommodate intense storm events (2.2 Structuring Growth in the City)
- New policy encouraging development adjacent to the Natural Heritage System to provide natural landscaped surfaces that increase the ecological function and/or biodiversity (2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods)
- New policy in to minimize hazards to local and migratory birds (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- Updated policies to enhance the urban forest and ensure adequate soil for new trees, protect mature and native trees, and support the health of street trees (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- Updates policy recognizing the risks associated with extreme heat (3.4 the Natural Environment), and recognizing the need for shade to ensure pedestrian comfort on City streets (3.1 The Built Environment);
- Updated policies promoting the integration of green infrastructure as a component of stormwater management (3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods, 3.4 The Natural Environment, 5.2.1 Secondary Plans);
- Updated non-policy text and added new sidebar text on the Natural Heritage System and Inventory integrating new water resources system mapping components; outlining the components of the Water Resources System; examining historical watercourses; and outlining watershed planning (Chapter 3);
- Updated non-policy text connecting the concepts of Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development (Chapter 3);

- Added a policy minimizing the use of road salt and its impact on the natural ecosystem (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- Refined policy to prioritize green infrastructure when protecting the health of natural ecosystems (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- Refined policy to promote ecological and hydrological connectivity (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- Refined non-policy text to integrate the tree canopy targets (3.4 The Natural Environment)
- New policy encouraging development to demonstrate a net increase in ecological function on development sites within contributing areas identified on Map 9A (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- Added reference to the Biodiversity Strategy within sidebar text (3.4 The Natural Environment); and
- New policy to consider Great Lakes Strategy, and Great Lakes Protection Act when undertaking watershed and /or waterfront planning (3.4 The Natural Environment).

## **Waste and a Circular Economy**

Updates were made throughout the Official Plan to reflect the solid waste policy drivers including: Growth Plan (2020); the Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement (2018); Council's adoption of the Long Term Waste Management Strategy; and Council's adoption of the Toronto Green Standard Version 4.

Updates related to waste and a circular economy include:

- New policy requiring an evaluation of opportunities for reuse of demolition waste (4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods);
- Updated policy that promotes the integration of circular economy principles in addressing environmental stressors (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- New policy and sidebar text to require and outline best practices for the management and reuse of excess soil (3.4 The Natural Environment);
- Updated policy promoting the allocation of space in new developments for localized material recovery and other waste materials, beyond blue, and green bins (5.1.3 Site Plan Control);
- Updated policy expanding reference to waste diversion through the organic waste stream (2.2.3 Avenues and 3.4 The Natural Environment); and
- New sidebar text articulating the concept of circular economy and the City's zero waste aspirational goal (Chapter 5).

Other technical updates have been made in the Official Plan to ensure proper references to updated Maps, policies and schedules to align with the proposed changes. Additional technical changes were also made to update references, where needed, to provincial policies and provincial plans.

## **Policy Considerations**

This section summarizes the policy considerations addressed in OPA 583. The recommended OPA has regard for matters of provincial interest and is consistent with

the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), and conforms to or does not conflict with the Growth Plan (2020), the Greenbelt Plan (2017); and the Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement (2018) as it relates to the City's environmental and climate change policies, and are consistent with the general intent of the Official Plan.

## **Planning Act**

The *Planning Act* governs land use planning in Ontario and establishes how a municipality must implement land use planning decisions. In particular, Section 2 of the *Planning Act* requires that municipalities, when carrying out their responsibility under this Act, have regard for matters of provincial interest including:

- (a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions;
- (e) the supply, efficient use and conservation of energy and water;
- (q) the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be oriented to pedestrians; and
- (s) the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to a changing climate.

## **Provincial Policy Statement (2020)**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on land use planning and development matters to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. It includes policies on key issues that affect communities, such as promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity; and preparing for the regional and local impacts of a changing climate. The PPS recognizes and acknowledges the Official Plan as an important document for implementing the policies within the PPS.

## **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)**

On August 28, 2020, the Province enacted Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ("Growth Plan"). The Growth Plan provides a strategic framework for managing growth and environmental protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region. Growth Plan (2020) policies require municipalities to: integrate climate change considerations; ensure planning for more resilient communities; and incorporate approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Growth Plan (2020) directs municipalities to develop official plan policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, address climate change adaptation goals, and identify and protect the key hydrologic features and areas of the water resources system.

## **Greenbelt Plan (2017)**

The Greenbelt Plan (2017) protects agricultural and environmentally sensitive land from urban development in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region. The Plan contains land use designations and policies that govern the lands within the defined Greenbelt Area, which includes: the Niagara Escarpment; the Oak Ridges Moraine; the Protected Countryside; and Urban River Valleys. Urban River Valleys run through the City of Toronto, linking the Greenbelt to Lake Ontario. The Greenbelt benefits Toronto residents in a number of ways including access to a broad expanse of countryside as well as recreational spaces and opportunities, local food production, and enhanced

protection of ground and surface waters which flow into Lake Ontario which is the source of Toronto's drinking water.

### **Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement (2018)**

The Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement (2018) provides direction for municipalities to increase waste reduction and resource recovery of food and organic waste. This policy statement was issued under section 11 of the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016. The Policy Statement focuses on waste reduction and resource recovery through preventing and reducing food waste, effectively and efficiently collecting and processing food and organic waste, and reintegrating recovered resources back into the economy.

### **Next Steps**

Addressing the dual crisis of climate change and biodiversity decline, along with other environmental concerns extend beyond this Official Plan update.

The updates presented in Attachment 1 align the Official Plan with Provincial policy requirements and the City's environment and climate change goals as they apply to land use decisions, and governing new development. There are other policy documents and programs beyond the Official Plan that will implement these policies, set necessary targets, and undertake programs to achieve the City's environmental goals. Further provincial legislative changes related to climate change and energy conservation could also assist with providing paths of implementation.

City Planning is currently undertaking consultation and review of Chapter 1 of the Official Plan ([Item PH33.13](#)). This review will result in a revised vision to 2051 and will frame the policies of the Official Plan. Among other matters, an updated Chapter 1 will set a renewed focus to prioritize climate change action and sustainability goals towards net zero emissions by 2040 and will be advanced for Council's consideration in 2023.

The interconnection between climate change goals and intensification near transit was a major theme discussed through the consultation events held to-date. Feedback received during the public and stakeholder consultations will be considered as work related to the MCR's intensification strategy continues. Council has adopted 18 Protected Major Transit Station areas, and staff are targeting the July 5, 2022 meeting of Planning and Housing Committee to bring forward a priority set of additional final Major Transit Station Areas and Protected Major Transit Station Areas for consideration and adoption. The overwhelming majority of the draft Major Transit Station Areas within the City meet or exceed the Growth Plan's (2020) minimum density targets for people and jobs. The City is also advancing the [Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods](#) program that is aiming to facilitate more low-rise housing in established residential neighbourhoods. The goals of both these programs will be to promote intensification and plan complete communities in areas served by existing and planned transit.

During the consultations on the MCR, there were a number of comments in regards to how the City's design guidelines support the Official Plan's climate mitigation and

adaptation policies, and implementation of the Toronto Green Standard performance requirements for energy and greenhouse gas emissions. This will be reviewed as urban design guidelines are updated.

Potential revisions to support promotion of local food, food security, and soil health, and encouraging provision of opportunities to support access to healthy, local, and affordable food, and urban and near-urban agriculture will be addressed in a later phase of the MCR.

## **Conclusion**

The Official Plan updates presented in this report continues Toronto's strong legacy of bringing forward leading-edge policies that protect the natural environment, preserve and enhance biodiversity and address climate change.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment 583 will bring the Official Plan into conformity with Provincial policies and address Council direction related to environment and climate change. The recommended OPA reflects extensive consultation and engagement with the public and stakeholders.

This report recommends that Council adopt the recommended Official Plan Amendment and that the amendment be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval under Section 26 of the Planning Act as part of the MCR and Growth Plan (2020) conformity exercise.

OPA 583 has regard to the relevant matters of provincial interest under Section 2 of the Planning Act. OPA 583 conforms to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) and to the Greenbelt Plan (2017). OPA 583 is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and the Food and Organic Waste Policy Statement (2018).

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Gregg Lintern  
Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Recommended Official Plan Amendment 583: Environment and Climate Change updates

Attachment 2: Recommended Policy Revisions Incorporated with the In-Force Official Plan Showing Differences

Attachment 3: Revised and New Maps 9A, 9B, and 9C

Attachment 4: Revised and New Maps 12A and 12B

Attachment 5: Revised and New Maps 2 and 3 for SASP 141

## **Attachment 1: Recommended Official Plan Amendment 583: Environment and Climate Change updates**

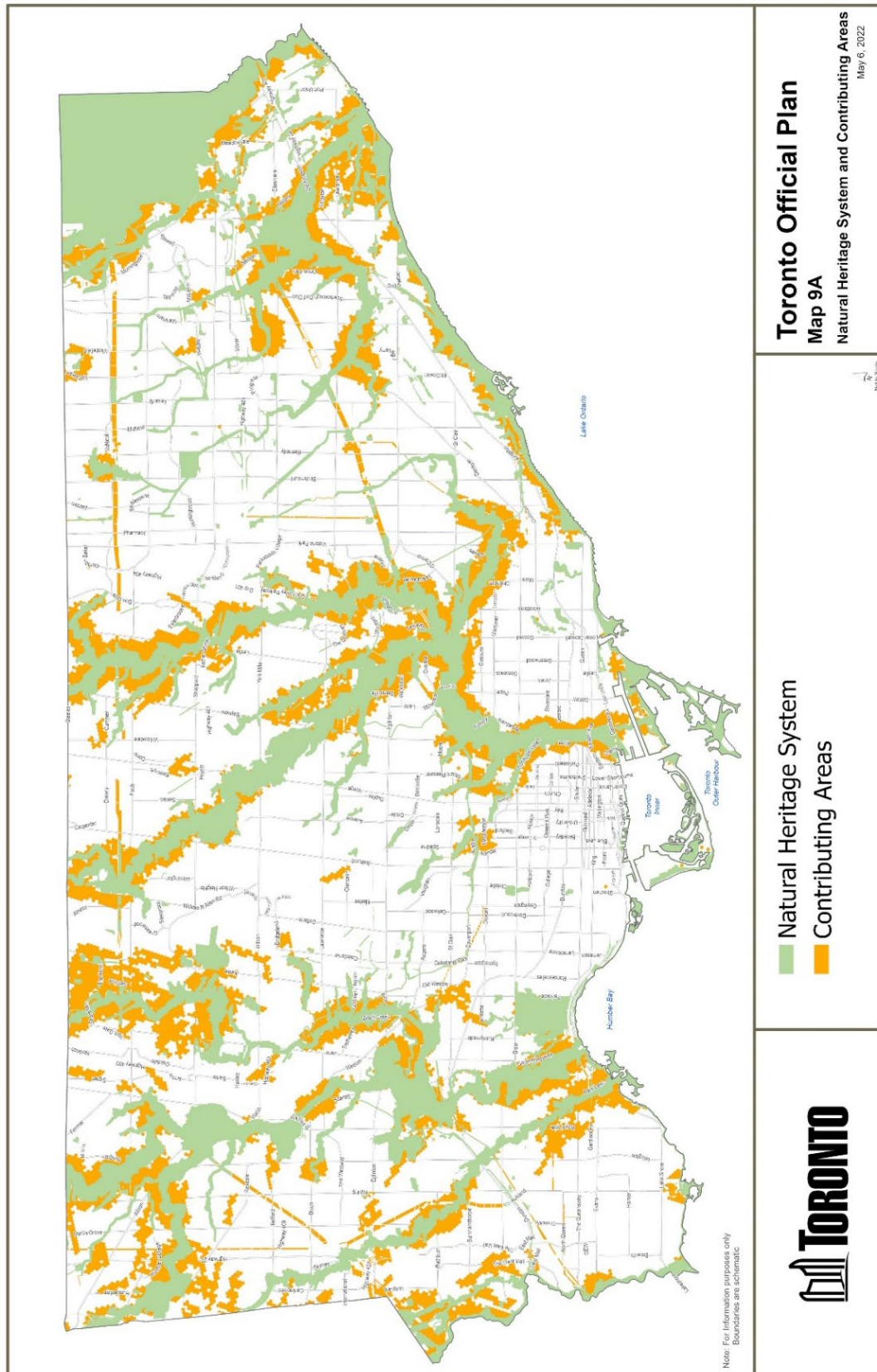
(Provided separately)

## **Attachment 2: Recommended Policy Revisions Incorporated with the In-Force Official Plan Showing Differences**

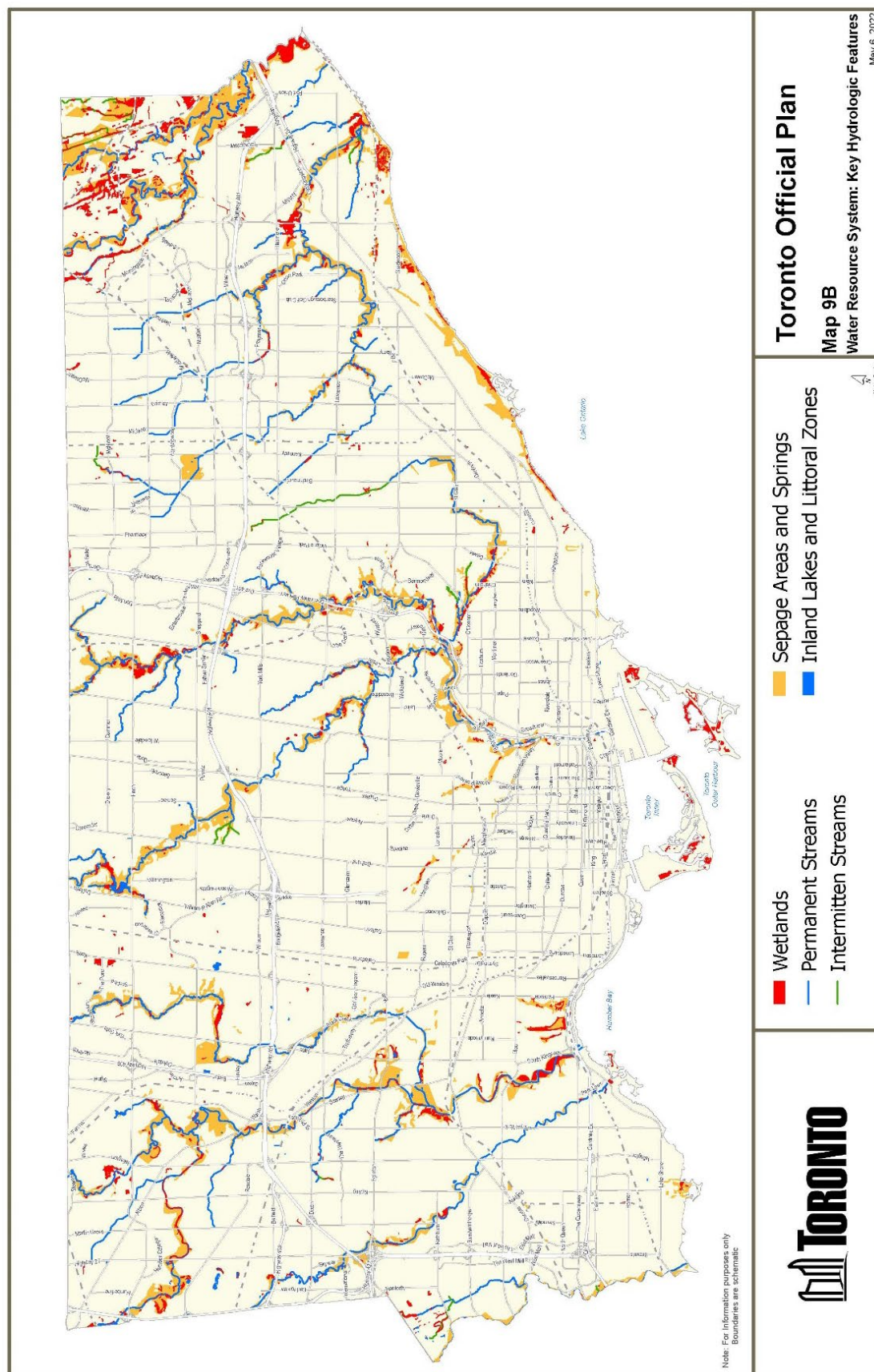
(Provided separately)

# Attachment 3: Revised and New Maps 9A, 9B, and 9C

## Map 9A Natural Heritage System

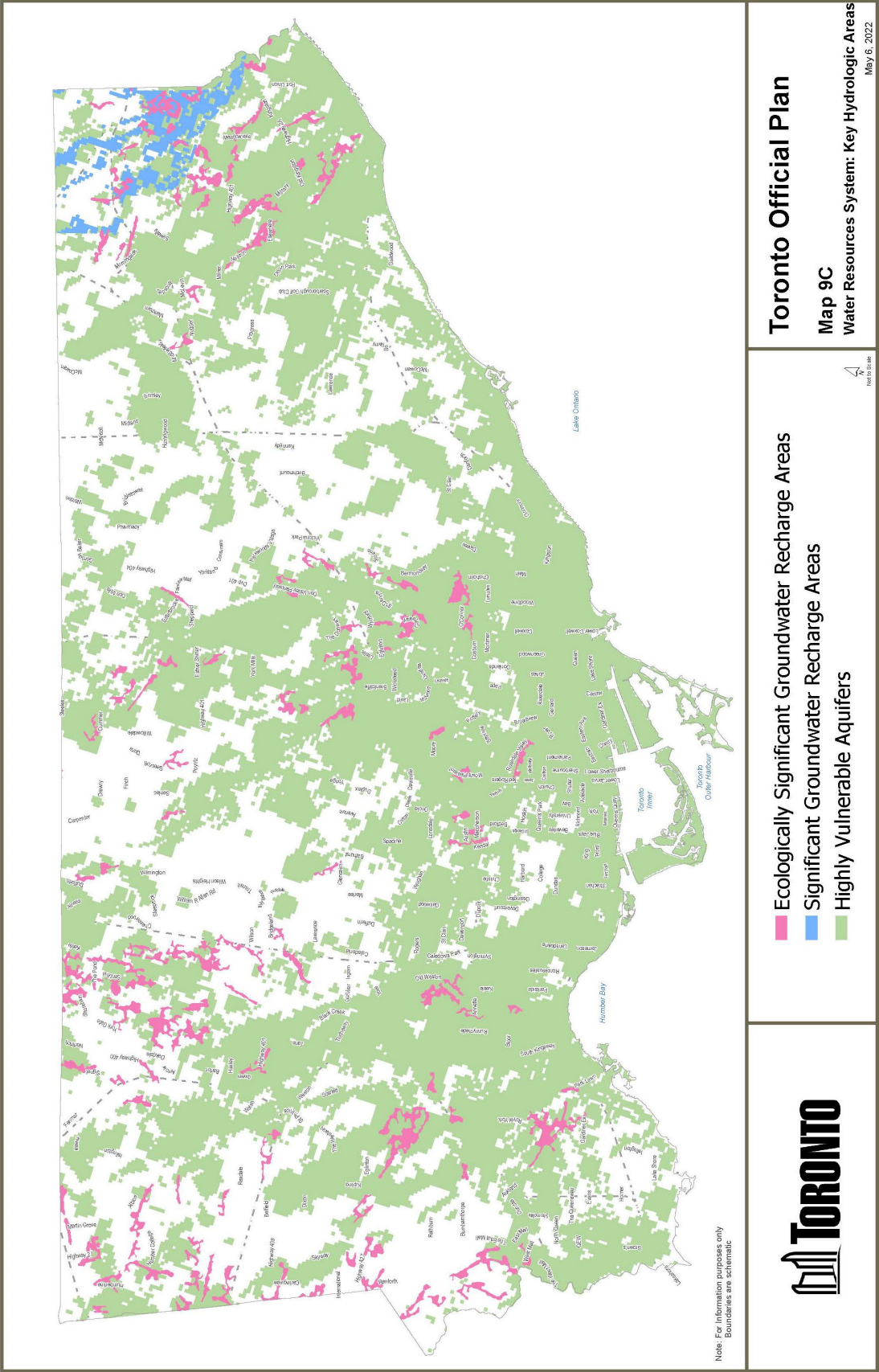


## Map 9B Water Resource System: Key Hydrologic Features



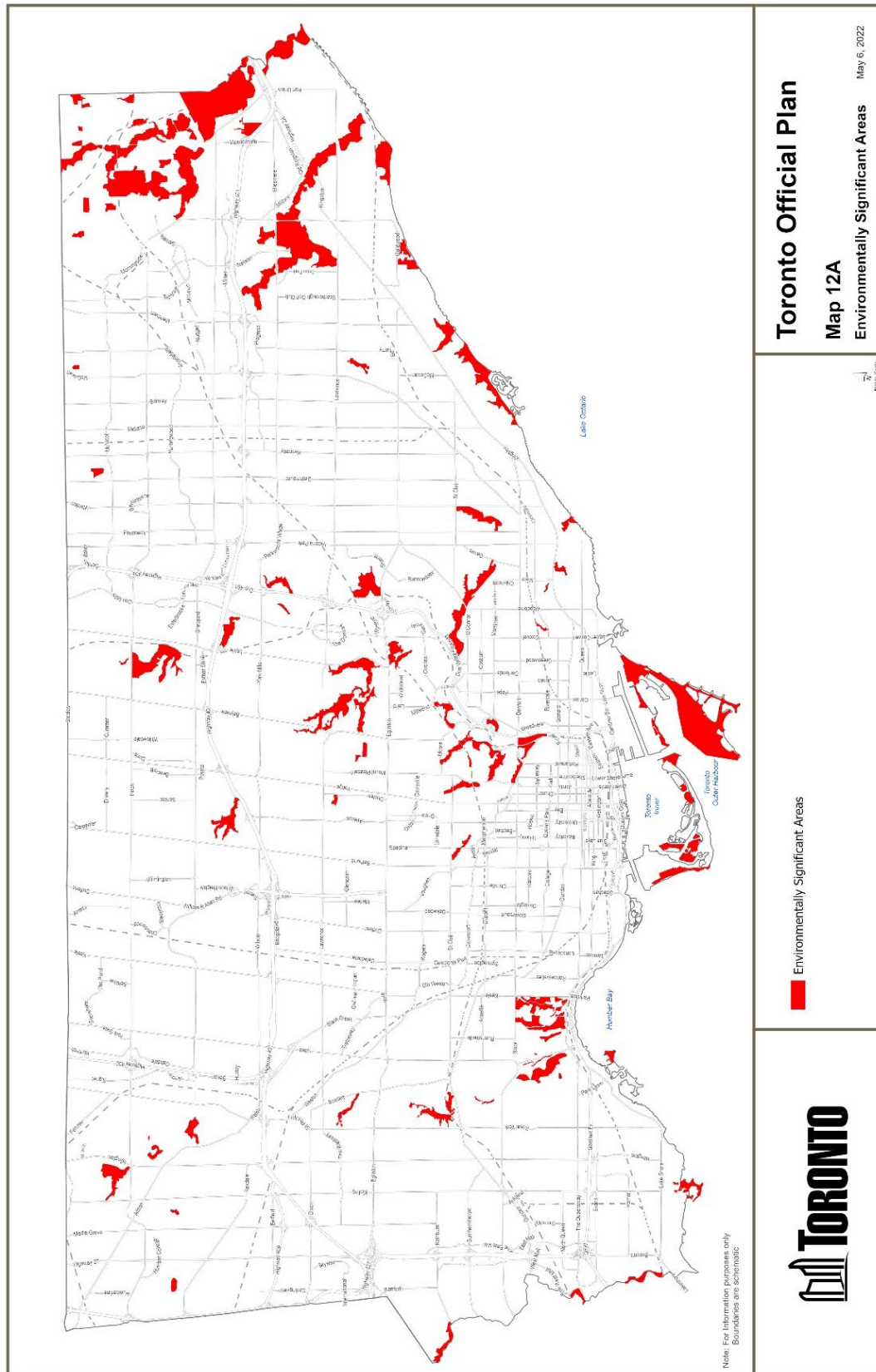


Map 9C Water Resources System: Key Hydrologic Areas



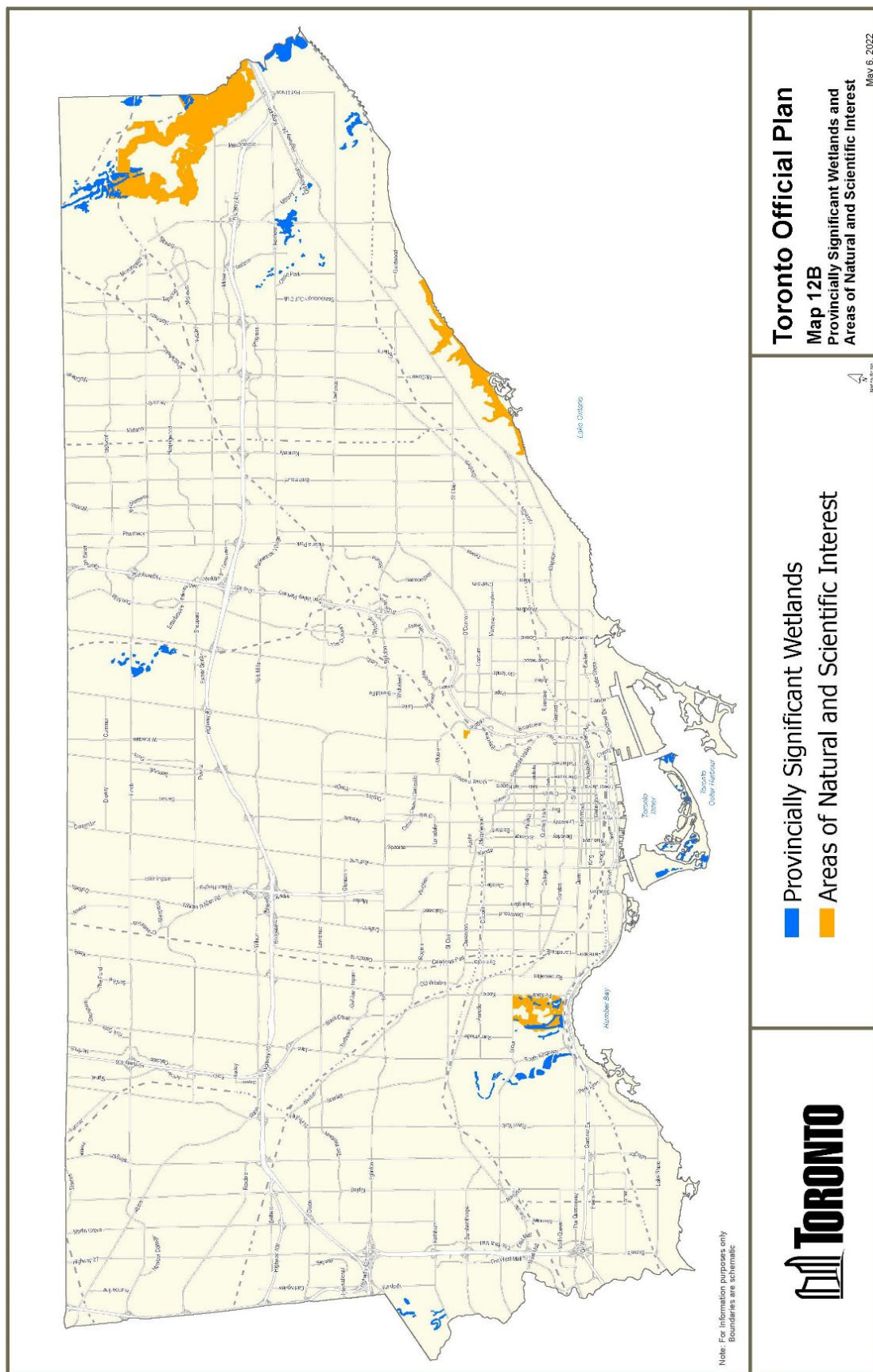
## Attachment 4: Revised Maps 12A and 12B

### Map 12A Environmentally Significant Areas



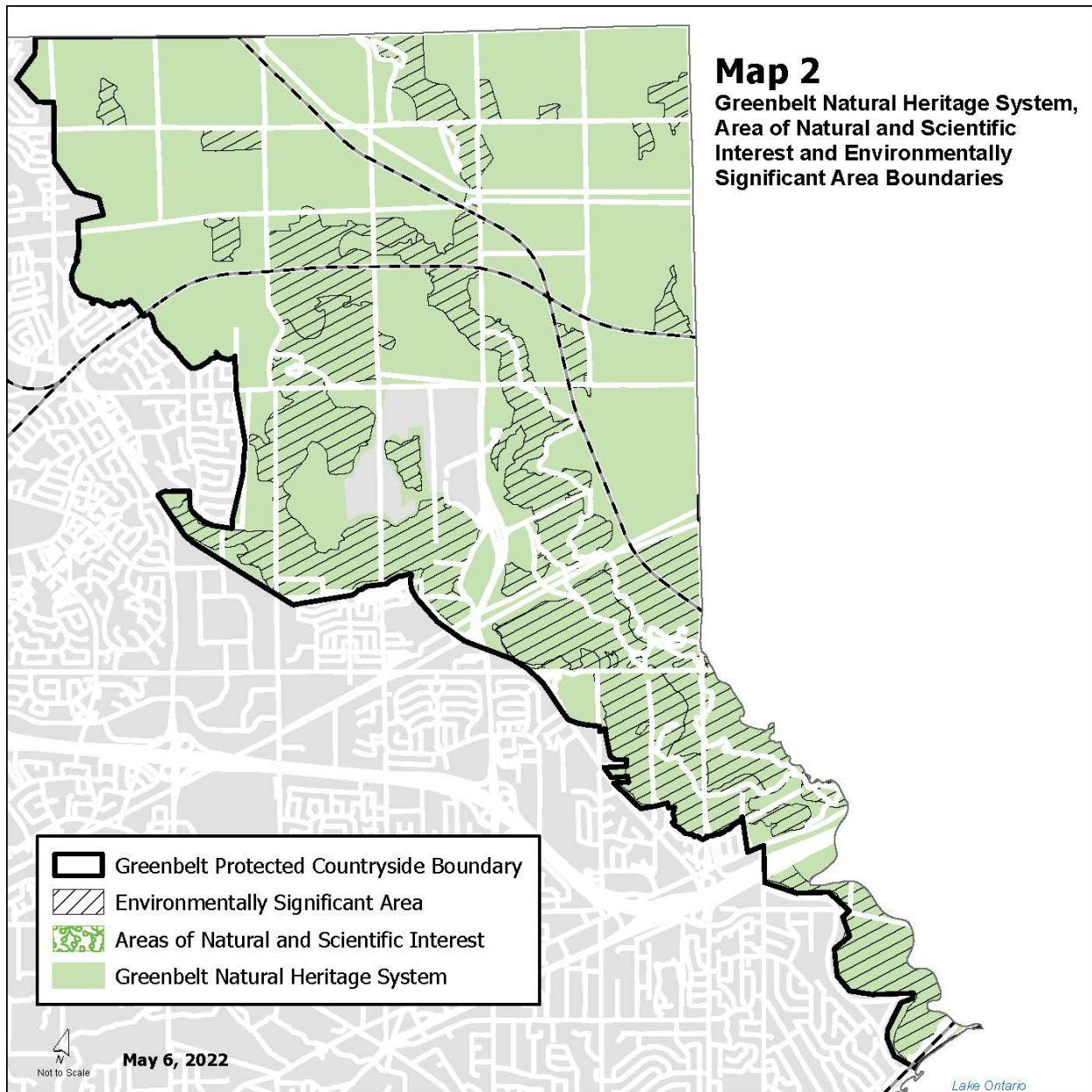


## Map 12B Provincially Significant Wetlands and Areas of Scientific Interest



## Attachment 5: Revised and New Maps 2 and 3 for SASP 141

### SASP 141 Map 2 Greenbelt Natural Heritage System, Area of Natural and Scientific Interest and Environmentally Significant Area Boundary





## SASP 141 Map 3 Water Resource System

