



# 3. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED





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## 3.1. MAPPING OVERVIEW

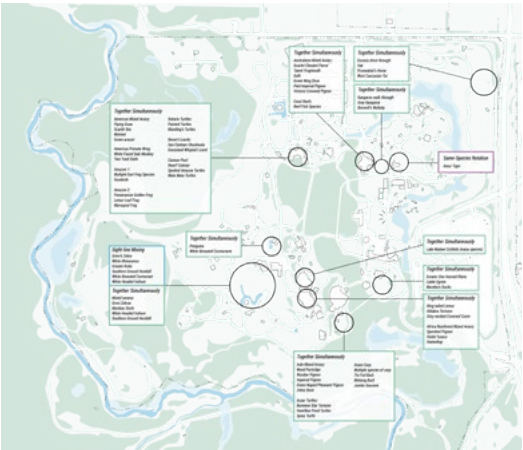
In order to understand the many complex layers that make up Your Zoo, intensive mapping was undertaken. Animal populations and habitat areas were mapped, along with physical site characteristics such as water and forest canopy. Mappings of guest experience layers, such as venues and circulation, were also undertaken to understand how guests use the site. Specific challenge areas, or pain points, were mapped, as well as underutilized assets or areas with great potential. When examined collectively, the mappings provide a diagnostic overview of the site as a whole. A diagnostic overview of specific smaller zones within the site was also compiled. Together, these provide a good understanding of the Zoo’s assets and challenges, allowing for a design to emerge that proposes thoughtful and innovative solutions to address many of these areas simultaneously, while building on Your Zoo’s existing assets and successes.



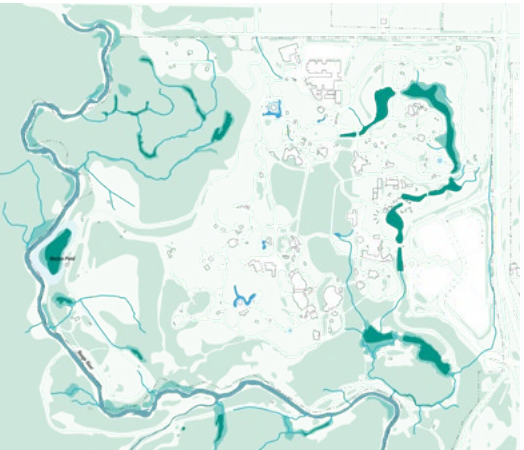
Biomes or habitat groups



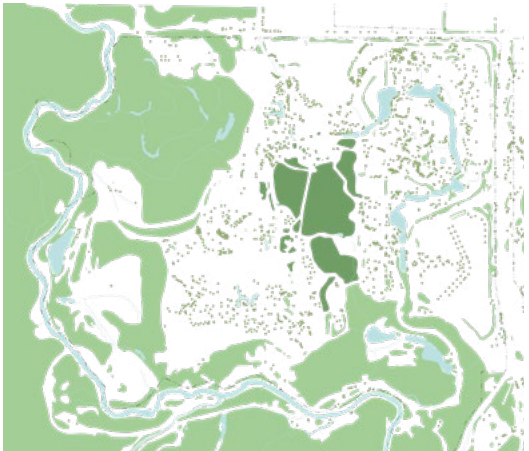
Animal population



Animal mixing



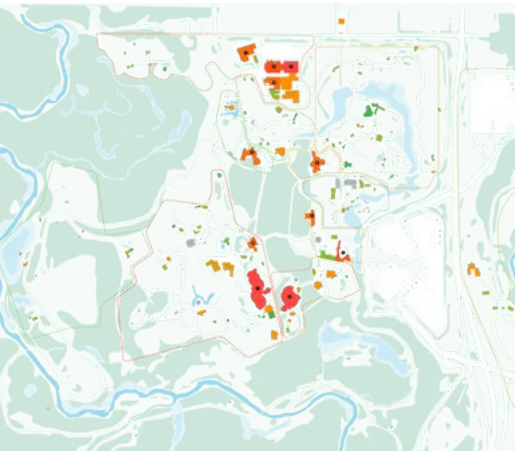
Permeable ground and water bodies



Canopy cover



Ongoing projects



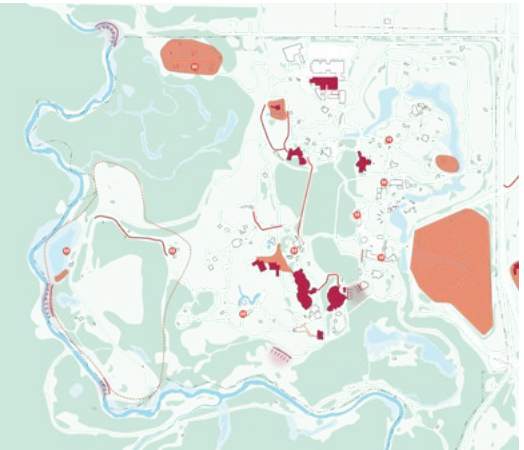
Building audits



Accessibility/AODA compliance



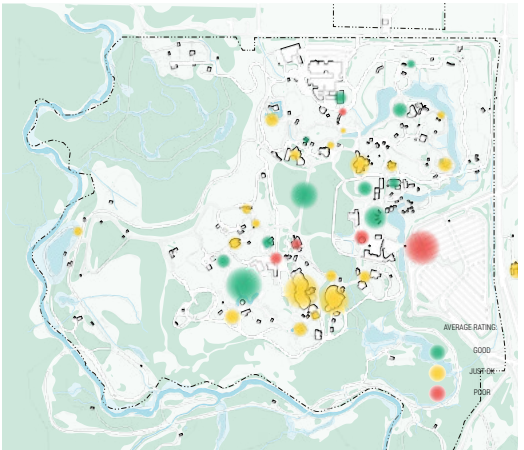
Guest service points



Pain points



Opportunity areas



Overview of site areas










# 3. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

## 3.2. INCREDIBLE CONTEXT

Surrounded by Rouge National Urban Park and partially nestled in the river valley, Your Toronto Zoo is immediately enveloped within a beautiful and lush landscape. Contrasting with this, Your Zoo also sits adjacent to a number of suburban neighbourhoods. These become important elements when designing new opportunities for Your Zoo to better serve its neighbours and its guests, by designing a Zoo that provides both a density of urban activities in some areas, and a richness of vast natural park-like spaces in others.

### Legend

-  Rouge National Urban Park Boundary
-  Existing Trail Corridors
-  Proposed Trail Corridors
-  Potential Trailhead/Parking
-  External Existing Trail Corridors
-  External Proposed Trail Corridors
-  Rouge National Urban Park Entry Area

### Rouge National Urban Park Overview

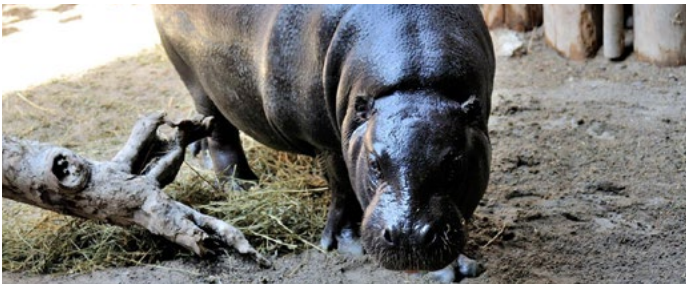




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## 3.3. A DIVERSITY OF SPECIES

Your Toronto Zoo has a wide range of species organized by biome and distributed between indoor and outdoor spaces across the vast site. This becomes the starting point for establishing even more generous and connected habitats that can better serve species individually and collectively.



Legend

Eurasia

Tundra

Americas

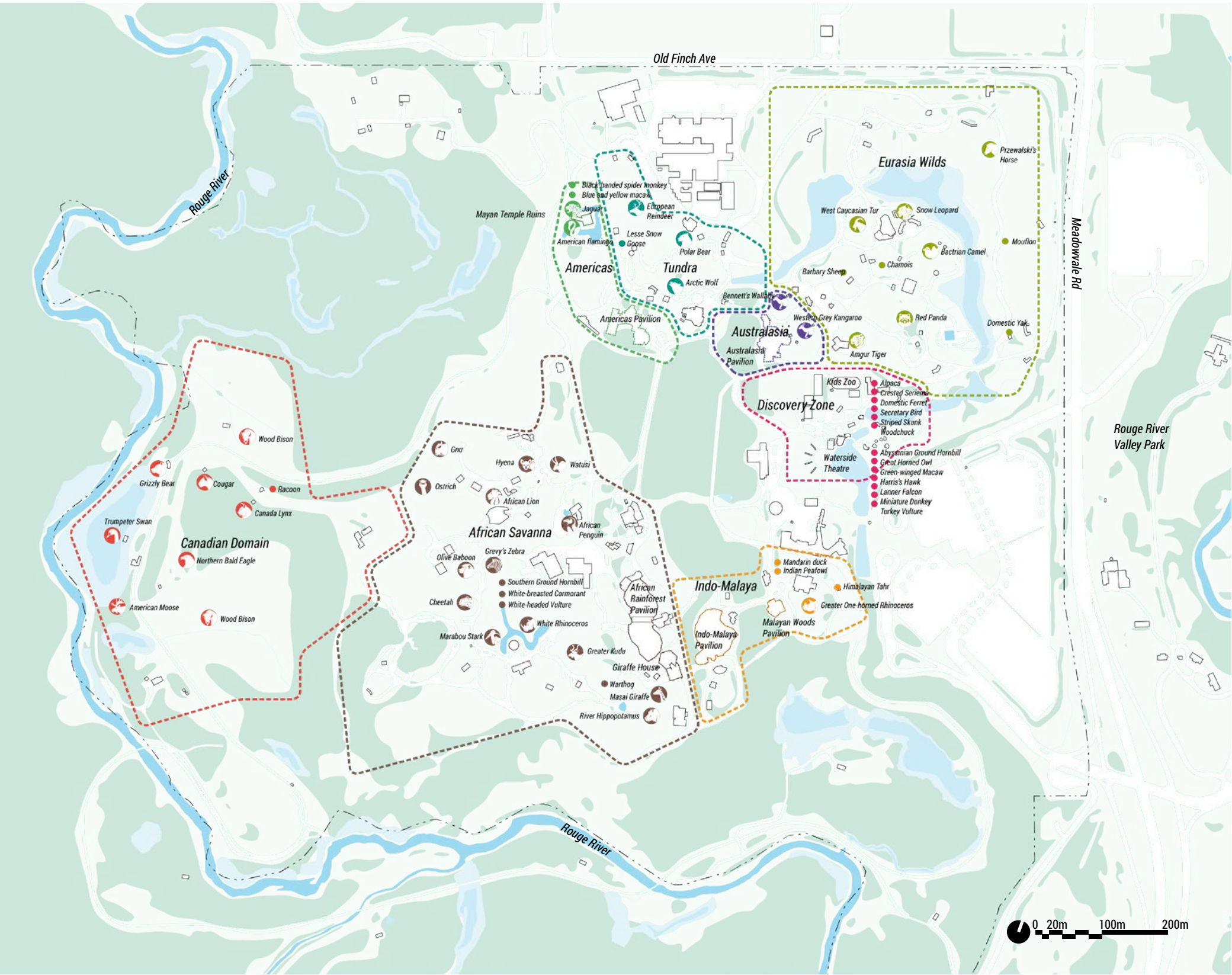
Indo-Malaya

African Savanna

Canadian Domain

Australasia

Discovery Zone





# 3. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

## 3.4. GUESTS

Your Toronto Zoo caters to a diverse audience with varying reasons for visiting. The Master Plan builds on this by developing new experiences to increase return visits and to appeal to broader audiences locally, regionally, and globally.

### Who knows about and visits Your Toronto Zoo?

Your Zoo is well known among tourists. It is critical to ensure that the perceptions Ontarians hold of the Zoo are reflective of Your Zoo's progressive conservation goals and education programs. Many guests who visited Your Zoo within the past year feel very familiar with it, assuming they've already seen everything. It is important to change this perception and find new initiatives and ways to reconnect with guests to encourage repeat visitation.

### Who comes to Your Toronto Zoo?

People with kids or who care for kids (especially with children ages 12 and younger) remain the key opportunity targets for increasing attendance and intent to visit. Among the general population, millennials show keen interest in visiting Your Zoo as well.

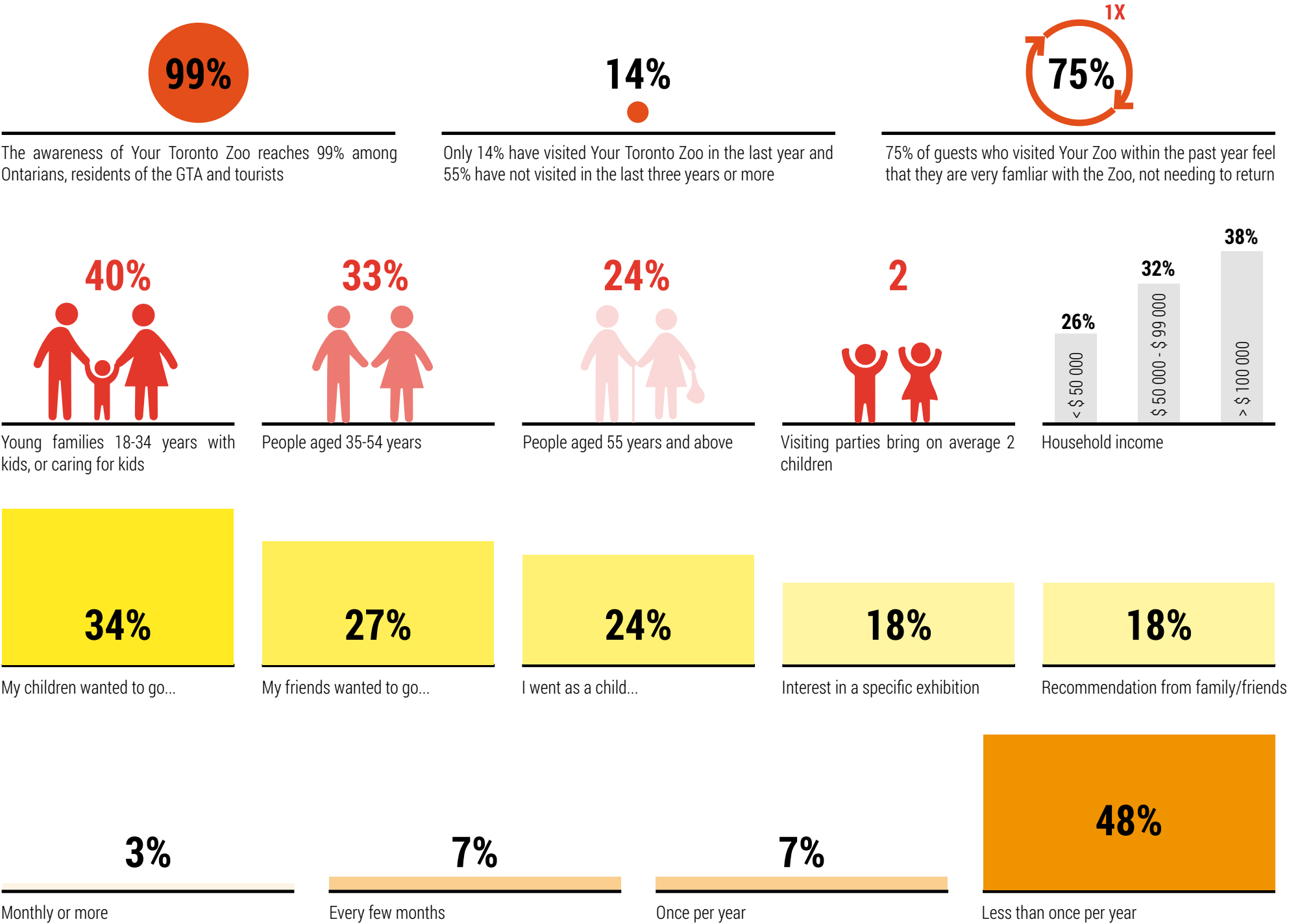
### Why do guests come to Your Toronto Zoo?

External forces are influential in prompting zoo visits. Your Zoo should make attempts to increase visitation by creating a buzz about new animal habitats, and conservation projects, especially for those who have already visited in the past.

### How often do guests come?

Likelihood to visit is low, especially among tourists. Past guests don't find the need to visit Your Zoo again as they are not expecting anything new. Your Zoo will need to communicate and highlight upcoming exhibits and events as well as different paths or ways to enjoy Your Zoo to increase repeat visitation.

Source: Toronto Zoo Brand and Visitor Research Toronto Zoo Full Report February 2020

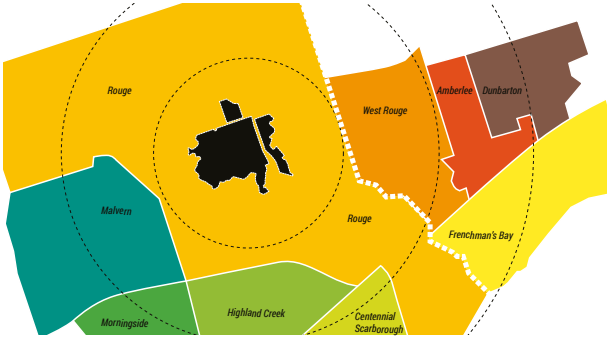




# 3. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

## 3.5. COMMUNITY

Your Toronto Zoo sits in close proximity to neighbourhoods that collectively are very diverse in terms of age as well as income. The Master Plan builds on this diversity by creating a plethora of offerings and spaces that cater to these different groups, to best serve the community.



**Population**  
Population per neighbourhood.

**Children 0-14 Years**  
Six neighbourhoods have higher percentages of children than the average.

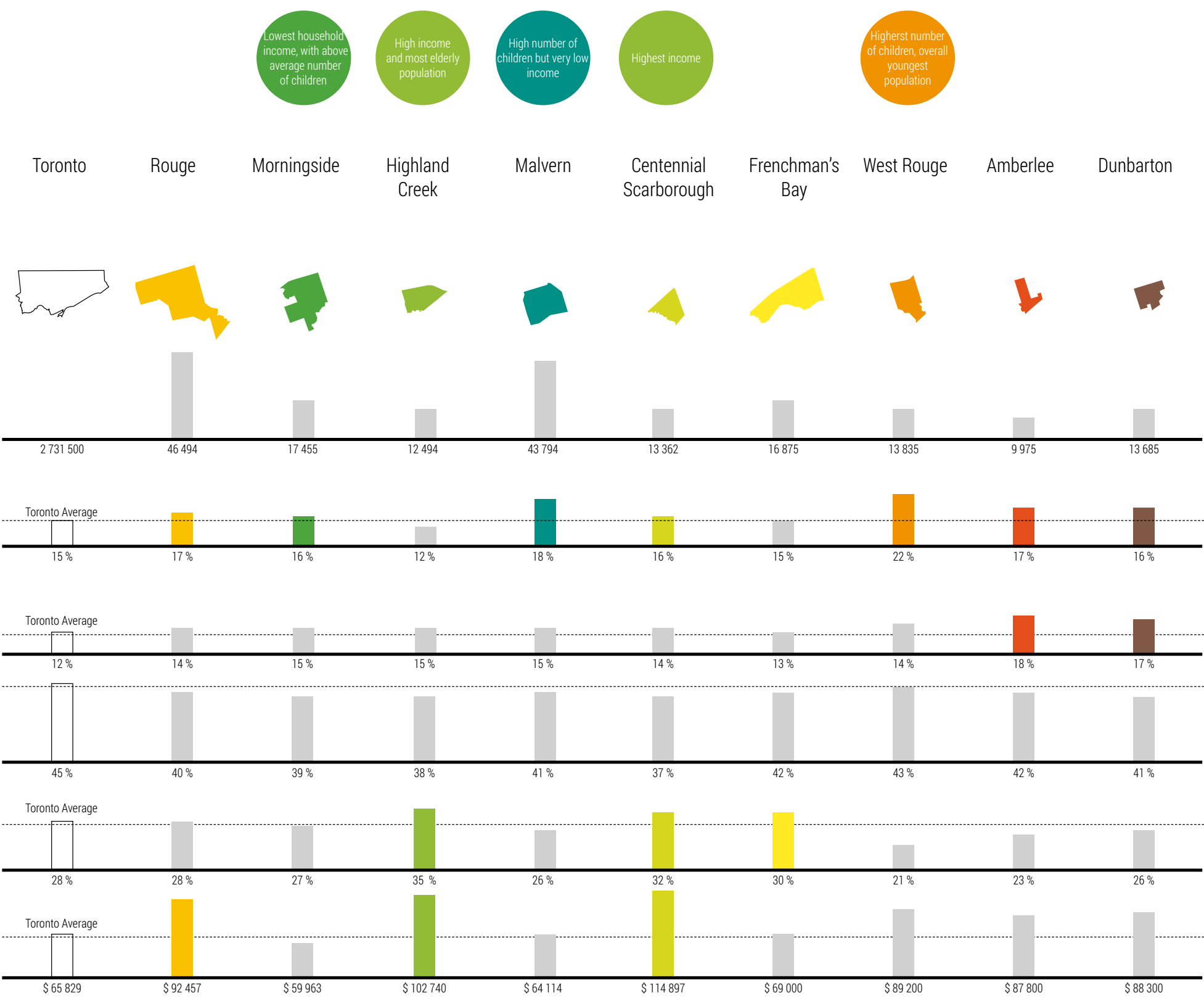
**Youth 12-24 Years**  
With the exception of two neighbourhoods, most have similar populations of youth, around 15%.

**Working Age 25-54 Years**  
All neighbourhoods are below the Toronto average for populations in the working age bracket.

**Seniors 55+ Years**  
Three neighbourhoods have much higher percentages of their population over 55.

**Median Household Income**  
Three neighbourhoods have lower household incomes than the Toronto average and three have significantly higher.

Source: Statistics Canada 2016, Census of Population





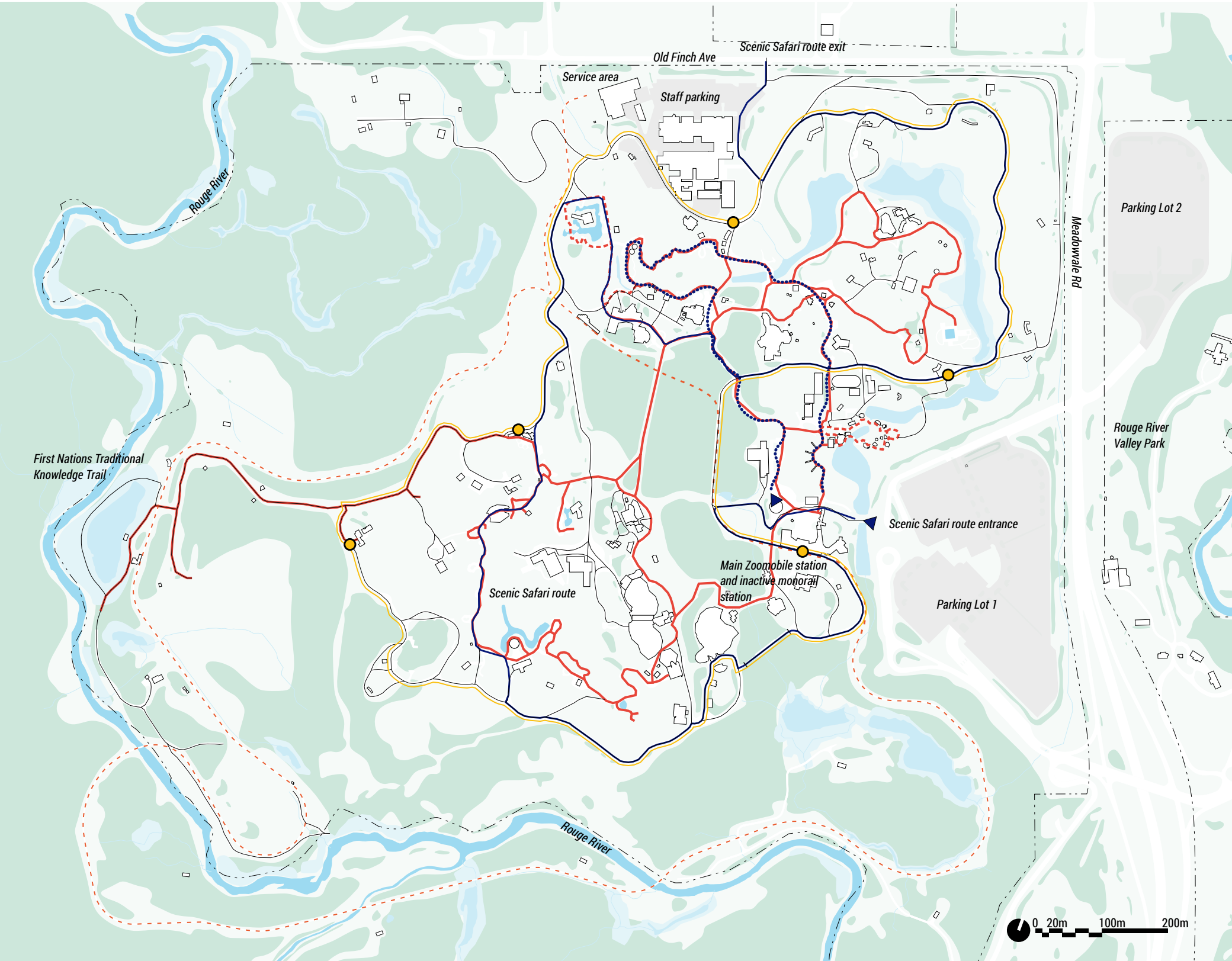
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## 3.6. THE SITE: CIRCULATION

Your Toronto Zoo employs a wide range of modes of transportation to move staff and volunteers, guests, and materials around the site. The Master Plan builds on this diversity by further exploring new ways to move around the Zoo to create varied experiences, as well as more efficient ways to move materials around the vast site.



- Legend**
- Guest Path
  - Seasonal Guest Path
  - Scenic Safari
  - Service Road
  - Zoomobile
  - Terra Lumina immersive multimedia show
  - Decommissioned monorail infrastructure
  - Zoomobile Station





# 3. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

## 3.6. THE SITE: OPPORTUNITIES

Your Zoo is full of many areas across the site with potential to be redesigned in a way that builds on existing and often underexplored zones. This will also create new and innovative opportunities that can enhance animal welfare, improve the guest experience and better enable efficiencies for staff and volunteers through improved work areas.

### Legend

- Modified/added building
- Amplify existing qualities
- Add a new layer to existing qualities

### Capital Projects

- 1 **Addition of Indoor Habitat for African Species**  
(currently not seen during winter, desire to open year-round)
- 2 **Modification of African Rainforest Pavilion**  
(addressing AODA, improving spaces for species and guests)
- 3 **Saving Species Sanctuary**  
(temporary stays for seized, confiscated or rescued animals)
- 4 **Relocation of the Canadian Domain (2 locations)**  
(accessibility and flooding issues due to location in valley)
- 5 **New Nutrition, Welfare, and Enrichment Centre**  
(improve delivery, packaging, distribution of animal food and diet analysis, pair with new guest restaurant program)
- 6 **Optimization of the Wildlife Health Centre**  
(focussing on breeding, desire to expose biotank and labs - densify this area as an active guest hub)

### Additional Opportunity Areas

- 7 Jaguar habitat expansion
- 8 Habitat expansion and connection opportunity
- 9 Forage Farm expanding on existing browse program
- 10 Enhanced stormwater management wetlands
- 11 Arrival/departure experience creating connection and action
- 12 Connected elevated habitats experience
- 13 Core Woods picnic pockets
- 14 Valley Halla, opportunity for temporary events





# 3. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

## 3.6. THE SITE: PAIN POINTS

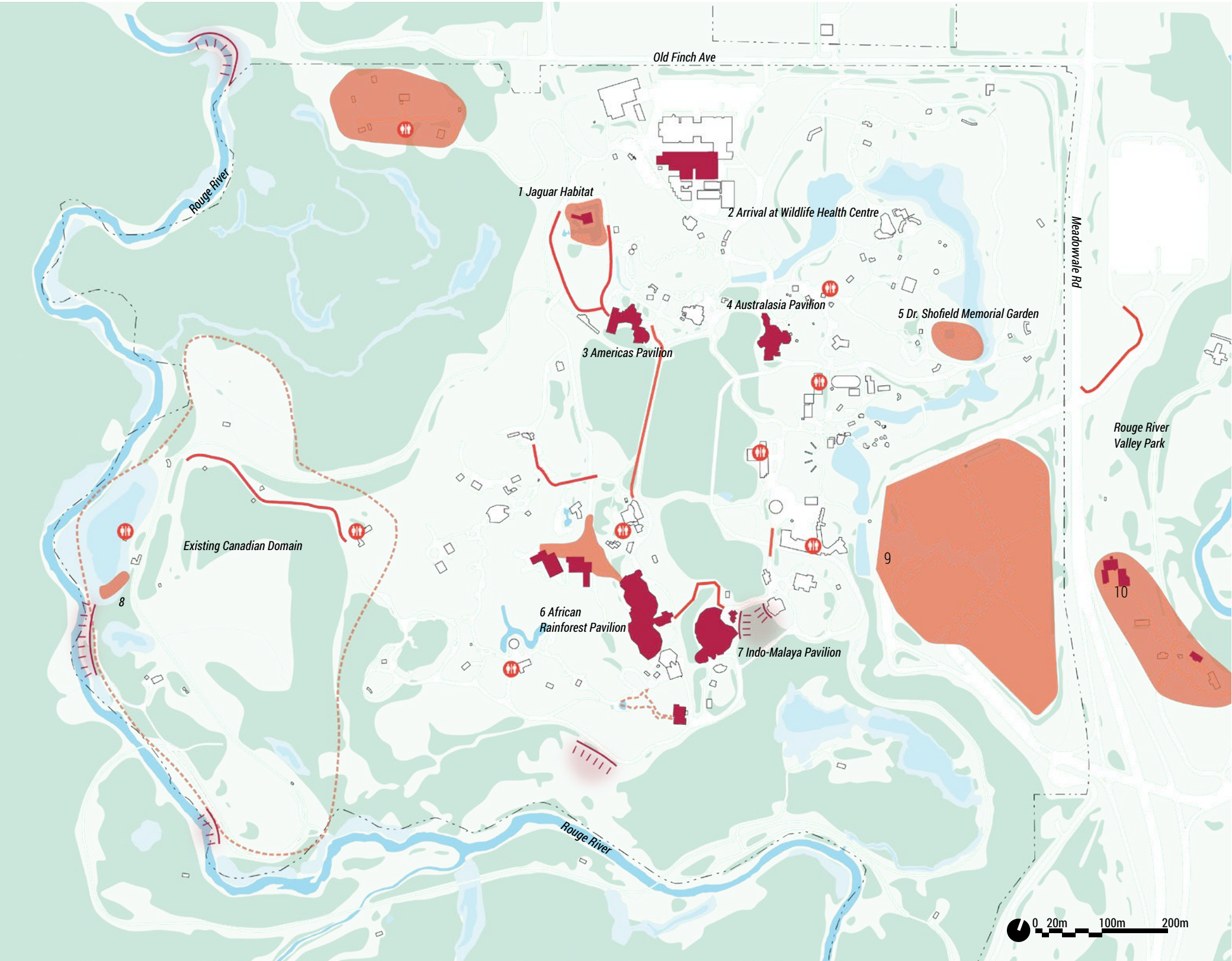
Your Zoo currently faces a number of challenges in meeting the criteria set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, due to steep grades in many places both on paths and in buildings. Additionally, some buildings and outdoor areas require modification to improve holding spaces for animals, experiences for guests, and energy and water sustainability. These challenges present opportunities to design for animal welfare, guest experience, and the environment simultaneously, in a way that is agile and adaptive to both the changing roles of Your Zoo, and the environmental and sustainability challenges of the site.

### Legend

- Underused area with potential
- Problematic building
- Problematic outdoor area
- Washrooms needing improvement
- AODA non-compliant path
- Eroding edge

### Specific Pain Point Areas

- 1 Jaguar enclosure should be expanded, including holding areas; the waterfall is a substantial resource; AODA challenges to access this area
- 2 Feels like back of house - not easy to navigate to Wildlife Health Centre, and no access to second-floor science area
- 3 Very steep internal ramping + flow between here and Tundra Trek could be improved
- 4 No indoor kangaroo viewing in winter
- 5 Forgotten space: Dr. Schofield Memorial Garden
- 6 Very steep internal ramping
- 7 Very steep internal ramping
- 8 Periodic flooding
- 9 Underwhelming arrival and departure experience
- 10 Buildings for conservation breeding program need work - program could be relocated





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## 3.6. THE SITE: ONGOING PROJECTS

There exist a number of projects that are currently ongoing or in the planning phases, to address accessibility challenges, improve animal welfare and enhance guest experience. Further design of these areas, through the Master Plan, works to strengthen the whole experience in these areas, to go beyond simply addressing the initial challenges.



### Legend

- Site boundary
- New buildings currently in design phase
- - - Boundary of areas in planning stage to become AODA compliant
- - - Area under construction for habitat and exhibit improvement

