

Parks and Public Realm Background Memo

Jane Finch Initiative – Phase 1

Parks, Forestry & Recreation
CITY OF TORONTO

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1. Introduction

Public parks and other open spaces perform a variety of critical functions that improve and maintain community and environmental health. They can offer recreation opportunities to support active lifestyles, tranquil spaces for rest, welcoming spaces for social events and gatherings, and natural infrastructure for vital ecosystem services and mitigation of climate change effects. A healthy supply of good-quality parks creates more liveable, complete communities.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the existing and planned parks network in the Jane Finch Study Area and key directions and priorities for the parks network as the Jane Finch Initiative proceeds and the area evolves.

2. Parks and Recreation Planning - Guiding Policies and Principles

2.1 How Does the City of Toronto Create New Parkland?

The creation of new parkland in Toronto is governed by Section 42 of the *Planning Act* and the City of Toronto's Official Plan, Section 3.2.3. The City can acquire and develop parkland through three primary mechanisms:

- **Parkland dedications from (re)development:** As enabled through Section 42 of Ontario's Planning Act, the City has the authority to require a specified portion of lands under development to be conveyed to the City for a public park. This means that land owners who wish to undertake most types of development projects must convey a portion of land, either on the development site itself or at a suitable nearby (off-site) location, to the City for parks purposes. In some cases where a development site may not be a suitable location for a public park, the City can require applicants to pay the cash equivalent of the value of the required parkland dedication, known as 'cash-in-lieu' of parkland. More information on parkland dedications can be found on the City's [Parkland Dedication website](#), in the [Parkland Dedication By-Law](#) (Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 415, Article III), and in the City's Official Plan ([section 3.2.3](#)).
- **Direct acquisitions:** The City can also directly purchase land for the purpose of a park using the above noted Section 42 cash-in-lieu contributions.
- **Internal Transfers of City-owned lands:** City-owned lands are typically operated and maintained by different City Divisions and Agencies (for example, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division oversees parks, while the Transportation Services Division oversees roads). Sometimes, the operation of City-owned lands are internally transferred from one Division / Agency to another when the original Division / Agency no longer has an operational need for those lands or when there is Council-approved direction to implement a new use on the lands.

2.2 City of Toronto Parkland Strategy

The City of Toronto's [Parkland Strategy](#), adopted by City Council in November 2019, was created to guide long-term parks planning, prioritization, and investment throughout the city in order to ensure the expansion and enhancement of the parks system.

The Parkland Strategy (PLS) measures parkland provision using the baseline of residential population against the area of parkland available across the city. It identifies areas of relatively low or high

parkland provision, as well as “Areas of Parkland Need”, which are priority areas for parkland planning and acquisition, and have been determined based on compounding factors such as low park supply, low income, and high growth.

Parks planning and investment throughout the city, and in the Jane Finch Study Area, is guided by the four guiding principles of the PLS:

- Expand the parks system by creating new parkland to support growth and address gaps to ensure an effective parks system that will support the needs of a livable, diverse city.
- Improve the function of existing parks to promote community cohesion, ecological sustainability, and health and wellbeing through active living, access to nature, and the provision of spaces for rest, relaxation, and leisure.
- Include everyone by removing barriers so that parks and other open spaces are inclusive and inviting places that are equitably accessible for people of all ages, cultures, genders, abilities, and incomes.
- Connect parks and other open spaces, physically and visually, and leverage opportunities to use other open spaces so that people, communities and wildlife have abundant access to parks and open spaces and can seamlessly navigate to and through the parks and open space system.

The relevant findings of the Parkland Strategy for the Study Area are noted in Section 3.2.

2.3 City of Toronto Ravine Strategy

The City of Toronto [Ravine Strategy](#) (adopted by City Council in October 2017) and the [Ravine Strategy Implementation Report](#) (adopted by City Council in January 2020) were created to guide the future management, use, enhancement, and protection of Toronto's extensive ravine system. Ravines contain most of Toronto's Environmentally Significant Areas, forests and wetlands, and many varieties and significant species of plants and animals. Healthy ravines are extremely important for both human and environmental health, biodiversity, other ecosystem functions, and mitigating impacts from climate change. Ravines are subject to increasing pressures from recreational use, encroachments from adjacent private property, and illegal activities such as dumping of waste and off-leash dog activity. Without investment and protection, there is the potential that natural areas and ravine ecosystems may be further damaged.

The Ravine Strategy provides, for the first time, an intentional and coordinated vision and approach to managing Toronto's valuable ravine system on an ongoing basis through a series of 20 actions under five guiding principles: protect, invest, connect, partner, and celebrate. As part of the Ravine Strategy, City Council adopted a prioritization framework to be used to prioritize and support the development of capital plans for ravine-based projects. The relevant findings of the Ravine Strategy for the Study Area are noted in Section 3.5.4.

2.4 City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

The City of Toronto [Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2019-2038](#) (FMP), adopted by City Council in November 2017, is a 20-year plan for investment in new and improved recreation facilities across the city. The FMP is guided by the principles of quality, sustainability, innovation, and equity.

The FMP seeks to address three major goals:

- Renew and upgrade existing facilities
- Address gaps and growth-related needs (identify current and future facility gaps based on existing and projected population, and create new facilities where needed); and
- Work with others to maximize opportunities for partnerships and leverage investments.

The [Implementation Strategy for the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan](#), adopted by City Council in October 2019, identifies specific types of recreation facilities required by geography (ward, district, or citywide) and time period: short term (2019-2023), medium term (2024-2028), and long term (2029-2038), in order to address recreation service level gaps throughout the city. The relevant findings of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan for the Study Area are noted in Section 4.3.

3. The Parks System in the Jane Finch Study Area

3.1 Existing Parks Inventory

There are twenty-two (22) existing parks that are located entirely or partially within the Jane Finch Study Area, comprising a total area of approximately 201 hectares (2,006,772 m²), as detailed in Table 1 and shown in Figure 2.

The Parkland Strategy categorizes parks in several ways, as outlined in Figure 1. It outlines various functions that parkland can serve based on the types of programming and assets within the park, as well as various park sizes.

Each park size has an associated catchment area, based on a reasonable distance to travel to access the park. As the size of a park increases, so does its catchment area. The consideration of park size and catchment areas are based on two assumptions: larger parks contain more space to accommodate various features and functions, and people are generally willing to travel greater distances to parks with more amenities.

While there are several parkettes and small parks, most of the existing parks in the Study Area are larger parks that contain naturalized areas and large-scale recreation amenities such as multi-purpose sports fields and baseball diamonds. While such a network of large parks and ravines is a key asset in the Study Area, there are opportunities to improve access to these large parks, as well as opportunities for a greater range of park sizes.

FUNCTIONS

HEALTH + WELLNESS		
 PASSIVE + ECOLOGICAL Spaces that support passive recreation and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment.	 SPORT + PLAY Spaces that support organized or programmed sport and recreation, and active play.	 COMMUNITY + CIVIC Spaces that support community activities and foster community interaction.

SIZE

PARKETTE	SMALL PARK	MEDIUM PARK	LARGE PARK	CITY PARK	LEGACY PARK
Size: < 0.5 ha	Size: 0.5-1.5 ha	Size: 1.5-3 ha	Size: 3-5 ha	Size: 5-8 ha	Size: 8 ha +
Catchment: 0.5 km (5-10min)	Catchment: 1 km (10-20 min)	Catchment: 1.5 km (20-30 min)	Catchment: 3 km (30+ min)	Catchment: N/A*	Catchment: N/A*

**City and Legacy parks have not been given a specific catchment area due to their very large size, the unique features they contain, which attract and serve a city-wide function.*

Figure 1: Park Types - Parkland Strategy

Examples of different spaces and features as part of each park function include:

- *Passive + Ecological*: ponds, wetlands, beaches, ravines, etc;
- *Sport + Play*: playgrounds, soccer fields, basketball courts, skating rinks, etc; and
- *Community + Civic*: picnic sites, community gardens, community recreation centres, amphitheatres, fire pits, etc.

In the Jane Finch Study Area, the majority of existing parks contain **ecological** features, such as ravines, and programming intended for **sports and play**. There is a need and opportunity for more community and civic spaces/features to accommodate outdoor community gathering and events, such as farmers' markets, movie nights, and other programming.

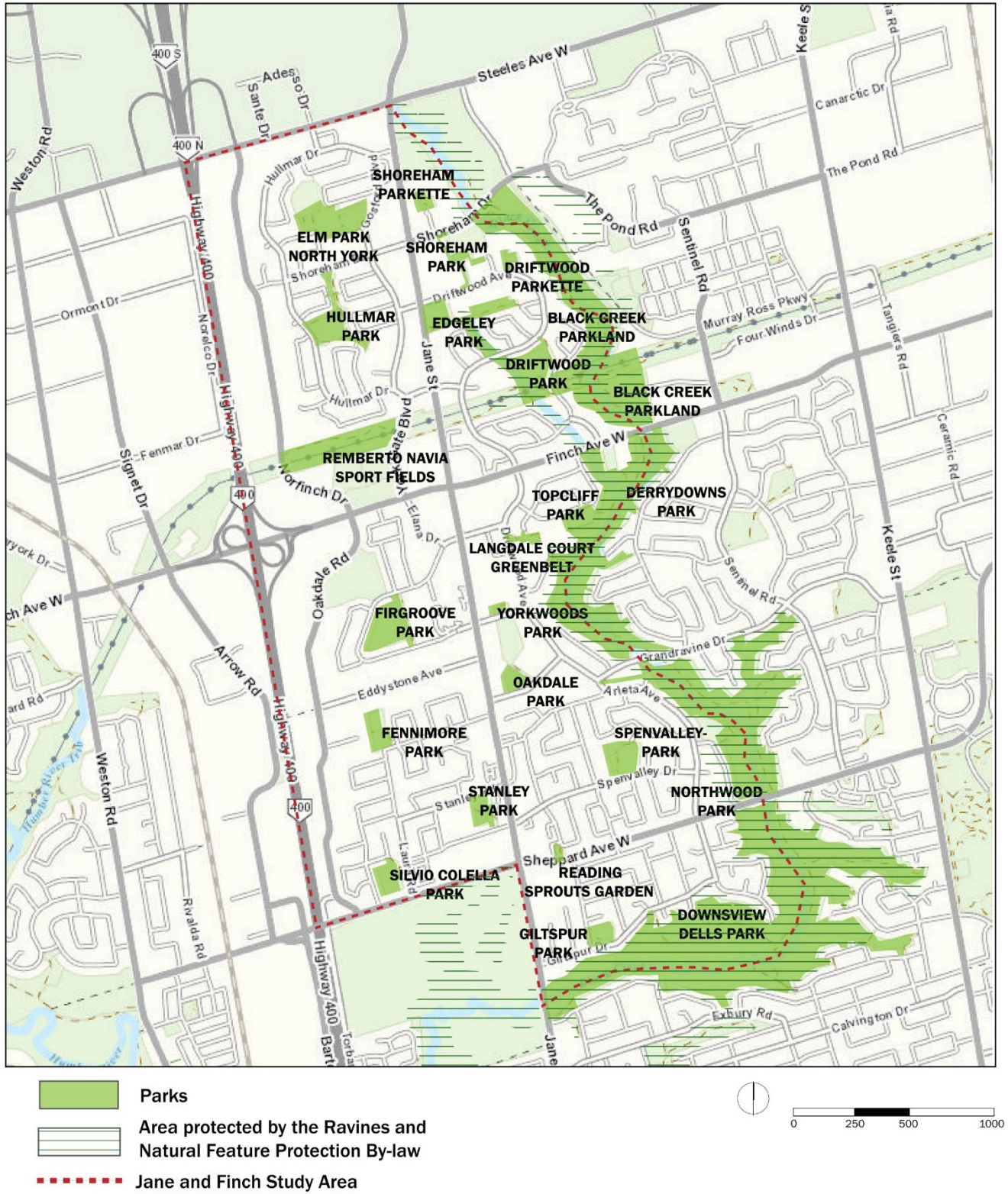


Figure 2: Existing Parkland in the Study Area

Table 1: Existing Parkland in the Study Area

Park	Area (m²)	Area (ha)	Park Size Classification (Parkland Strategy)	Primary Park Function(s) (Parkland Strategy)	Key Park Features and Facilities
Black Creek Parkland	249,429	24.9	Legacy Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive + Ecological 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravine • Black Creek Trail
Derrydowns Park (portion)	278,932	27.9	Legacy Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive + Ecological 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravine • Black Creek Trail • Washroom Building • Fire pit
Downsview Dells Park (portion)	748,646	74.9	Legacy Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive + Ecological • Community + Civic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravine • Black Creek Trail • (2) Firepits • (4) Picnic Sites
Driftwood Park	87,065	8.7	Legacy Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Creek Trail • Driftwood Park Trail • Playground • Baseball Diamond
Driftwood Parkette	5,319	0.5	Small Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground
Edgeley Park	42,030	4.2	Large Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play • Community + Civic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driftwood Community Centre • Basketball Court • Outdoor Pool • Playground • Black Creek Trail
Elm Park – North York	47,745	4.8	Large Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Booth Memorial Arena • Playground • Soccer Field • Splash/Spray Pad
Fennimore Park	19,716	2	Medium Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play • Passive + Ecological 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground • Baseball Diamond Field • Splash/Spray Pad • Forested Area
Firgrove Park	40,971	4.1	Large Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground • (2) Outdoor Bocce Courts • Basketball Court • Tennis Courts • Soccer Field • Ball hockey/sports pad • Horticulture Display

Park	Area (m ²)	Area (ha)	Park Size Classification (Parkland Strategy)	Primary Park Function(s) (Parkland Strategy)	Key Park Features and Facilities
Giltspur Park	13,017	1.3	Small Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (4) Outdoor Bocce Courts • Baseball Diamond • Playground
Hullmar Park	36,080	3.6	Large Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground • Tennis Courts • Baseball Diamond
Langdale Court Greenbelt	5,607	0.6	Small Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive + Ecological 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways • Small Forested Area
Northwood Park (portion)	252,030	25.2	Legacy Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play • Passive + Ecological • Community + Civic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northwood Community Centre • Playground • Splash/Spray Pad • (2) Picnic Sites • Washroom Building • Fire pit • Ravine • Black Creek Trail
Oakdale Park	14,557	1.5	Small Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play • Community + Civic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oakdale Community Centre • Outdoor pool • Playground • (2) Basketball Courts • (2) Outdoor Chess Tables • Community Garden • Outdoor Fitness Station
Reading Sprouts Garden	1,210	0.1	Parkette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community + Civic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2) Shade Structures • Amphitheatre
Remberto Navia Sport Fields	78,004	7.8	City Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finch Corridor Trail • Cricket Pitch Field • (5) Soccer Fields
Shoreham Park	1,353	0.1	Parkette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground • Splash/Spray Pad
Silvio Colella Park	19,171	1.9	Medium Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground • (4) Outdoor Bocce Courts
Spenvally Park	28,142	2.8	Medium Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground • Splash/Spray Pad • Multipurpose Field • Baseball Diamond

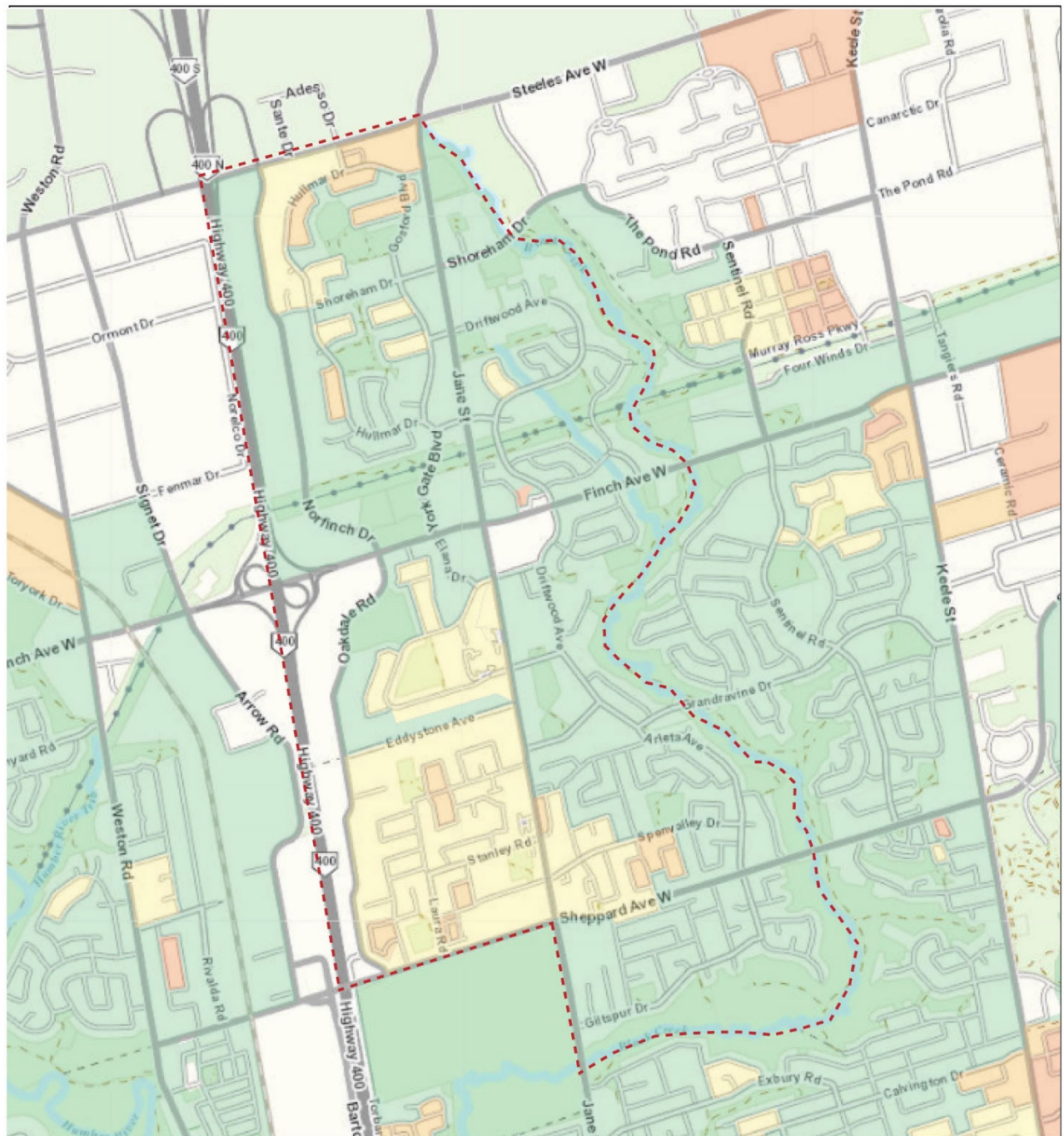
Park	Area (m ²)	Area (ha)	Park Size Classification (Parkland Strategy)	Primary Park Function(s) (Parkland Strategy)	Key Park Features and Facilities
Stanley Park	17,885	1.8	Medium Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play • Community + Civic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domenico DiLuca Community Recreation Centre • Outdoor Pool • Tennis Courts • Baseball Diamond
Topcliff Park	15,810	1.6	Medium Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play • Passive + Ecological 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground • (2) Outdoor Bocce Courts • Forested Area
Yorkwoods Park	4,053	0.4	Parkette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport + Play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground

3.2 Parkland Provision Levels

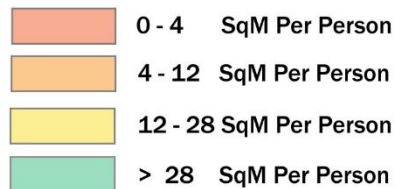
The 2019 Parkland Strategy provides an assessment of parkland provision city-wide, measuring the amount of parkland available to residents in 2016 per census dissemination block. This assessment includes all City-owned and operated parkland, but does not include ravine areas with significant slopes as these do not function as accessible and programmable open spaces.

According to the 2019 Parkland Strategy, the majority of the Study Area enjoys a parkland provision rate at or above the city-wide average of 28 m² per person, as shown in Figure 3. Highest levels of parkland provision are found nearest to the Black Creek Ravine, where many areas have a parkland provision rate double that of the city-wide average. However, parkland provision varies across the Study Area. There are some areas with parkland provision below the city-wide average – most notably, areas west of Jane Street and south of Steeles Avenue and areas west of Jane Street and south of Finch Avenue. The important role of the ravine lands in supporting the parks system becomes especially apparent when ravine lands are excluded from parkland provision calculations, as illustrated in Figure 4. This analysis shows a dramatic reduction in parkland provision levels and speaks to the need to support appropriate access and programming opportunities in ravine lands which complement the other critical ecological functions that these green spaces serve.

Future impacts on parkland provision are also assessed by the 2019 Parkland Strategy, informed by population projections based on the City's development pipeline. Parkland provision is projected to 2033 and assumes no new parkland is added. The projected parkland provision in the Study Area is anticipated to remain steady to 2033, as shown in Figure 5. However, these projections do not necessarily reflect the future development pressures and population growth that is expected to occur in this area as a result of transit investment. There will therefore be a need for new parkland as growth occurs.



Total Park Area (m2) Per Person

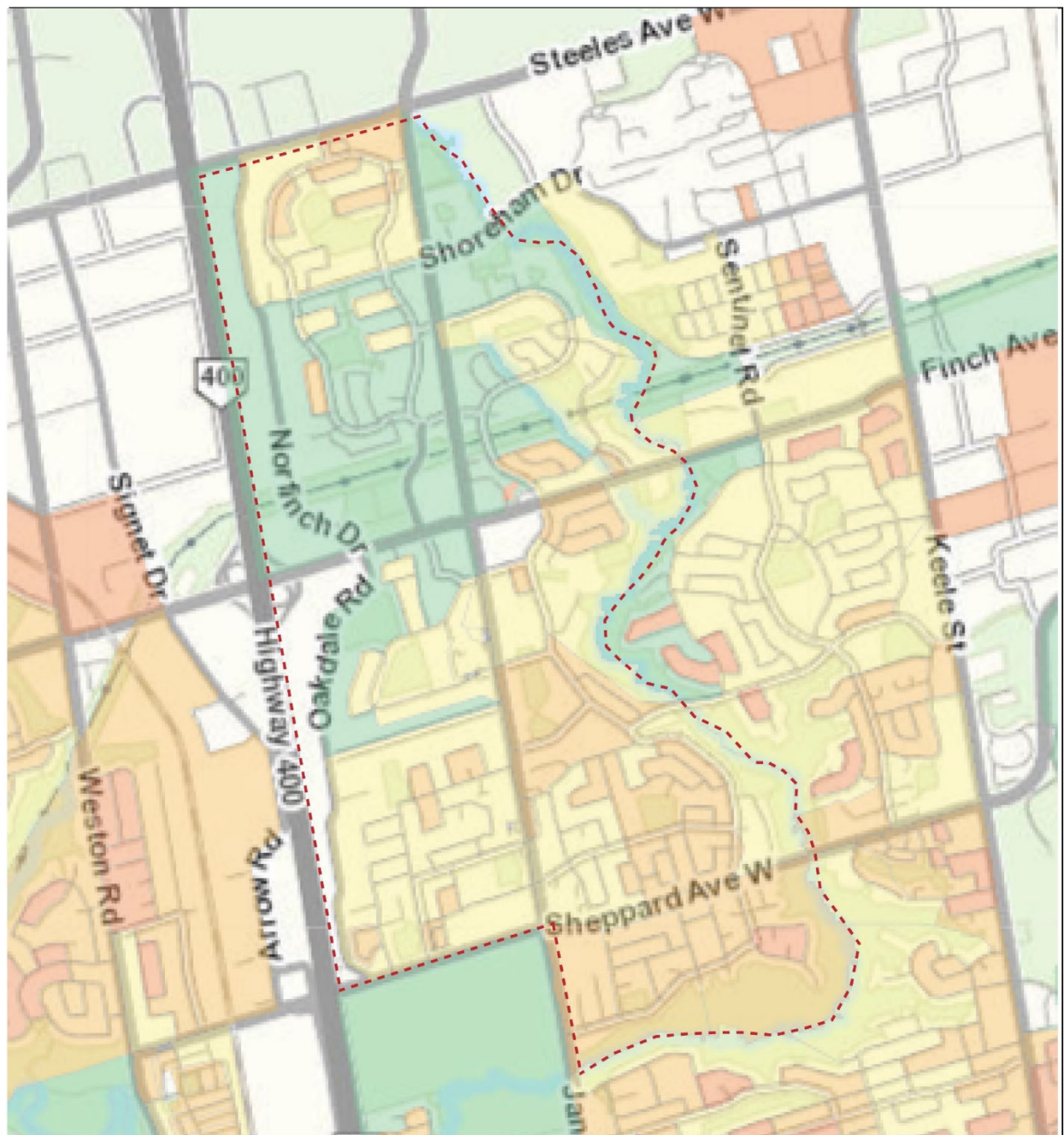


..... Jane and Finch Study Area



0 250 500 1000

Figure 3 - Parkland Provision (2016)



Total Park Area (m2) Per Person Without Ravines

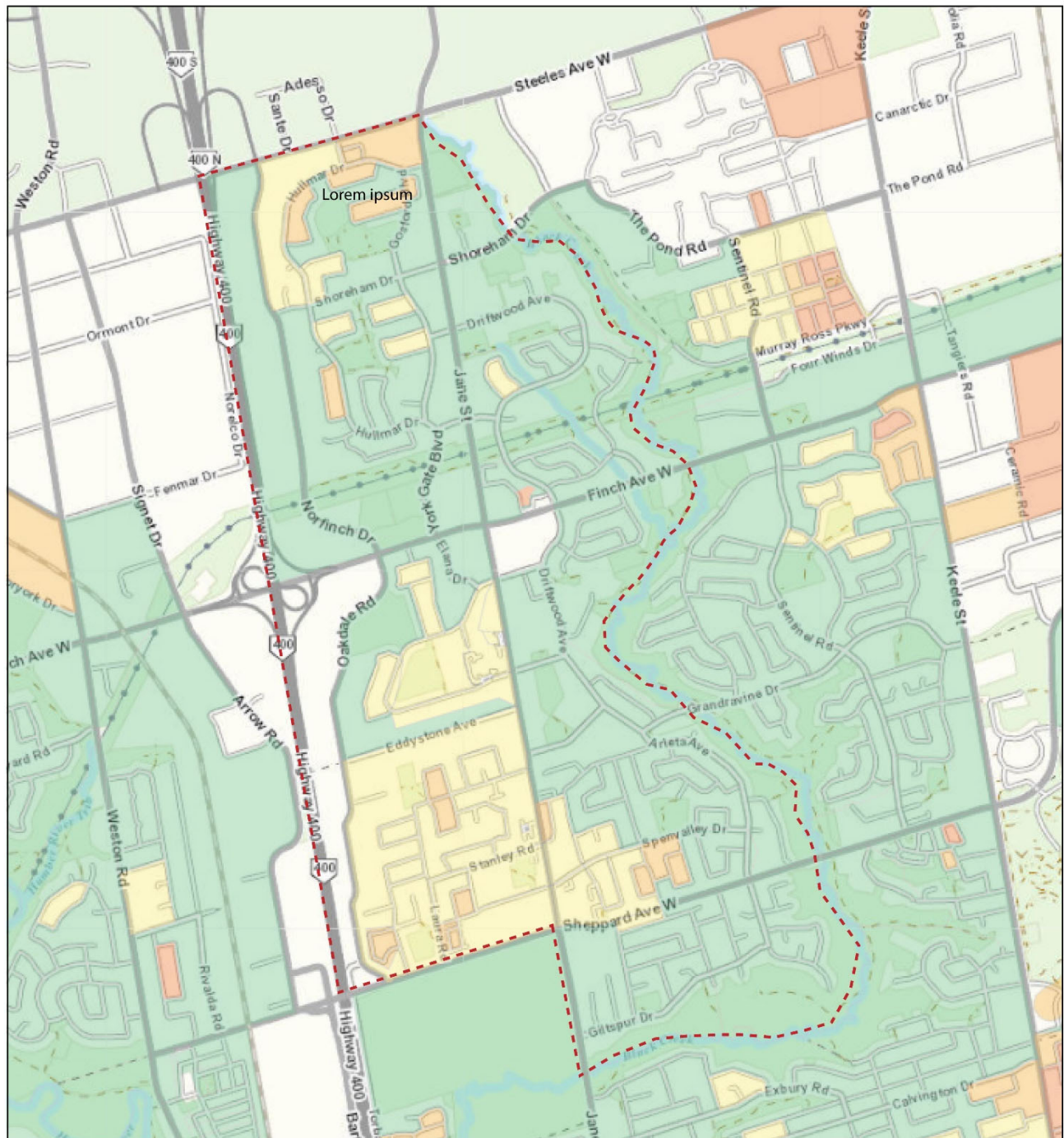


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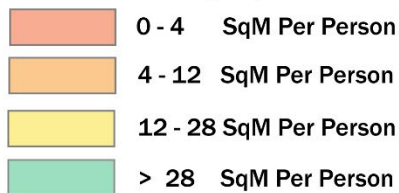


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Figure 4 - Parkland Provision without Ravines (2016)



Total Park Area (m2) Per Person



--- Jane and Finch Study Area

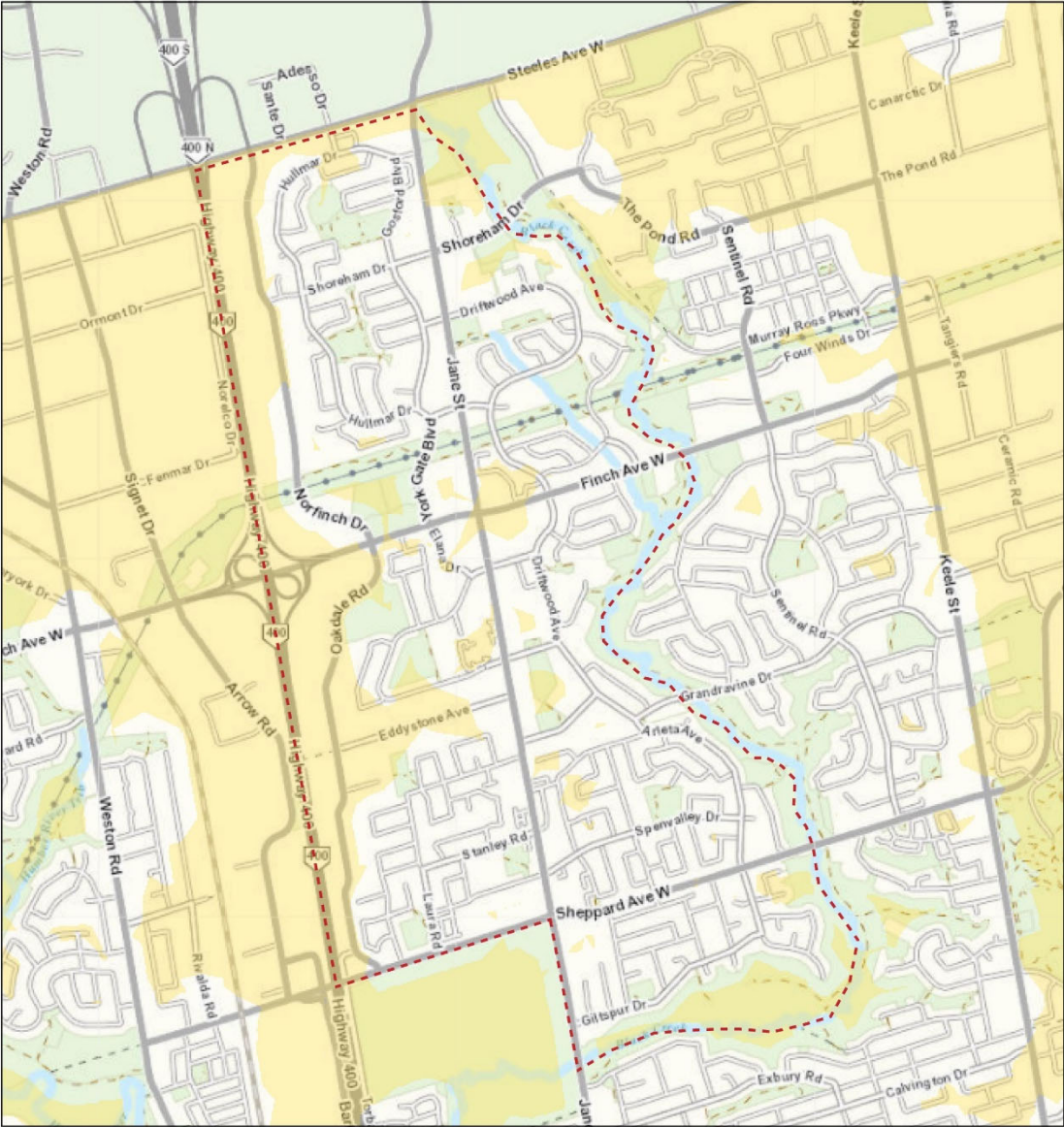


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Figure 5 Projected Parkland Provision Levels (2033)

3.3 Walkability to Parkland

The Parkland Strategy measures walkability – or the ability for residents to comfortably and safely walk to a park without the need of a vehicle. Walkability is impacted by distance but also by physical barriers that prevent a pedestrian from directly accessing a park, such as steep slopes or fences. Figure 5 illustrates walkability gaps, where residents are not able to access to a park within approximately a 500-metre distance or a 5 to 10 minute walk of their homes. Although much of the Study Area enjoys relatively high parkland provision levels, there are several area with notable walkability gaps. This includes areas around Firgrove Park and areas around the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue West.



Walkability Gap

Areas not served by a park within 500m

Areas within 500m of a park

Parks and other green areas

..... Jane and Finch Study Area

Figure 6 Parkland Walkability Gaps

3.4 Tree Canopy and Heat Vulnerability

A large and healthy tree canopy is important for both community and ecological health. Canopy cover is a measure of an area covered by trees as viewed from above. The Study Area has an average tree canopy cover of approximately 20 percent, which is lower than the city-wide average of between 28-31 percent. The City's target for tree canopy cover is 40 percent by 2050.

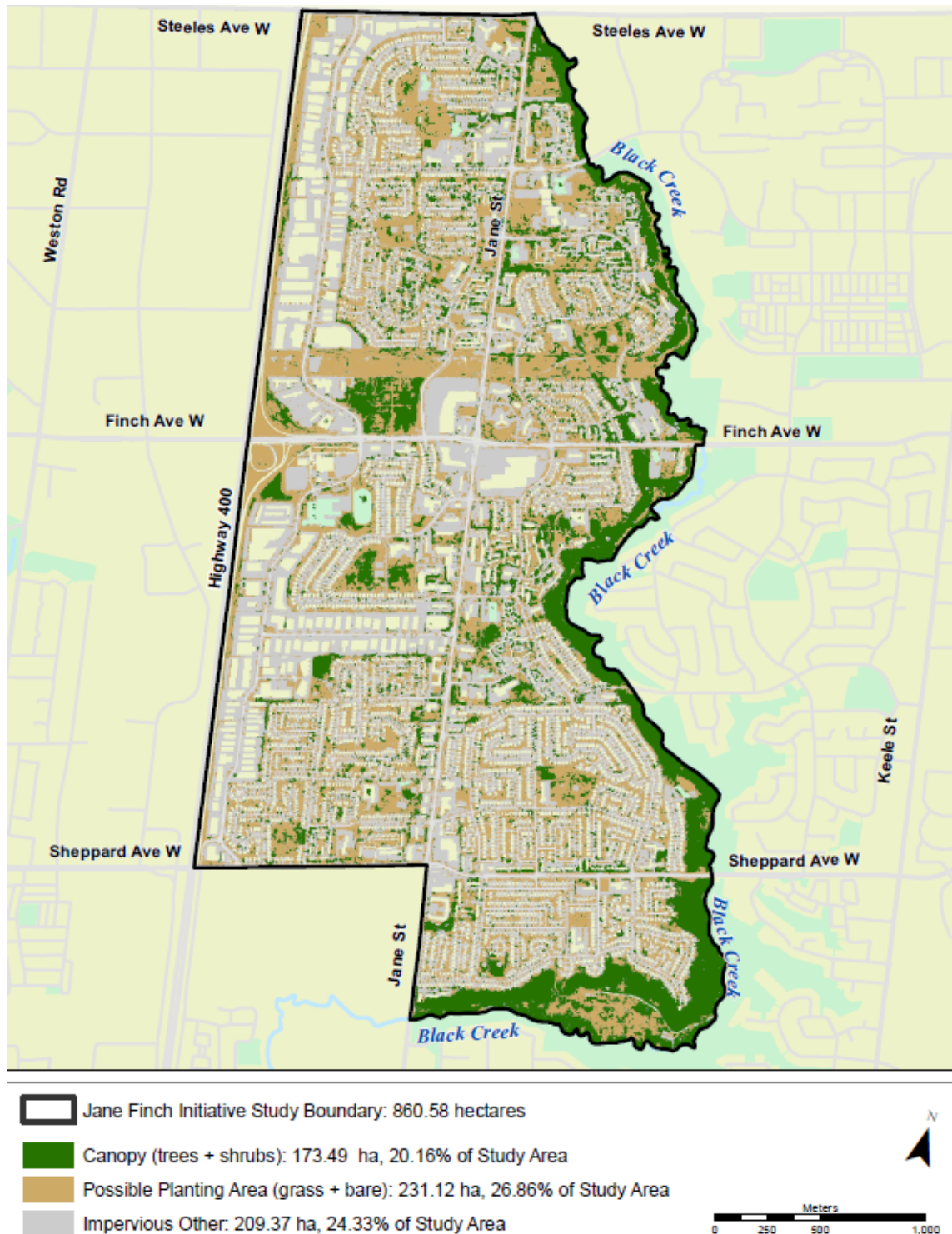


Figure 7 - Tree Canopy Cover

As illustrated in Figure 7, most trees in the Study Area are concentrated in ravines and parks. There are fewer trees along major roadways or in built-up, urbanized portions of the Study Area. Tree canopy cover is particularly low around the Jane Street and Finch Avenue West intersection and along the western boundary of the Study Area.

To understand the extent and benefits of the tree canopy, a Tree Equity Score has been calculated for every Toronto neighbourhood. The Tree Equity Score is derived from data about the tree canopy, climate, and demographic and socioeconomic composition. It is an indicator of whether an area has the right number of trees so all people can experience the benefits that trees provide. Tree equity analysis produces scores ranging from 0 to 100. Areas with lower Tree Equity Scores should be considered as priority areas for closing the tree canopy gap through more tree plantings.

Overall, the Study Area has a Tree Equity Score of approximately 90 percent based on the 2018 Tree Canopy Study Update. The areas north of Finch Avenue West have a slightly higher score than those to the south, as shown in Figure 8. Recognizing that ravine lands significantly contribute to the urban forest, this study also considered tree equity excluding the ravine system. Under this scenario, the Tree Equity Score for the areas south of Finch Avenue West was much lower, falling to 76 and representing the 15th lowest score across the city.

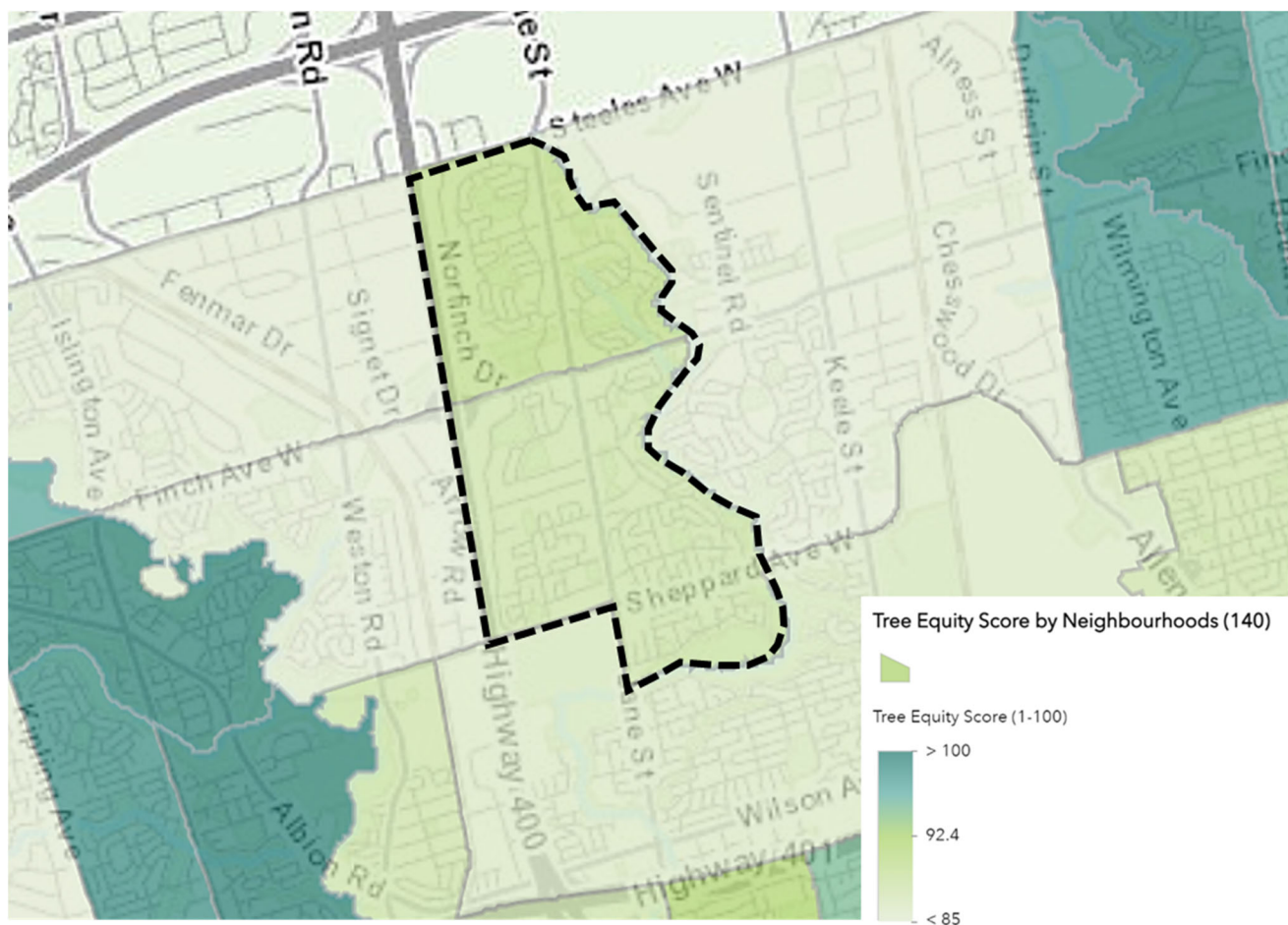


Figure 8: Tree Equity Score

The City also monitors areas of heat vulnerability in order to support hot weather response activities and long-term climate change adaptation planning. Extreme heat is associated with serious health impacts ranging from heat stroke to death, which are more likely to be experienced by young children, seniors, those living with illness, those living in poverty, outdoor workers, and people who are homeless or underhoused.

Typically, urban areas with low tree canopies and vegetation levels and high amounts of impermeable surfaces, such as paved parking lots, experience higher temperatures since modern building materials absorb heat instead of reflecting it. Areas that experience these 'heat island' effects also experience increased energy costs (for air conditioning), increased air pollution levels, and increased heat-related illnesses and mortality.

Toronto Public Health has developed a Heat Vulnerability Index, illustrated in Figure 9. The Heat Vulnerability Index takes into account multiple variables, such as surface temperature, distance from green spaces, tree canopy shading, dwellings in high-rise buildings, and the population of low-income children, among others. The Study Area scores high on the Heat Vulnerability Index, meaning that there are heat and health concerns that must be addressed.

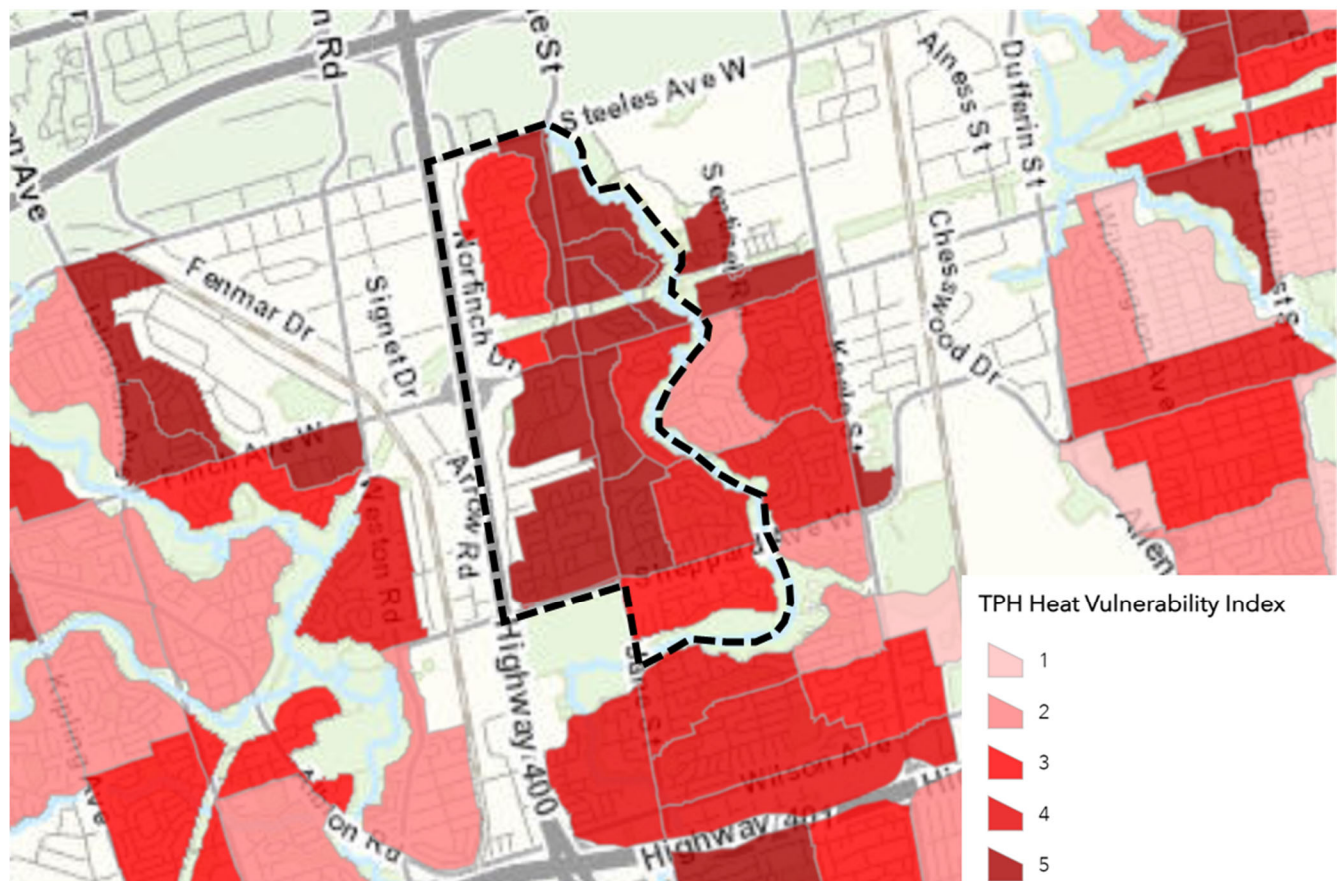


Figure 9: Heat Vulnerability Index

3.5 Park Initiatives in the Study Area

3.5.1 Recently Completed Park Improvements

Several parks within or near the Study Area were upgraded or accommodated new facility installations within the last five years and are noted in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Recently Completed Park and Recreation Facility Improvements in the Study Area

Park	Recent Improvements
Derrydowns Park	New outdoor fitness equipment Bridge replacement
Downsview Dells Park	Washroom building renovation
Driftwood Park	New playground
Driftwood Parkette	New playground ('KABOOM!' project)
Elm Park – North York	New playground and splash pad
Fennimore Park	New playground
Firgrove Park	New playground
Hullmar Park	New playground
Northwood Park	New pathways
Oakdale Park	New playground New shade structure with seating
Silvio Colella Park	Toronto Water is managing a major underground water infrastructure improvement project as part of the City's Basement Flooding Protection Program
Spenvalley Park	New splash pad

3.5.2 Planned Park Improvements and Facilities

There are several planned facility improvement projects within or near the Jane Finch Study Area in the Council-approved Parks, Forestry and Recreation 2021-2030 Capital Budget and Plan, as detailed in Table 3. The timing of planned projects, particularly those which are planned to occur later within the period, may be subject to shift (i.e. occur earlier or later), based on facility conditions and emerging priorities, which will partly be informed by the Jane Finch Initiative.

Table 3: Planned Park and Recreation Facility Improvements in the Study Area

Park	Type of capital improvements	Timing
Derrydowns Park	Trails and pathways improvement -	2026
Derrydowns Park	Public washroom state of good repair rehabilitation	2028
Driftwood Park	Bridge work	2026
Driftwood Park	Trails and pathways improvement	2029

Park	Type of capital improvements	Timing
Edgeley Park	Parking lot state of good repair rehabilitation	2029
Firgrove Park	Trails and pathways improvement	2025
Hullmar Park	Tennis courts state of good repair rehabilitation	2023-2024
Hullmar Park	Trails and pathways improvement	2025
Northwood Park	Trails and pathways improvement	2027
Oakdale Community Centre	State of good repair rehabilitation	2024-2025
Future Western North York New Community Recreation Centre (60 Starview Lane)	New facility (design and construction)	2021-2025
Shoreham Park	Playground enhancement	2023-2024
Spenvally Park	Trails and pathways improvement	2021
Stanley Park	Tennis courts state of good repair rehabilitation	2028

3.5.3 Future (Proposed) Parkland and Facilities

A future public park and a TCHC-owned and operated community centre are planned for the Study Area through the Firgrove-Grassways Master Plan. The master plan for the Firgrove-Grassways community establishes a framework for the future redevelopment of the lands and was endorsed in principle by City Council in February 2020. The plan includes a new 0.42-hectare central public park adjacent to a TCHC owned and operated community facility which would contain a new City-run childcare centre, community rooms, and an outdoor pool.

As growth occurs in other parts of the Study Area, there will be a need for additional new parkland. Parkland will be secured primarily through development applications, as new development is required to dedicate land to the City for parkland, as discussed in Section 2.1.

3.5.4 Trail and Ravine Improvements

Upper Black Creek Priority Investment Area

The Study Area contains a substantial ravine network along Black Creek. As part of the Ravine Strategy, a Prioritization Framework was developed to support the development of capital plans for ravine-based projects in certain areas. This approach recognizes that work cannot be undertaken through the entire ravine system all at once, which includes 105 segments.

An area identified as the Upper Black Creek ravine area (north of Finch Avenue W) has been selected as one of the first ten Priority Investment Areas and is shown in Figure 10. These Priority Investment Areas will require two key types of investment: 1) enhancing people's access to the ravines while managing and reducing user impacts through initiatives such as new boardwalks, lookouts and seating areas, improving trails, formalizing access points, and slope stability and erosion control work, and 2) protecting and restoring ecological features through the creation of wetlands, management of invasive species, and restoration of forests and riparian areas.

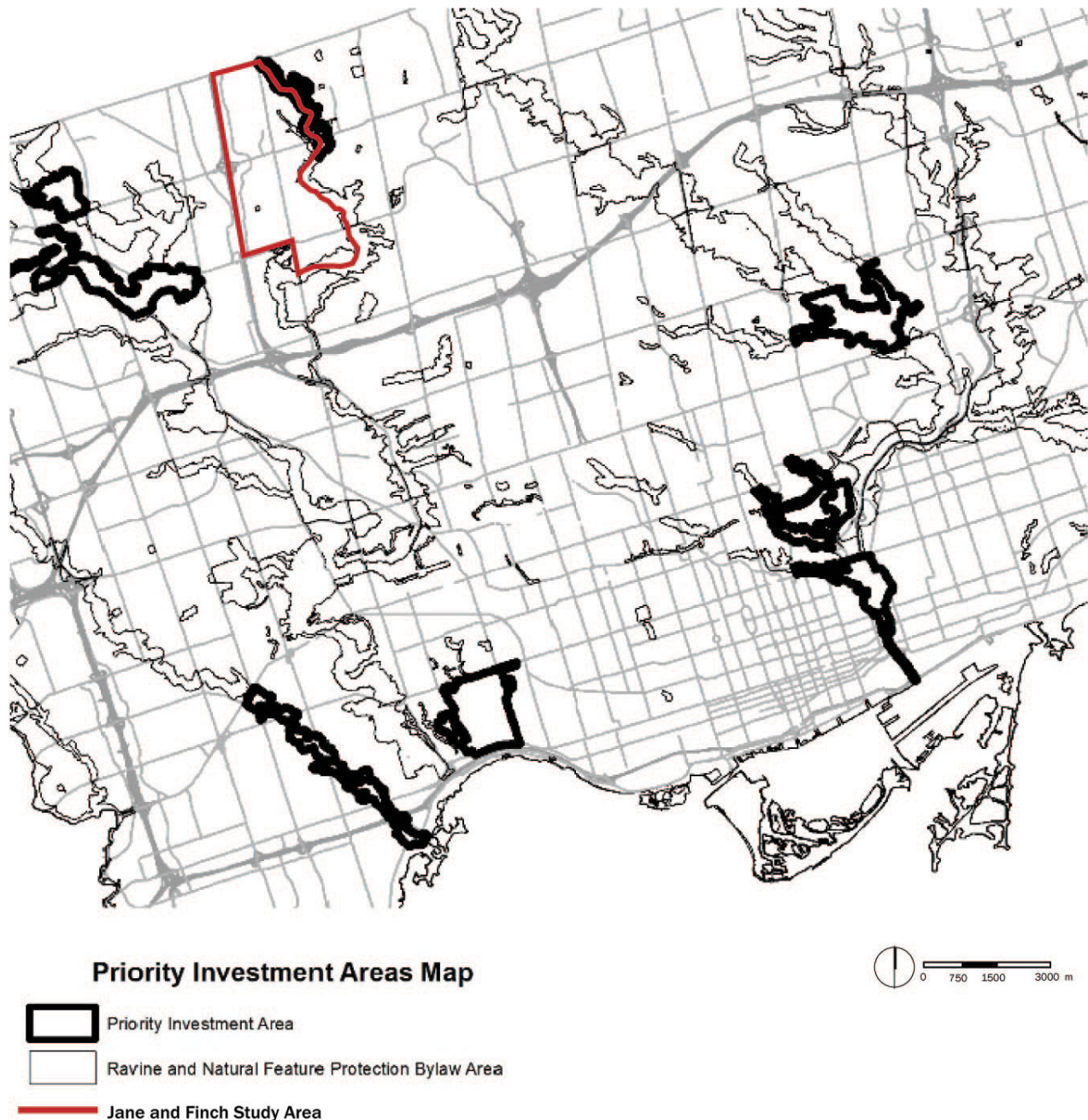


Figure 10: Ravine Priority Investment Areas - Ravine Strategy

The Upper Black Creek ravine area will be the focus of further study and investments within the next 10 years to improve protection of this natural area, while offering safe and sustainable opportunities for

people to connect with, contribute to, and celebrate ravines. The Ravine Strategy Implementation report identified \$104.9 million of capital investment needed to address both state of good repair and service improvements for the first ten Priority Investment Areas. Most of that amount is (\$99.4 million) is not yet funded. The City is seeking financial support from the Provincial and Federal governments for the unfunded capital component of the Ravine Strategy.

Loop Trail

The Ravine Strategy also identifies a ravine project known as the Loop Trail. In partnership with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and Evergreen, the Loop Trail project seeks to create a continuous, 81-kilometre off-road, multi-use ring trail, as shown in Figure 11. The Loop Trail is intended to knit together five Ravine Priority Investment Areas, 22 Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, the Humber River and Don River ravine systems, the Waterfront, and neighbourhoods along the Finch hydro corridor (including the Jane Finch Study Area).

Currently, 66 kilometres of the Loop Trail already exist, including a portion along the Finch corridor through the Study Area. An additional 15 kilometres of the Loop Trail must be completed, including a gap slightly west of the Study Area (west of Highway 400). This project aims to mobilize municipal, regional, public and philanthropic partners and funding to complete the trail and create a seamless loop.



Figure 11: Proposed Loop Trail - Ravine Strategy

Northwest Cultural Trail

The proposed [Northwest Cultural Trail](#) is a primarily north-south trail project that is intended to connect to the Loop Trail. The goal of the Northwest Cultural Trail project is to connect several multi use paths in ravines, parks, and Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS), and along active transportation bridges, greenways and streets into a 28-kilometre active transportation and cultural route, as shown in Figure 10. The trail will connect three Black Torontonians communities – Jane Finch, Lawrence Heights, and Little Jamaica.

The Northwest Cultural Trail proposes the northerly extension of the existing Black Creek Trail (just north of Shoreham Drive) to Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. This area aligns with the Upper Black Creek ravine priority investment area.

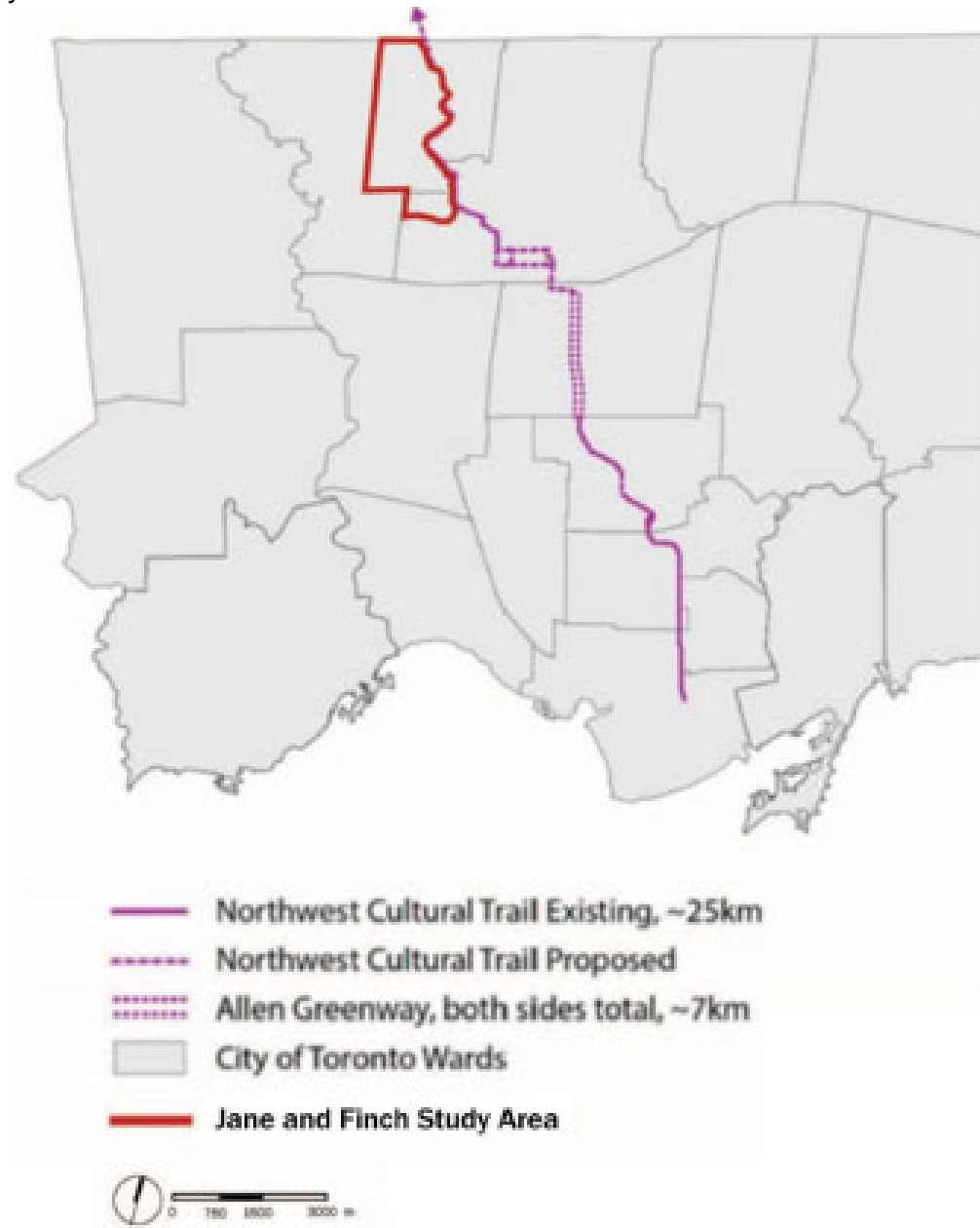


Figure 12: Northwest Cultural Trail

3.5.5 Indigenous Place-Making

The City has a priority to incorporate Indigenous place-making in Toronto's parks and public realm. Place-making means strengthening the connection between people and the places they share. In December 2020, staff presented an [Indigenous Place-Making Initiative](#) to the City's Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee. The goal of the Indigenous Place-Making Framework is to:

- Expand and ensure presentation and commemoration of Indigenous histories and cultures;
- Create space – physically, and in process and policy – for ceremony, teaching and community;
- Strengthen Indigenous connections with lands and waters, both traditionally and contemporarily used; and
- Build capacity for land-based Indigenous engagement, and for greater cultural competency in City of Toronto staff.

The Place-making Framework has four focus areas: public art, places and naming, policy and capacity, and engagement/consultation.

Indigenous place-making will be an important driver for the creation and design of new parks and ravine initiatives in the Jane Finch Study Area.

4. Active Recreation Facilities in the Jane Finch Study Area

4.1 Existing Outdoor Recreation Facilities

One of parks' key roles is to provide opportunities for active recreation and play for people of all ages and abilities.

The provision of outdoor recreation facilities in the Study Area has been evaluated by examining the recommended service catchment areas defined in the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2019-2038, which are approximately 2 kilometres for most facility types.

From a geographic perspective, the Study Area is well-served by most types of outdoor recreation facilities, meaning that there are various facilities located either within the Study Area or within a short walk from the Study Area. Maps illustrating the service catchment areas for various indoor and outdoor recreation facilities are included in the Appendix. The need for additional future facilities to serve emerging growth-based service gaps are identified below.

4.2 Existing Community Recreation Centres

There are 5 existing community recreation centres with the Study Area, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Existing Community Recreation Centres Serving the Study Area

Community Recreation Centre	Size (ft ²)	Facilities	Notes
John Booth Memorial Arena	30,591	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor ice pad 3 multipurpose rooms 	
Driftwood Community Recreation Centre	24,994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gymnasium Outdoor pool 7 multipurpose rooms Kitchen 	
Oakdale Community Centre	10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gymnasium Outdoor pool 2 multipurpose rooms Kitchen Preschool 	State of good repair rehabilitation scheduled in 2024-2025
Northwood Community Centre	36,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gymnasium Outdoor pool Lounge Meeting room 5 multipurpose rooms 3 kitchens Weight room 	
Domenico Di Luca Community Recreation Centre	12,896	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gymnasium Outdoor pool 3 meeting rooms Kitchen 	

4.3 Future Recommended Recreation Facilities

The Implementation Strategy for the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Facilities Master Plan ('FMP Implementation Strategy') identifies specific types of recreation facilities that are required by geography (ward, district, or citywide) and time period: short term (2019-2023), medium term (2024-2028), and long term (2029-2038).

According to the FMP Implementation Strategy, the following types of future recreation facilities may be able to serve the Study Area's population, by either being accommodated in new or existing parks within or around the Study Area:

- One (1) new **artificial ice rink/skating trail** is recommended in Ward 7 (Humber River-Black Creek) in the short term (next few years). A location for this new facility is currently being investigated.

The FMP Implementation Strategy also recommends the following additional facilities to be located throughout the city, as needed and appropriate, that can potentially serve the Study Area, depending on their final location:

- Multiple full-size and junior soccer/multi-use sports fields in both the short and long term;
- Multiple cricket pitches in both the short and long term;

- Two new tennis courts specifically in the North York District in the medium term (2024 to 2038)
- Multiple basketball courts in the longer term (2029 to 2038);
- Multiple smaller 'skatespots' in the longer term (2029 to 2038); and
- Multiple Dog Off-Leash Areas (DOLAs) in both the short and long term.

Given the need for multiple soccer/multi-use sports fields and cricket pitches to serve the city's population and the challenges associated with locating these land-intensive facilities, the City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division is currently developing a city-wide Sports Field Strategy and Cricket Strategy. These strategies will guide and prioritize investment, refine design and maintenance standards, identify priority locations for these large-scale facilities, and identify opportunities for field upgrades and repurposing of underused fields if warranted.

5. Community Feedback to Date

Through public engagement activities conducted to date, Jane Finch community members have frequently noted that the high value they place on local parks and other open/green spaces, community gardens, trails, ravines, access to nature, and recreation facilities. They feel that these types of community assets are some of the most important elements for a good quality of life, so these assets should be expanded and improved.

They key parks priorities and initiatives suggested by the community to date are:

- More access to outdoor and indoor public spaces in general, including spaces for both community gathering and diverse activities, which can accommodate different age groups, particularly youth and seniors;
- More active recreation facilities, such as outdoor gyms and fitness equipment, skateboard parks, skating rinks, splash pads and swimming pools, playgrounds, and basketball courts for all ages and abilities (for instance, some youth and adult residents use outdoor recreation facilities at York University, such as the basketball courts, because the local courts in the community accommodate mostly younger children);
- More flexible open spaces that can accommodate community gathering and events, such as piazzas and squares;
- More comfortable, inviting, and safe parks through more amenities such as benches, drinking water fountains and bottle filling stations, garbage bins, shade structures, and better lighting;
- Enhanced and new connections between sections of the ravine system for both people and wildlife through an improved trail network and pedestrian tunnels;
- More bicycle infrastructure throughout the Study Area, including through/to the ravines;
- Improved maintenance and clean-up of parks and recreation facilities;
- More opportunities for dog off-leash areas that are well maintained, as well as stricter dog off-leash bylaw enforcement in general; and
- More beauty in parks and other open spaces through elements such as gardens and gazebos, amongst others. Beatification projects in the Study Area's parks should strive for culturally

relevant landscapes and reflect the diverse culture and heritage of the community since the beauty of the community ultimately originates in its residents' and their history.

6. Key Directions and Opportunities

Parks planning and priorities in the Study Area will be guided by the four key principles of the Parkland Strategy, and will include:

Expand / Create New Parkland

- Create a bigger and more connected parks and open space network through new/expanded parks and other publicly-accessible open spaces.
- In particular, a key priority will be to introduce new parkland around the Jane Street and Finch Avenue West intersection, where there is currently a parkland walkability gap and very low tree canopy.
- Secure new parkland concurrent with growth, through new development and redevelopment.
- Prioritize on-site dedication of parkland for new development and redevelopment, particularly on large sites, such as those around the Jane Street and Finch Avenue West intersection.
- Seek opportunities to consolidate parkland dedications, wherever feasible, to assemble larger park sites that can maximize parks and recreation programming.
- Prioritize parkland dedication that is immediately adjacent to existing parks, where appropriate, in order to enhance the size, function, visibility and accessibility of such parks.

Improve the Function of Existing Parkland & Ensure Parks are Inclusive and Equitably Accessible Places

- Implement the planned facility improvement projects within and close to the Jane Finch Study Area in the Council-approved Parks, Forestry and Recreation 2021-2030 Capital Budget and Plan (as described in Section 3.5.2).
- Seek opportunities to introduce new active recreation facilities that are needed in this area, (such as soccer/multi-use sports fields, basketball courts, skatespots, etc.) in either new or existing parks within or close to the Study Area.
- Work to address community feedback on the quality, design, and maintenance of existing parks in order to make parks more comfortable, inviting, safe, and beautiful. Assess individual parks and seek further input through community engagement to identify where amenities such as benches, drinking water fountains, garbage bins, enhanced lighting, public art, etc. can be incorporated.
- Seek opportunities to introduce flexible open spaces for community gathering and events, such as plazas and squares, either in existing parks, future parks, or other publicly-accessible spaces.
- Incorporate area-specific place-making initiatives, including Indigenous place-making and interpretation of local cultural and natural features through public art, naming, wayfinding, interpretive features, and landscaping in parks and the broader public realm.
- Support improved tree health and increased tree planting.

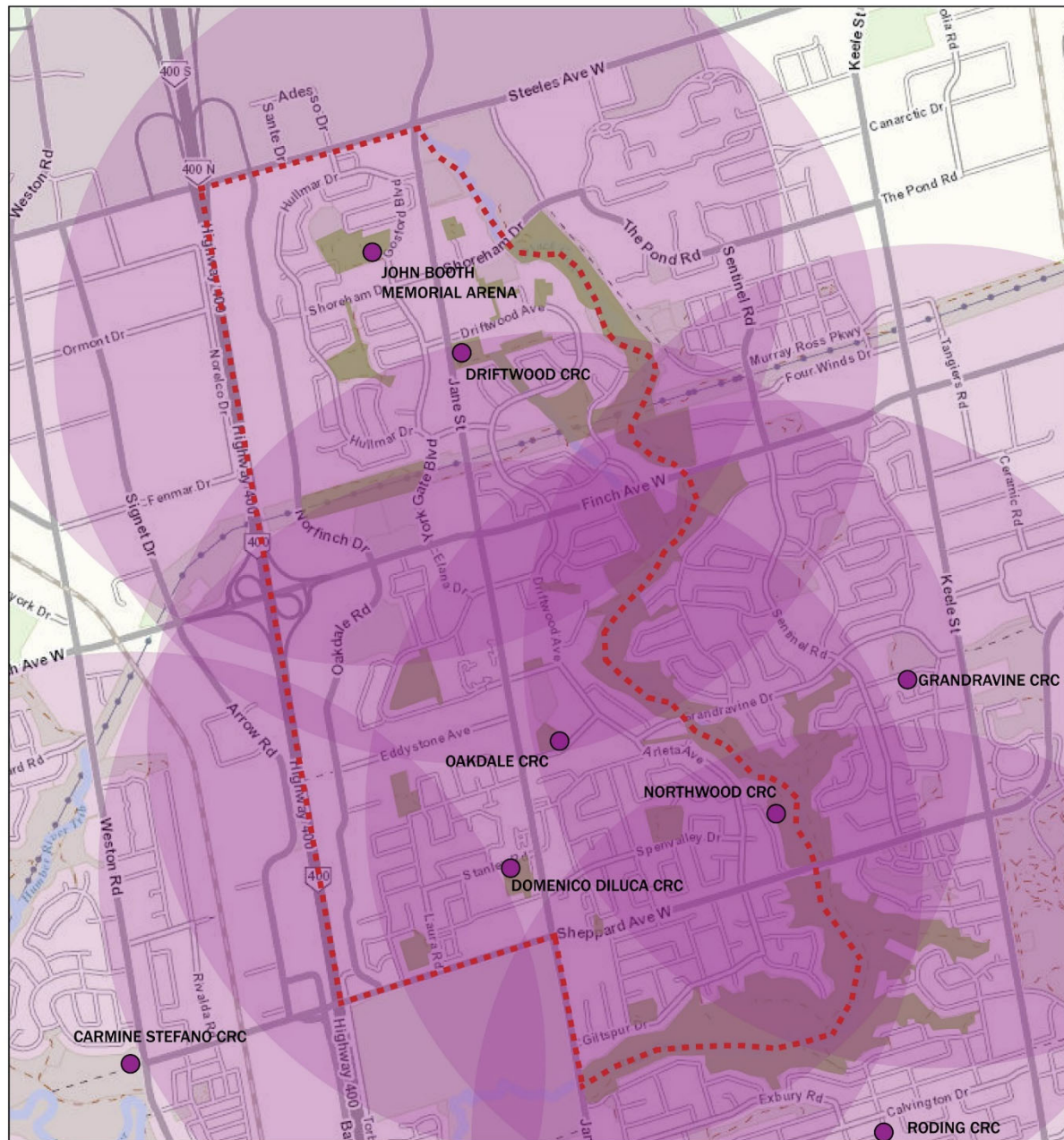
- Seek opportunities to include green infrastructure and elements which enhance ecological and hydrological functions, support habitat development, and promote biodiversity within parks and the broader public realm, where appropriate.
- Support a community-based planning and design process for parks and open space.

Physically and Visually Connect Parks and Other Open Spaces

- Work with partners, such as the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), other levels of government, philanthropic partners and developers, among others, to implement and fund planned trail and ravine projects, including:
 - The recommendations of the Toronto Ravine Strategy, including enhancements to access while managing and reducing user impacts, and protect and restore ecological features in the Upper Black Creek Priority Investment Area; and completing the Loop Trail west of the Study Area.
 - The proposed northerly extension of the existing Black Creek Trail (just north of Shoreham Drive) as part of the Northwest Cultural Trail project.
- Fill in other trail gaps and formalize existing informal trails to make them more accessible and safe for use, where appropriate.
- Work with City partners and other stakeholders to promote and coordinate improvements to the public realm, particularly where such improvements enhance connections to and between parks and other open spaces, and where walkability gaps exists.

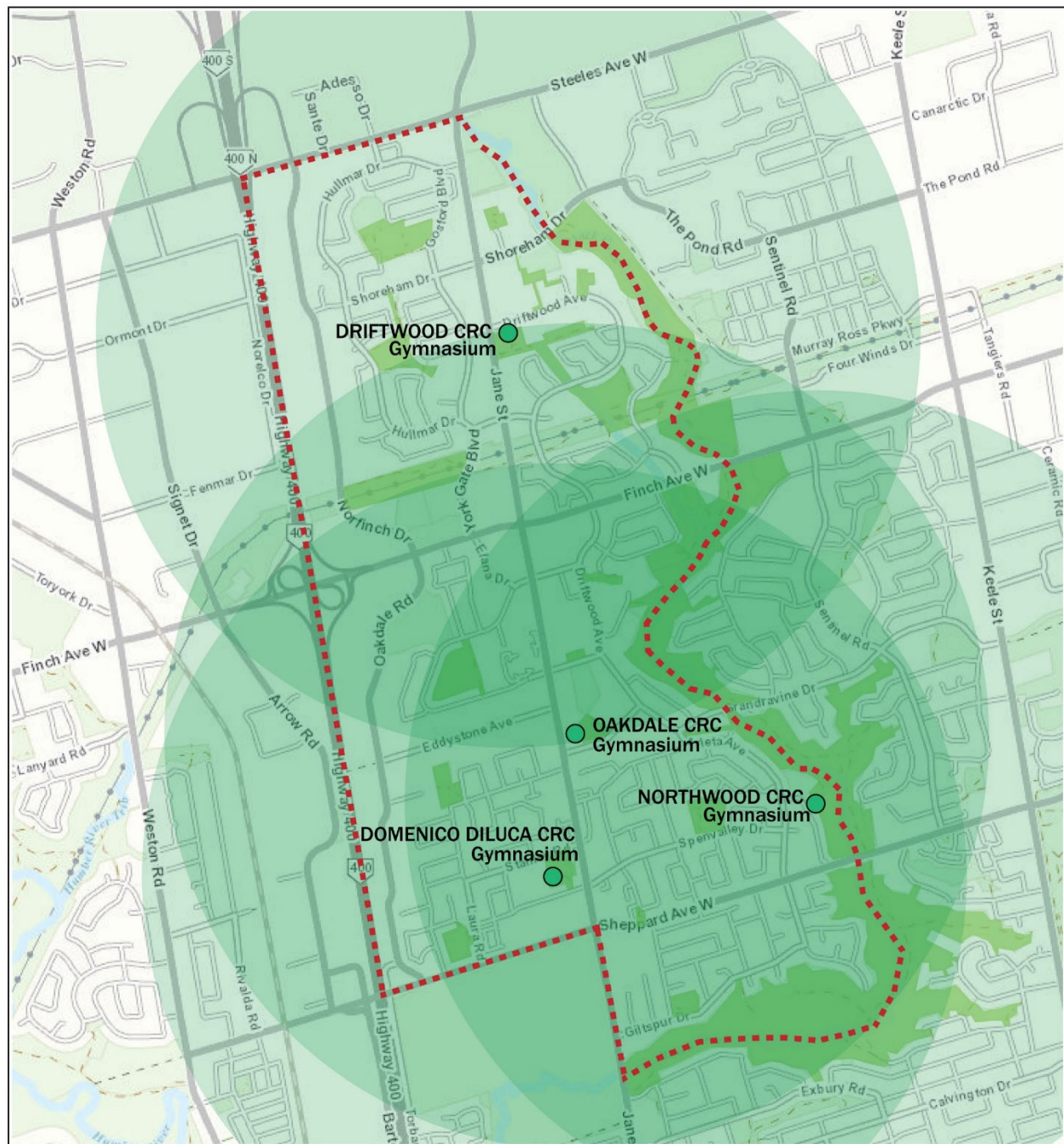
Appendix

Catchment Areas of Indoor and Outdoor Recreational Facilities



Community Recreation Centre Catchment Area

-  Mid Size Community Recreation Centre
-  Mid Size Community Recreation Centre Catchment Area - 2 km
-  Jane and Finch Study Area



Gymsnasium Catchment Area



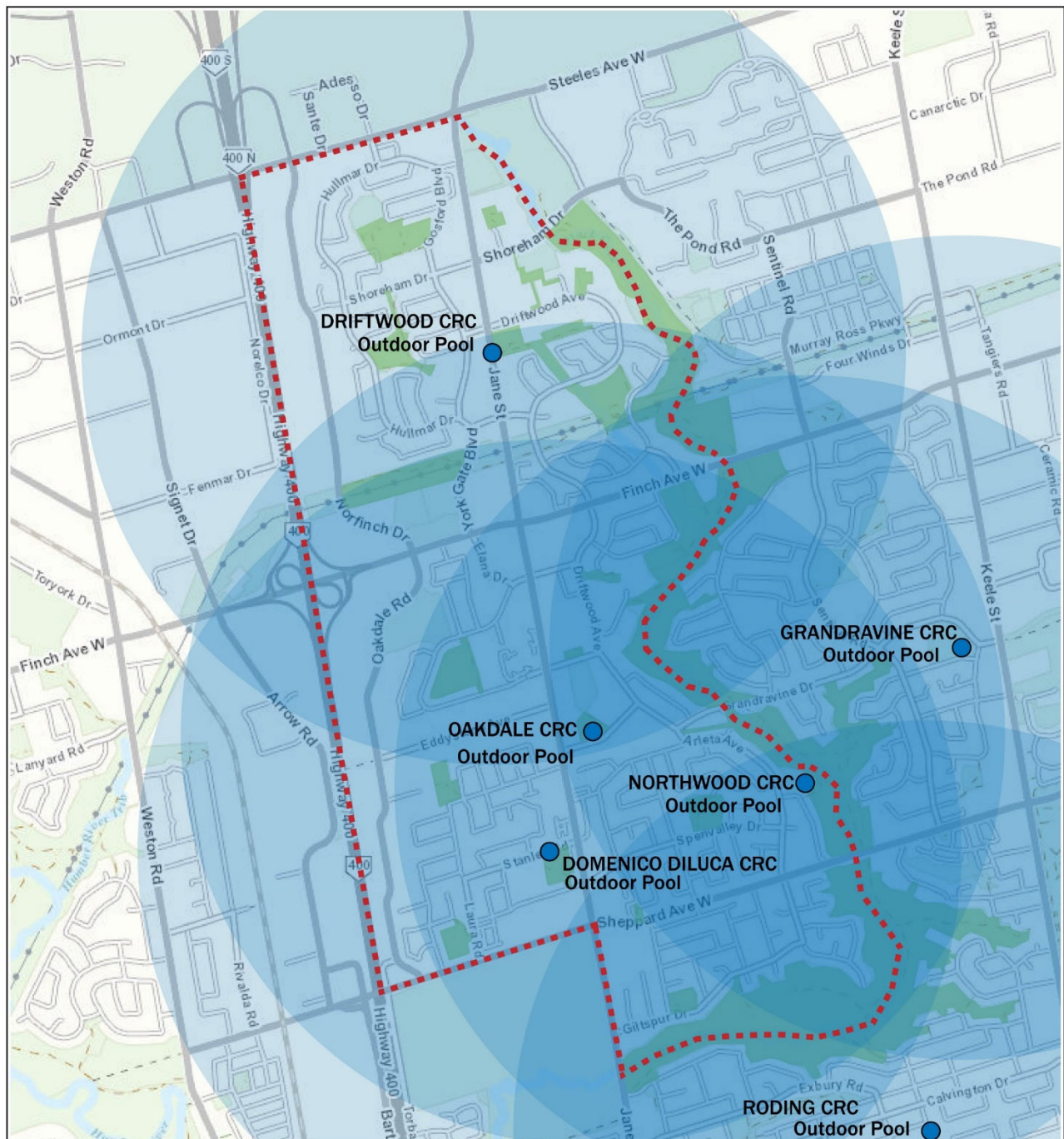
- Gymsnasium
- Gymsnasium Catchment Area - 2 km
- - - - - Jane and Finch Study Area



Indoor Pool Catchment Area



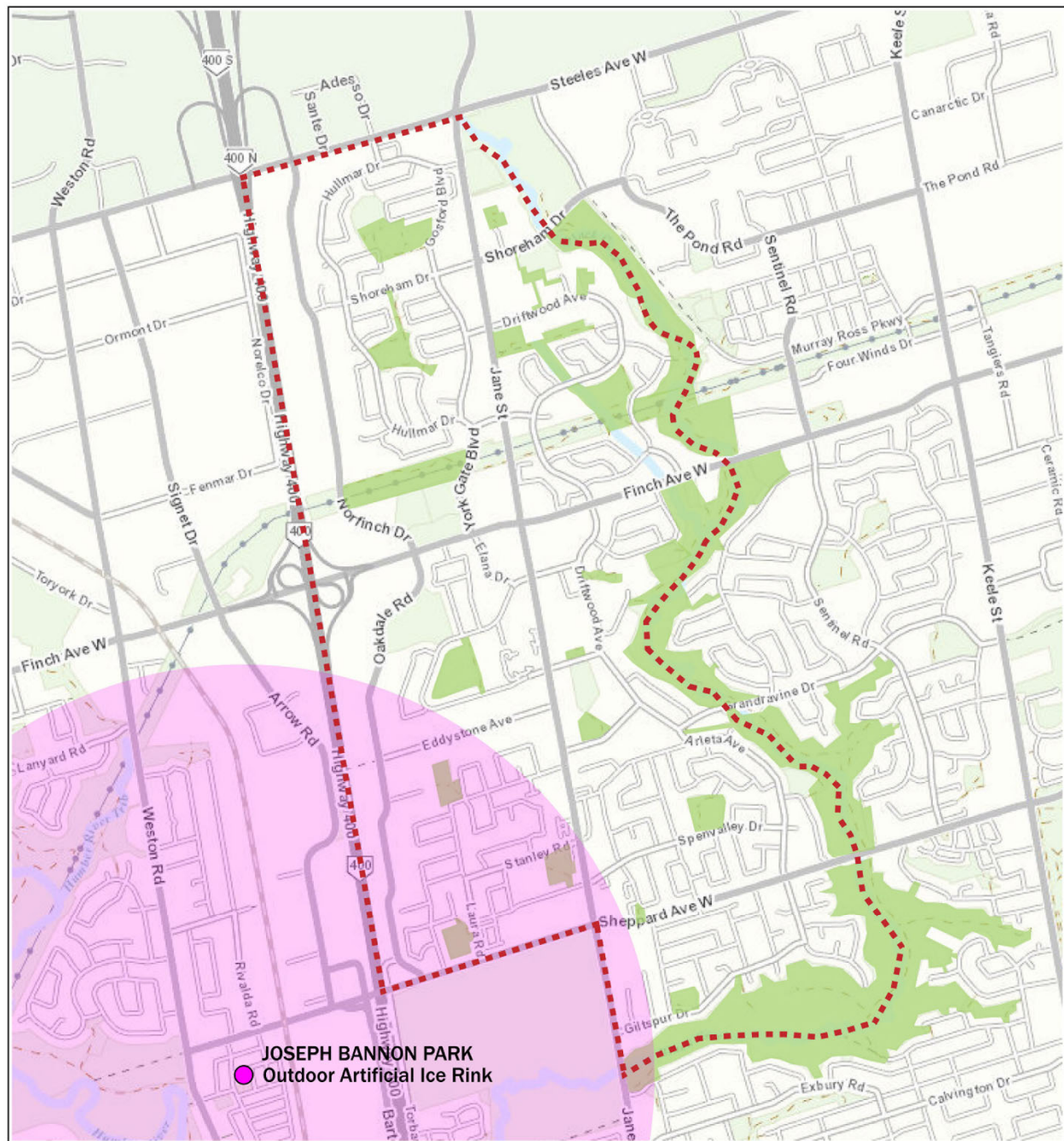
- Indoor Pool
- Indoor Pool Catchment Area - 2 km
- - - Jane and Finch Study Area



Outdoor Pool Catchment Area



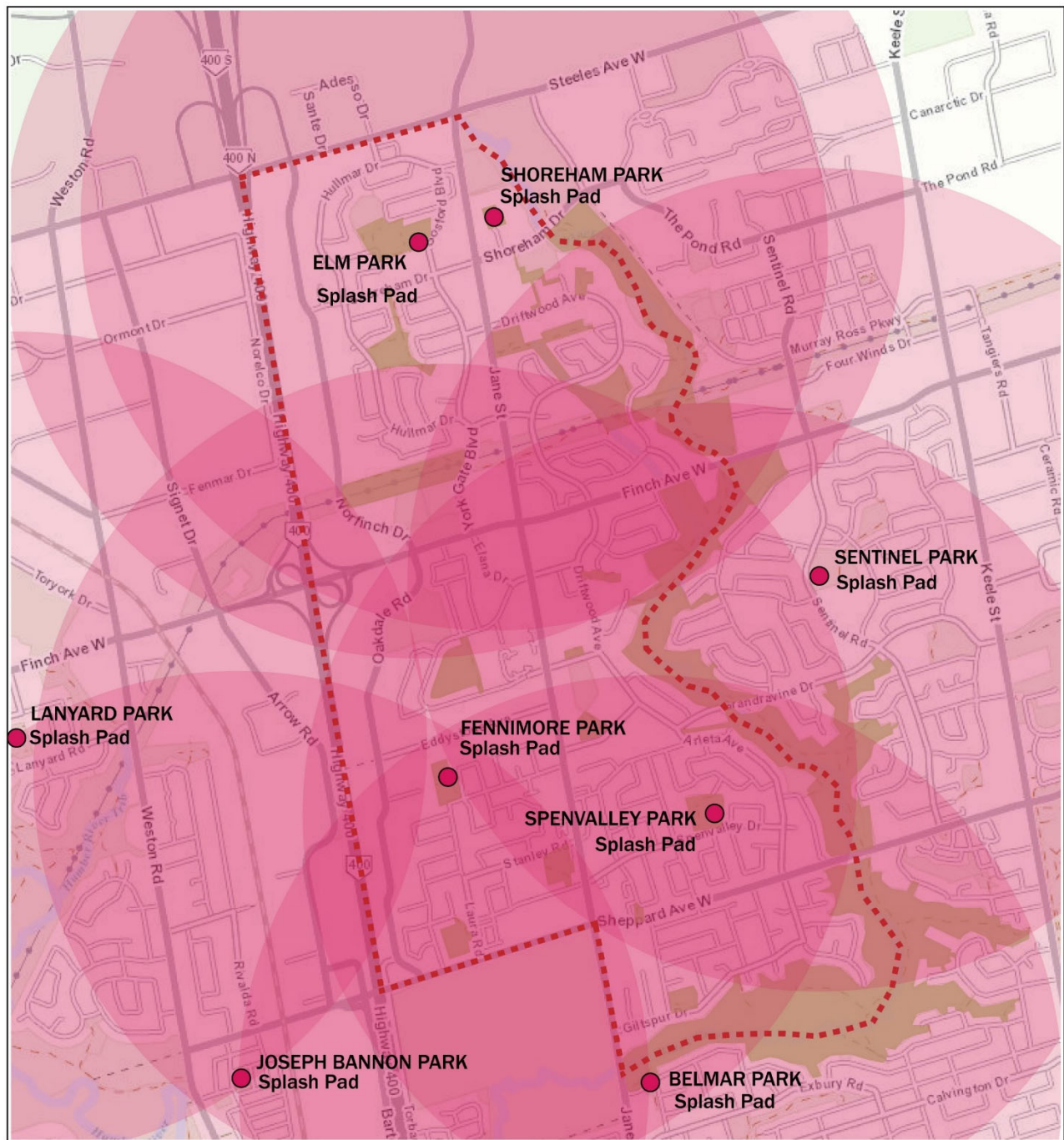
- Outdoor Pool
- Outdoor Pool Catchment Area - 2 km
- - - Jane and Finch Study Area



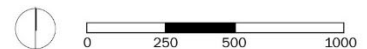
Outdoor Artificial Ice Rink Catchment Area



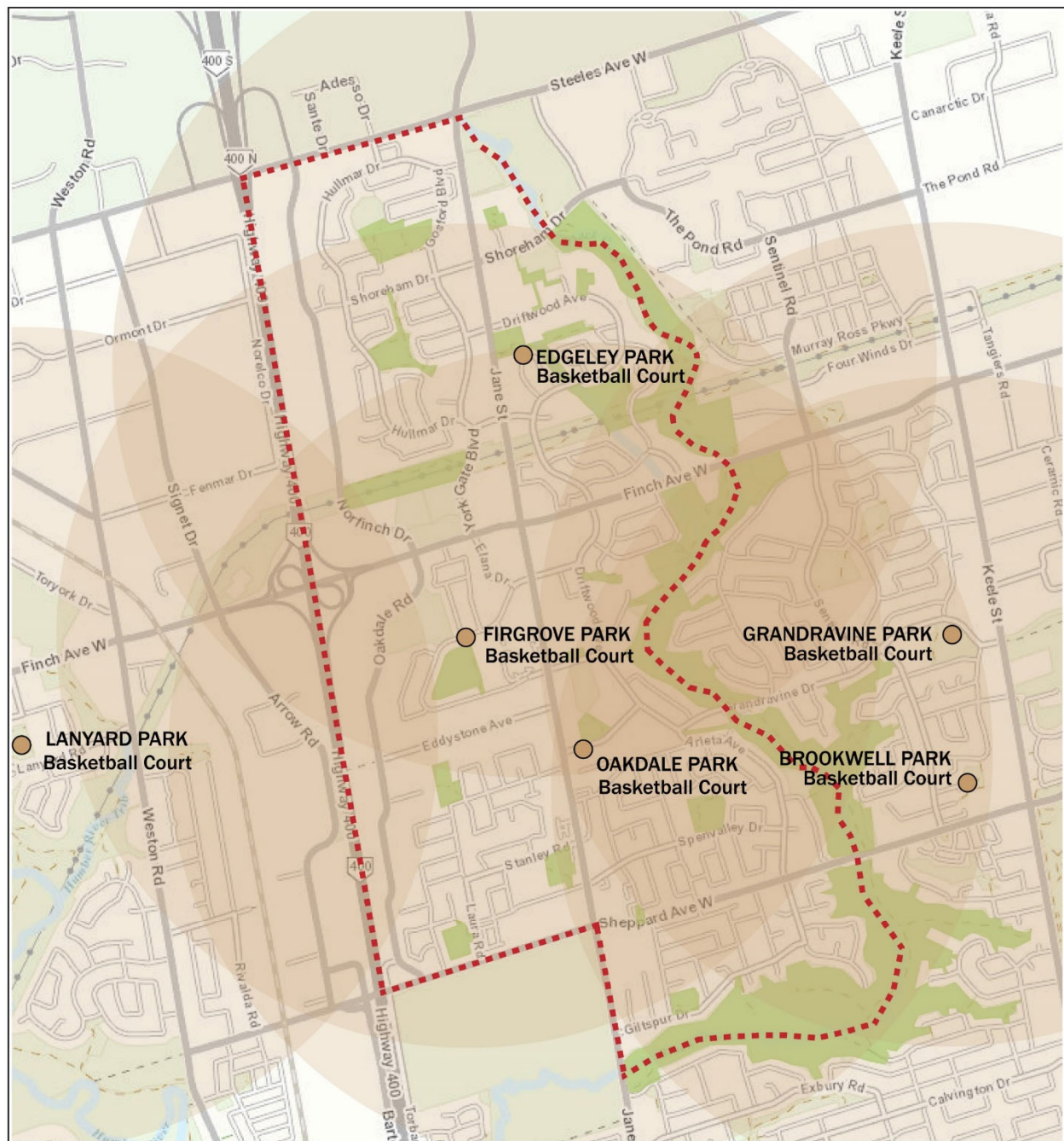
- Outdoor Artificial Ice Rink
- Outdoor Artificial Ice Rink Catchment Area - 2 km
- Jane and Finch Study Area



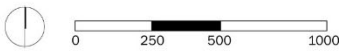
Splash Pad Catchment Area



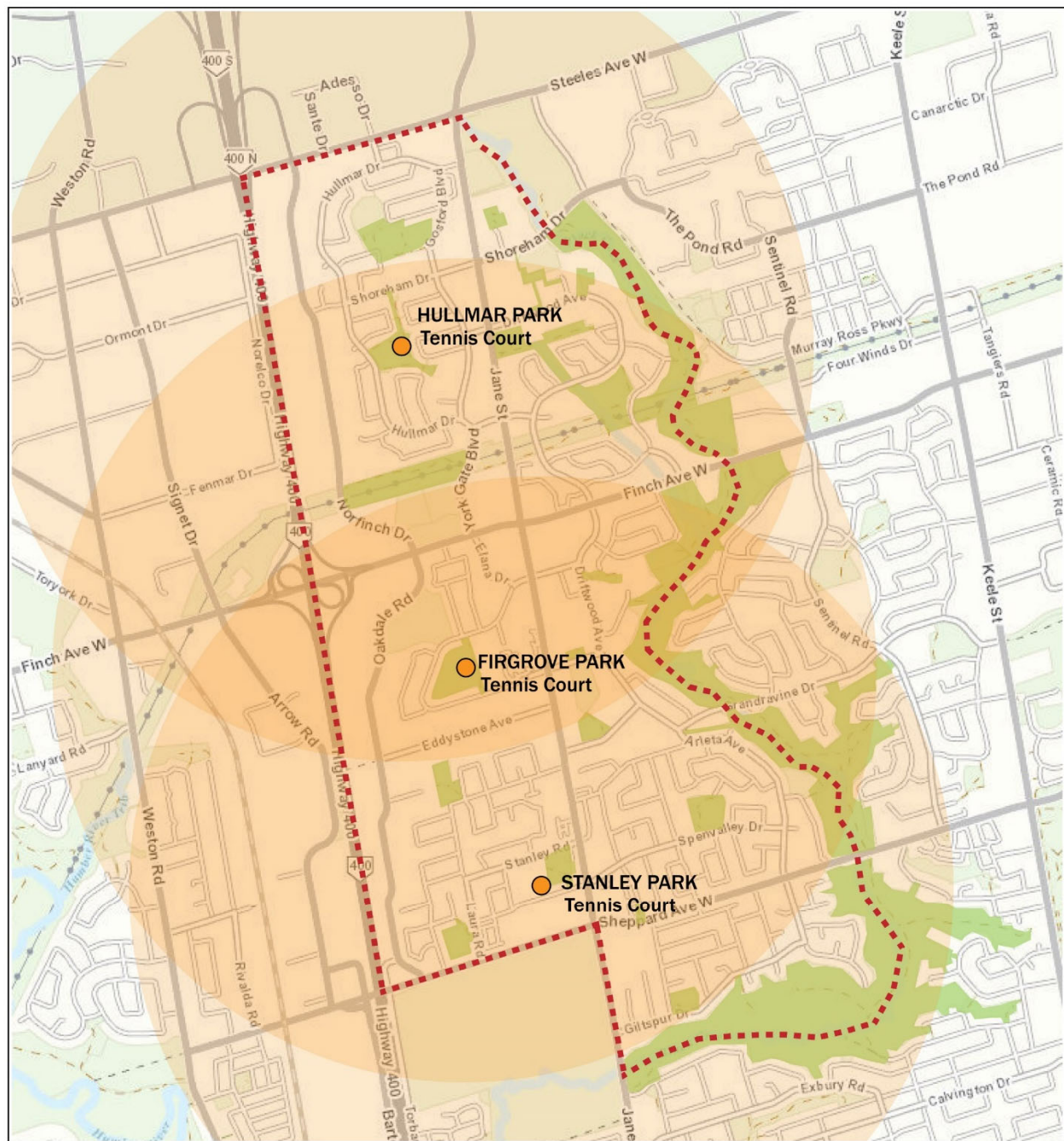
- Splash Pad
- Splash Pad Catchment Area - 2 km
- - - - - Jane and Finch Study Area



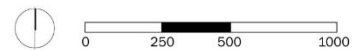
Basketball Court Catchment Area



- Basketball Court
- Basketball Court Catchment Area - 2 km
- Jane and Finch Study Area



Tennis Court Catchment Area



- Tennis Court
- Tennis Court Catchment Area - 2 km
- - - - - Jane and Finch Study Area