



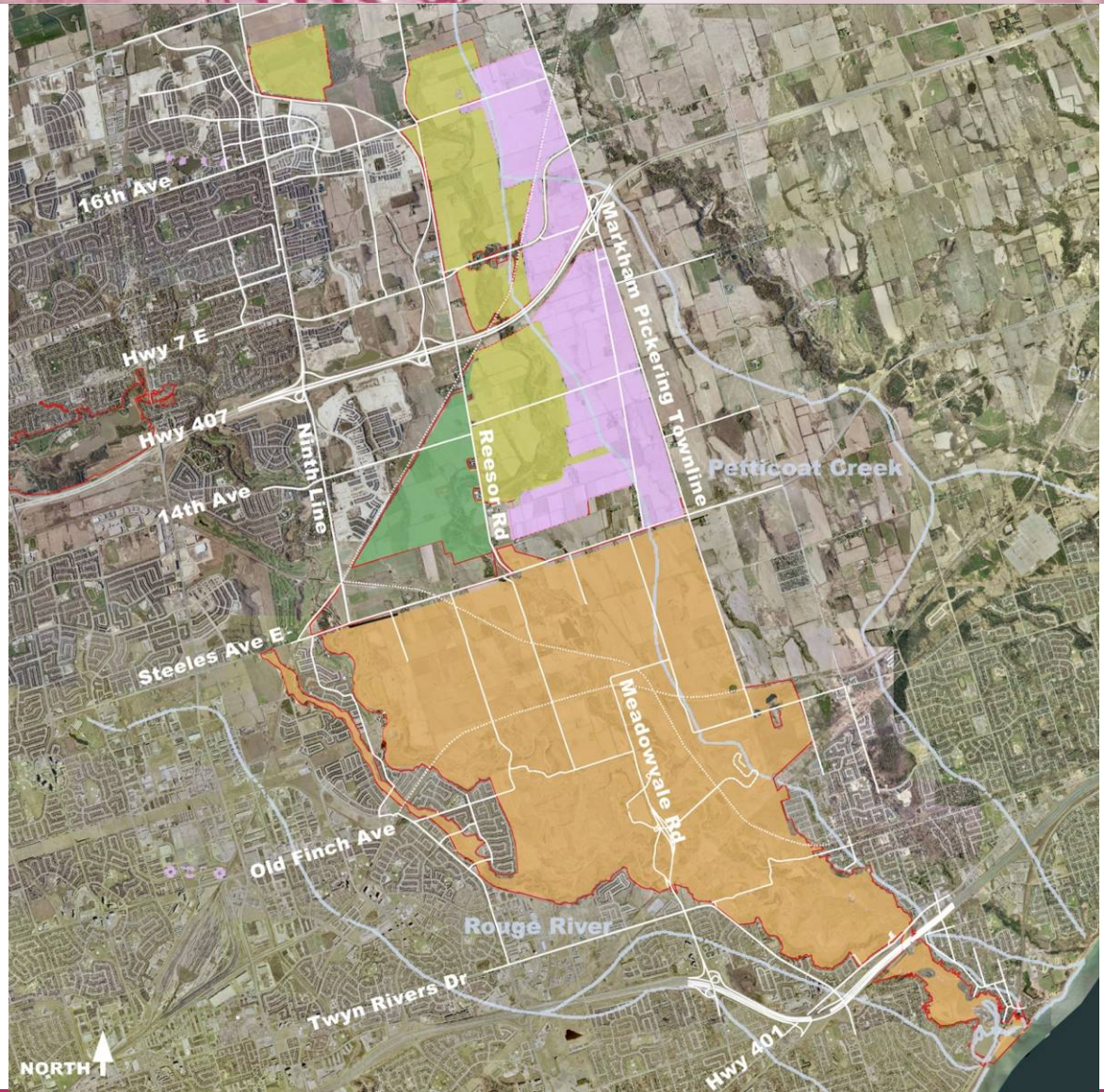
Rouge Park Trail Master Plan

Markham Development Services Committee
January 17, 2012

Rouge Park

Background - Rouge Park Components

- Watershed
- Bob Hunter Park
- Little Rouge Corridor
- Markham East Lands
- Rouge Park South
- Rouge Park Boundary





Overview of the Process

- Initiated in Autumn of 2009, Trail Advisory Committee meets regularly
- Public meetings held in October 2010, February 2011 and June 2011
- Master Plan process was extended to enable additional consultation
- Focus group sessions held January 2011 – May 2011
 - Agricultural Community/ Tenants
 - First Nations Representatives
 - Member organizations e.g. TRCA, Markham Sustainability
 - Natural Heritage Committee
 - Naturalist/ Environmental Groups
- Planning process has addressed issues raised at the public and focus group meetings
- Rouge Park Alliance presentations May and October 2011



Proposed Draft Vision

The vision for the Rouge Park Trails System was determined through the consultation process. This vision is set out below:

*The Rouge Park trail system will serve as a means to **understand and appreciate the unique natural and cultural attributes of the park** through heightened visitor experiences and immersion in the landscape.*

*The system will offer a **range of experiences and recreational opportunities** to assist in meeting the needs of users of all ages and physical abilities.*

*The trail system will support the **protection of the outstanding natural features, agricultural landscapes and diverse cultural heritage** of the park by managing appropriate public access and patterns of use while providing a rewarding experience of nature.*



Key Goals of the Trails Master Plan

1. Protect important natural heritage features

- Protect natural heritage features and functions
- Enhance habitat connectivity, diversity and function where possible
- Avoid fragmentation of natural habitats
- Avoid steep slopes and areas prone to flooding or erosion where ever possible

2. Provide a continuous north-south and east-west linkage

- Provide for a multi-use trail connection from the Waterfront to the Oak Ridges Moraine
- Provide key linkages to connect neighbourhoods adjacent Rouge Park
- Provide a multi-modal trail network that maximizes accessibility and is integrated with public transit

3. Protect, respect and celebrate significant cultural, agricultural heritage resources

- Capitalize on interpretive opportunities
- Avoid sensitive cultural heritage features and landscapes



Trail Alignment Principles – Natural Heritage

Where possible trails will be aligned to:

- **Minimize disturbance** to areas of 'high ecological sensitivity'
- Allow for the **expansion of the natural heritage** system
- **Utilize existing trails** where deemed appropriate from an ecological perspective
- **Minimize fragmentation** of existing woodlands and habitats
- **Minimize interference** with:
 - Natural hazards: steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, seepage areas
 - Habitats for Species of Concern and Species at Risk





Trail Alignment Principles - Recreation

Where possible trails will be aligned to:

- Trails will offer a range of experiences and challenges for **passive recreation**
- Trails within the park will be primarily used for **hiking, snow-shoeing, cross-country skiing** and nature appreciation
- Bicycle routes will be located predominantly along **road rights-of-way, multi-use pathways**
- Motorized vehicles will be prohibited on all trails (with the exception of maintenance/service vehicles)



Guided Nature Hikes!



Great things are coming!



Spotting birds



Lots of group hikes

Rouge Park

Sensitivity Zones

- Areas of High Sensitivity
- Areas of Moderate Sensitivity
- Areas of Low Sensitivity

Areas of High Sensitivity

- High concentrations of rare, area sensitive, and ground nesting species
- Provincially Significant Wetlands
- Large native interior forest areas

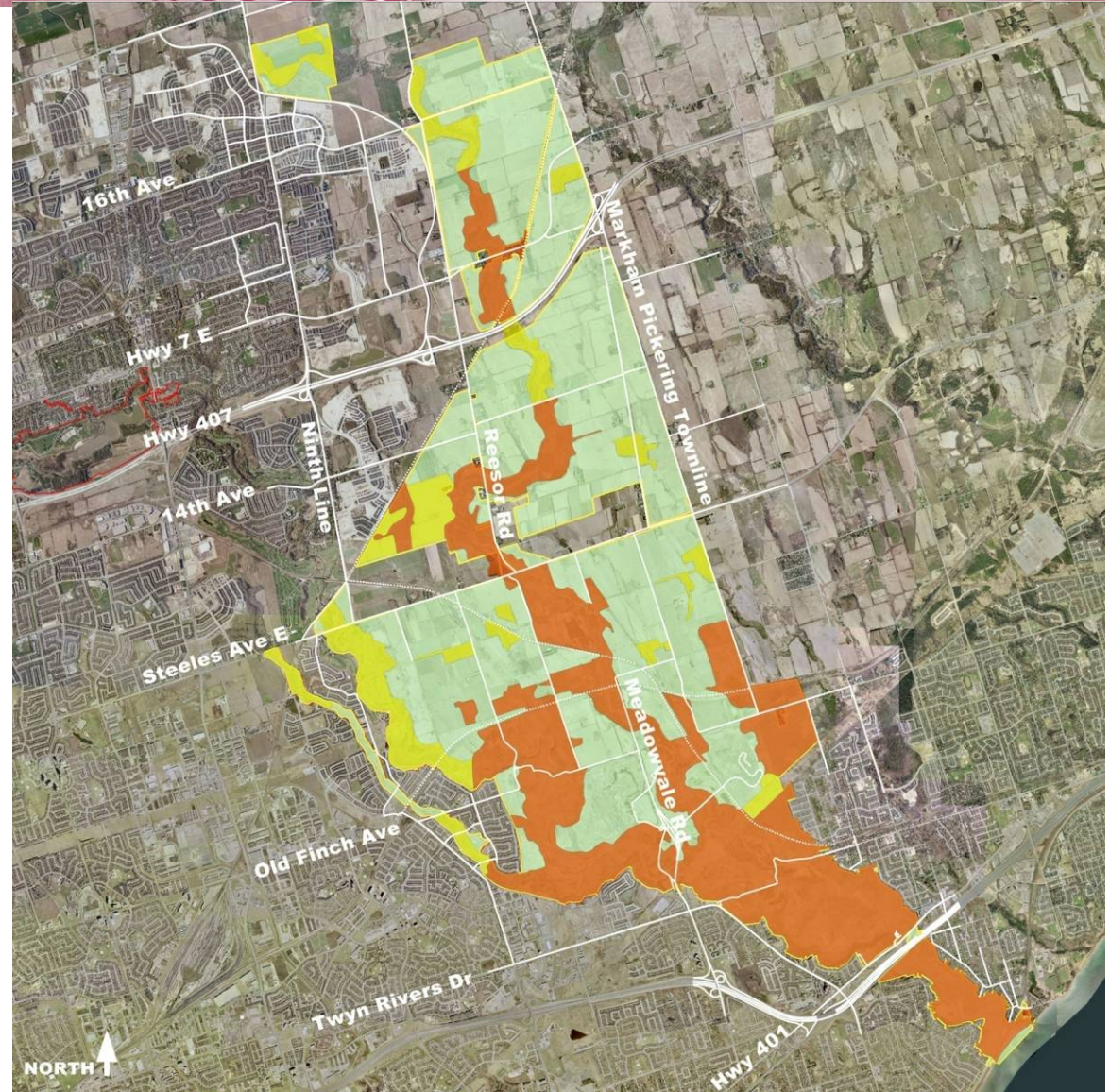
Areas of Moderately Sensitivity

- Medium concentrations of rare, area sensitive, and ground nesting species
- Less disturbed forested valley system
- Restoration areas

Areas of Low Sensitivity

- All other areas within Rouge Park

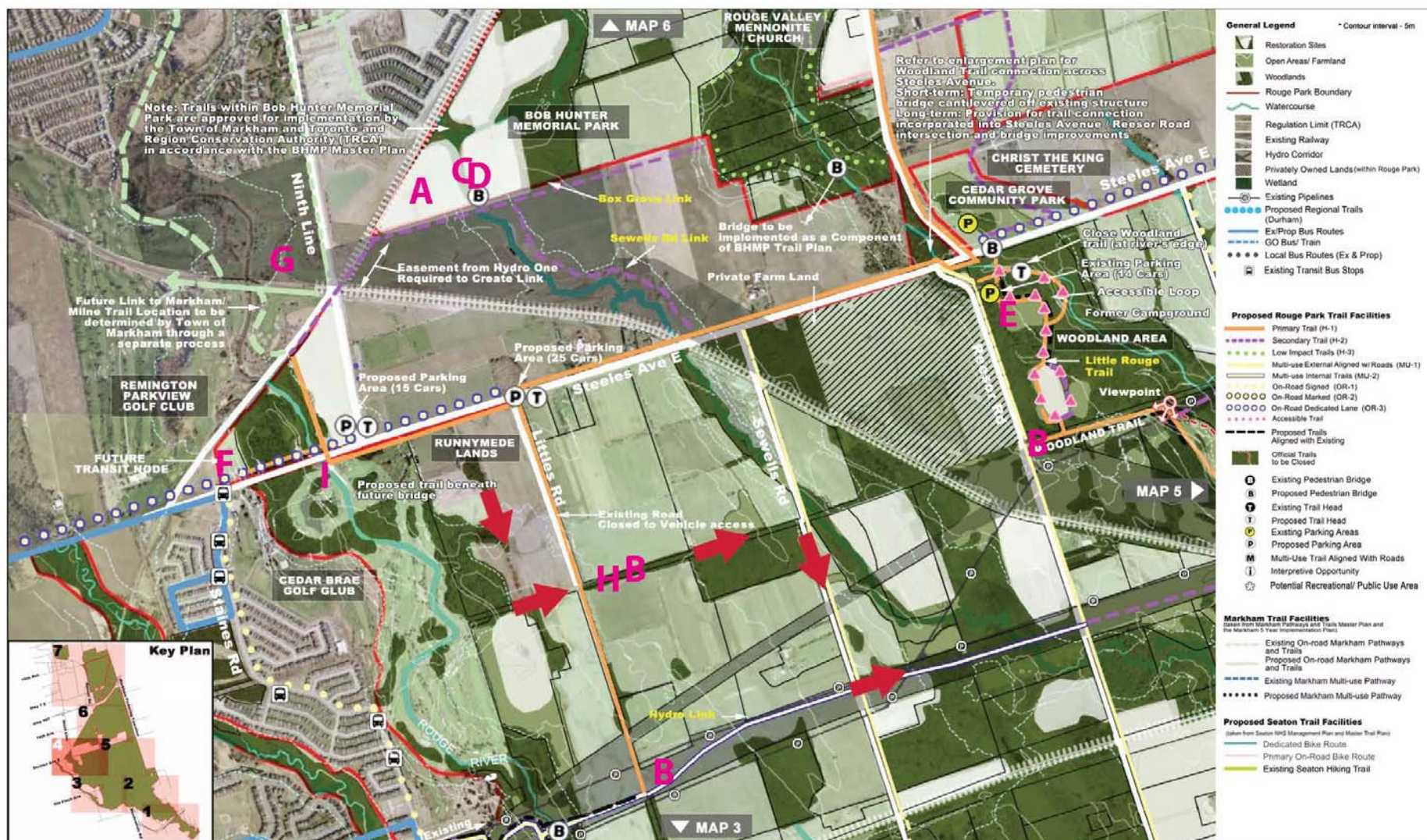
* ***This map was used to inform trail types***



Rouge Park

Overall Plan





Natural Heritage Protection:

- There will be a large forest in the southwest corner of BHMP, the secondary trail will remain along the edge of this. **A**
- Trail will make use of road allowances, hydro corridors and laneways **B**

Celebrations:

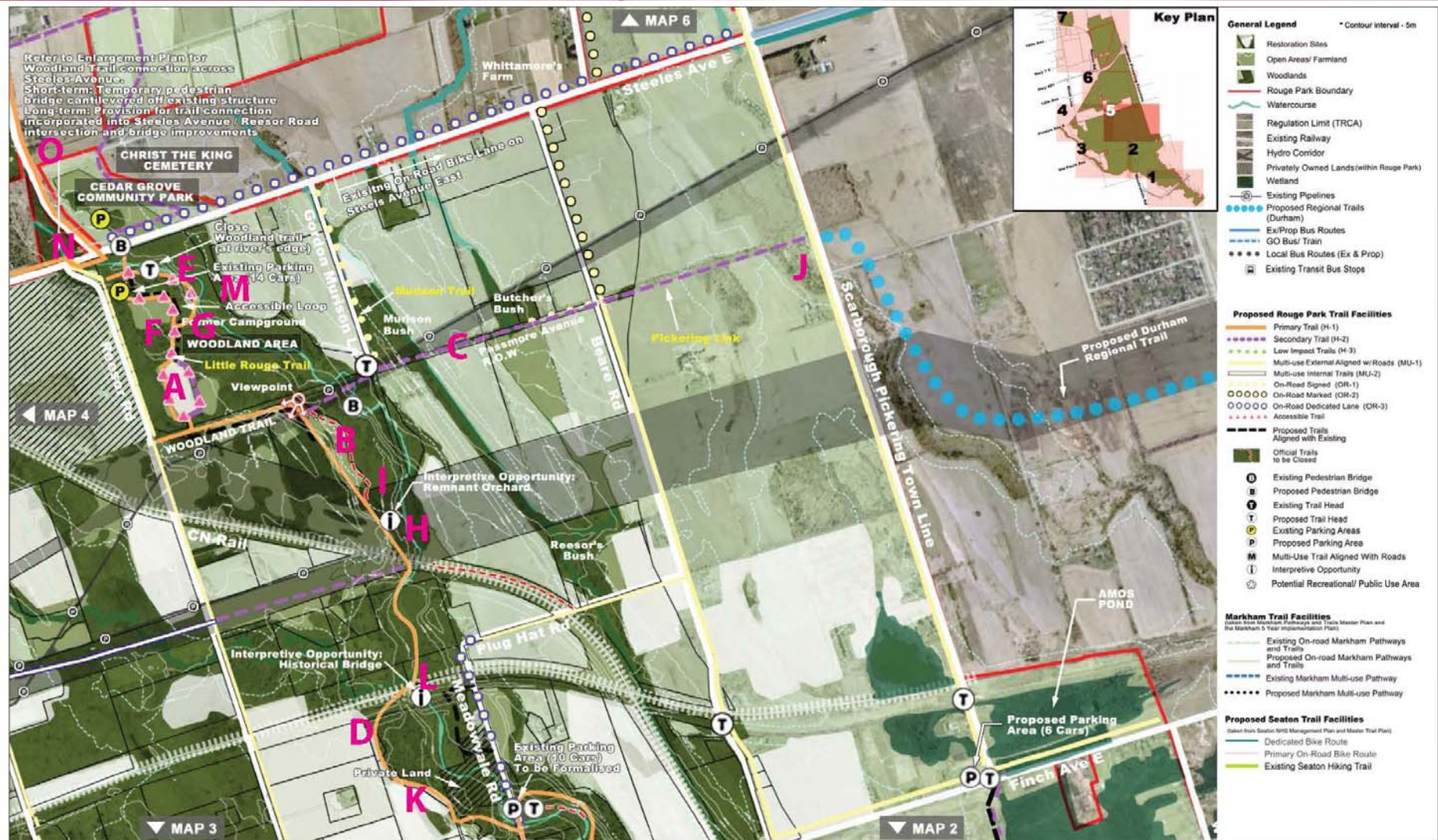
- The section includes the south end of BHMP, soon to be a major visitor use area serving Markham residents. **C**
- Volunteers will play an important role in habitat restoration **D**
- Woodland trail is a former campground and cottage community, the park served the Cedar Grove community **E**

Trail Linkages:

- A transit loop is planned for Steeles Avenue just west of 9th line. Users will be informed of the neighbouring trail system with signage **F**
- In a separate Markham study, the connection to the southwest corner of BHMP is being examined, tying into the Markham trail system. **G**

Other Notes:

- Instead of main trail south on Little's Road, it is recommended to move the trail slightly west down a laneway on the Runnymede land, then east along the Passmore road allowance (see arrows) **H**
- The trail will go under the bridge crossing Steeles west of 9th, when Steeles is widened. **I**



Natural Heritage Protection:

- Trail has been moved away from a restoration site at Woodland **A**
- One loop on south end of Woodland trail has been removed to protect large habitat area **B**
- makes use of unopened road allowance **C**
- Trail skirts around edge of forest area in south section **D**

Celebrations:

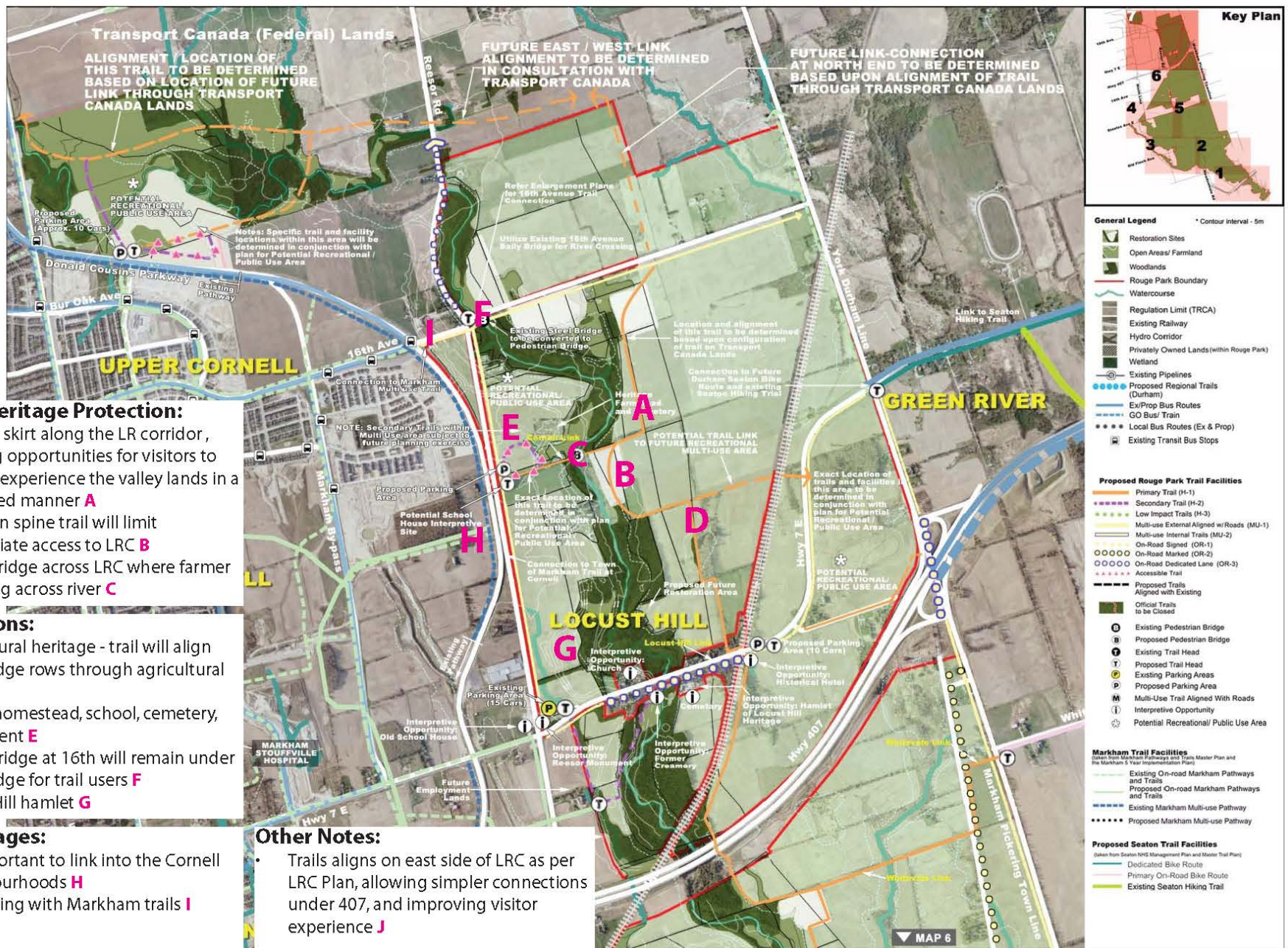
- This highlights our Woodland Area, a former campground, cottage laneway, and community park. **E**
- Old cottage foundations can be spotted along trail. **F**
- Part of Toronto's bird flyways project **G**
- Historical trestles **H**
- Remnant orchard **I**

Trail Linkages:

- Connecting to proposed Durham regional trail in the east via Passmore road allowance **J**
- Creates the important connection between the Woodland trail to the Cedar trail in the south **K**
- Connects Markham to Toronto **N**
- Links through cemetery, improving Markham connections **O**

Other Notes:

- Connecting Woodland to Cedar presented a challenge - crossing two rail lines, and LRC **L**
- a frequently used unofficial trail at Woodland will be re-naturalized to reduce visitor contact with the creek **M**





Markham Highlights

Neighbourhood connections:

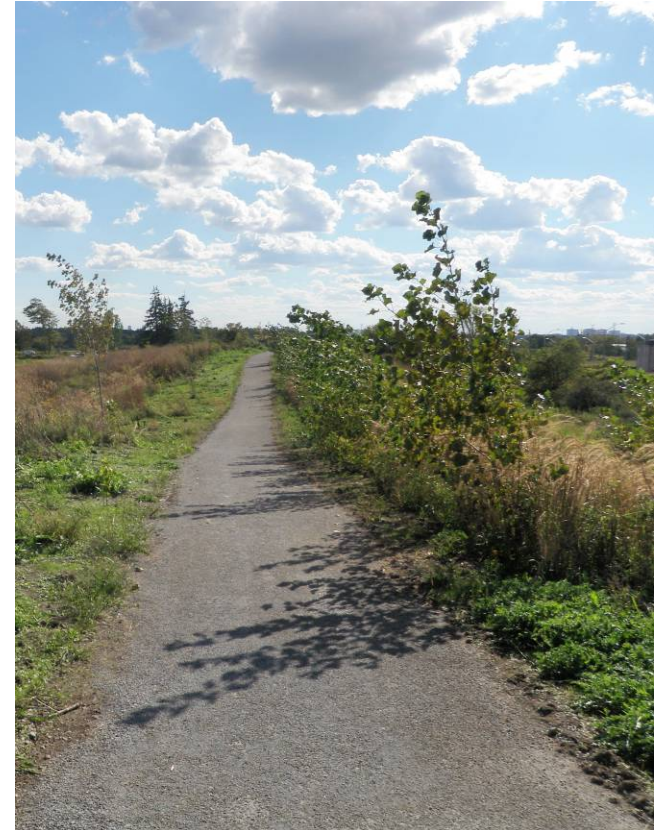
Cornell, Box Grove, Locust Hill

Kilometres of trail (including Steeles Av.):

- Primary trail – 13.6
- Secondary/Low Impact trail – 13.23
- Multi-use path – 16.55
- Cycling route – 9.24
- Total: 52.62

Parking areas/number of cars

- BHMP Visitor Centre, paved, 40
- Cedar Grove Community Centre, granular, 18
- Reesor Monument, granular, 15
- 'Little Rouge Trail'/14th Av. between Reesor and 11th Con., 12
- Locust Hill, 10
- Cornell, where Reesor Road/Don Cousens PW align, 25
- Upper Cornell, 10,000 Trees for the Rouge Site, 10

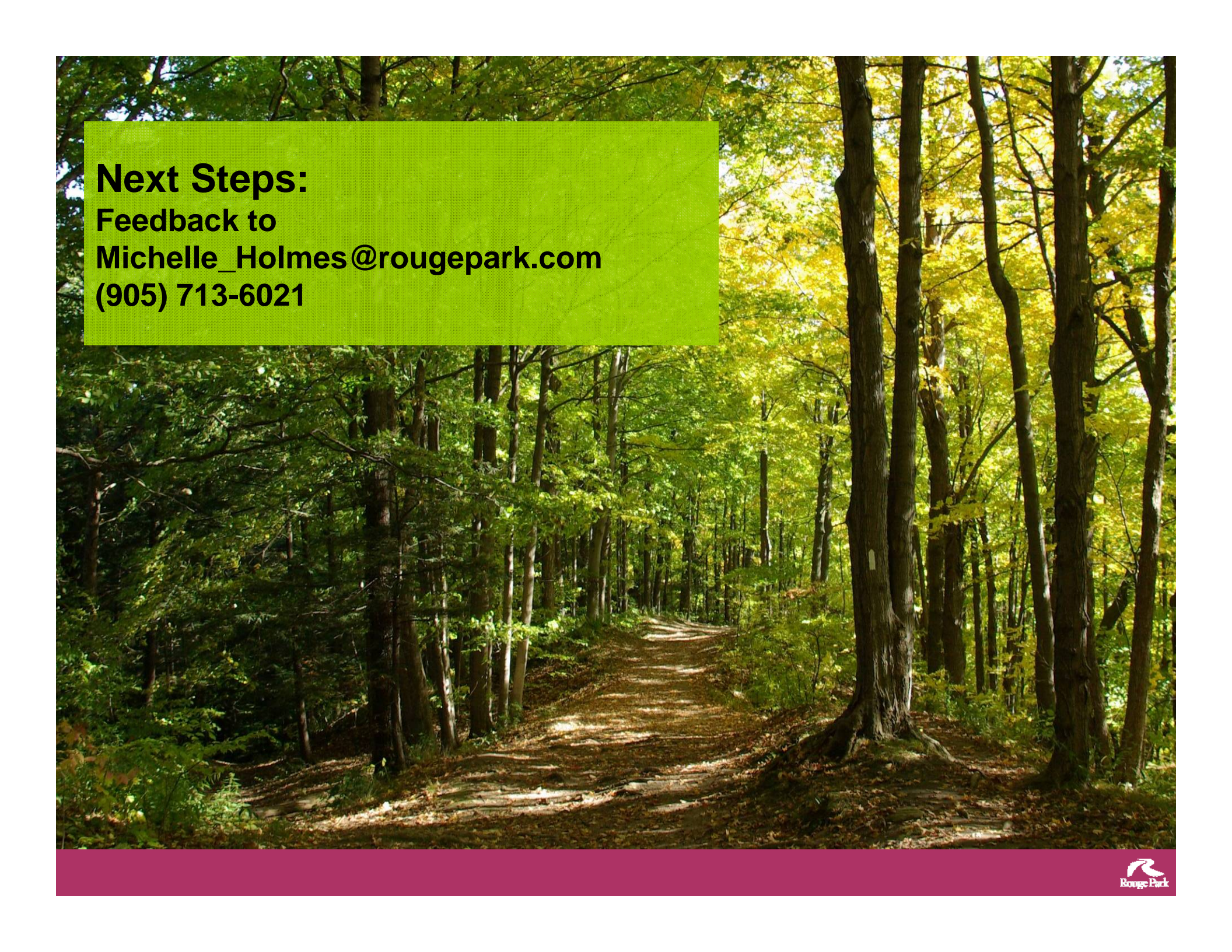




Celebrating Cultural, Agricultural and Natural Heritage:

- Bob Hunter Memorial Park
- Interior forest and valley forest
- Little Rouge Creek Corridor; valley top walking overlooking Creek
- Whittamore's Farm
- Cedar Grove heritage community; Lapp's Cider Mill, Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Reesor properties, Cedarena, Cedar Grove Labyrinth
- Working farms
- Locust Hill heritage community
- Heritage wooden bridge deck at 16th/Reesor
- Bob Hunter Memorial Park
- Restoration sites
- 10,000 Trees for the Rouge Valley site
- Christ the King Cemetery
- Reesor Family Cemetery
- Historic church on 11th concession north of Steeles





Next Steps:
Feedback to
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