

Thornhill SNAP

6 Years of Community Engagement and Activation

Developed by TRCA

November 18, 2025

What is SNAP?

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program

A neighbourhood-based solution for sustainable urban renewal and climate action

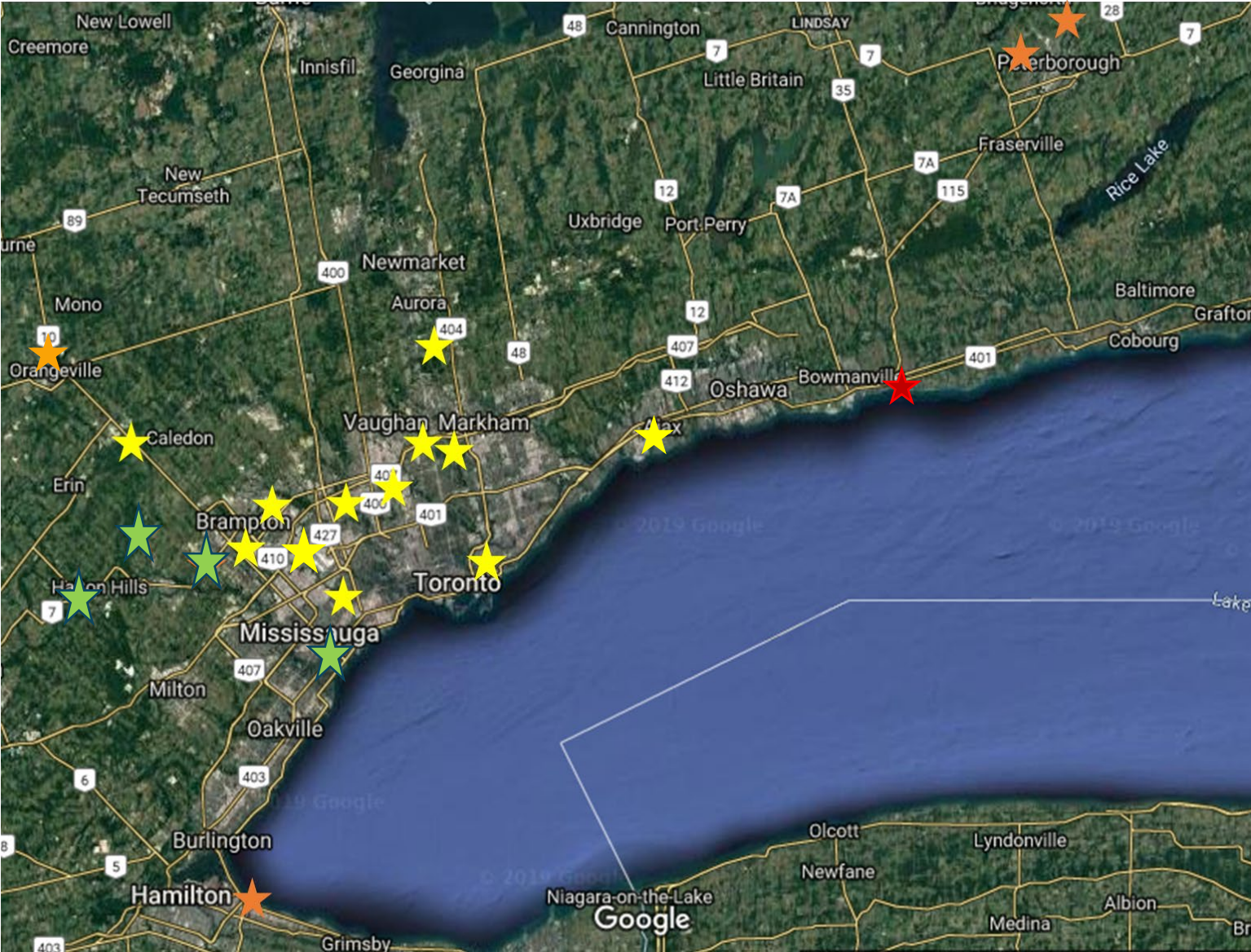


Develops and implements Action Plans for all land uses

Brings together technical objectives with residents' priorities

Works with local groups and builds partnerships with all sectors to make implementation happen

A Growing Network of SNAPs



21

Neighbourhoods

1

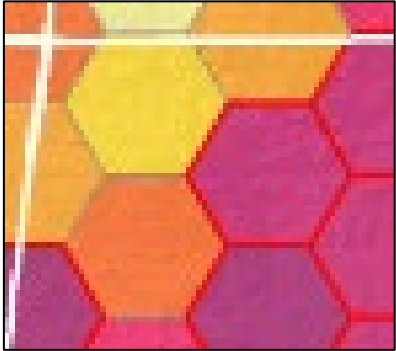
International
Neighbourhood

15

years running

Thornhill SNAP

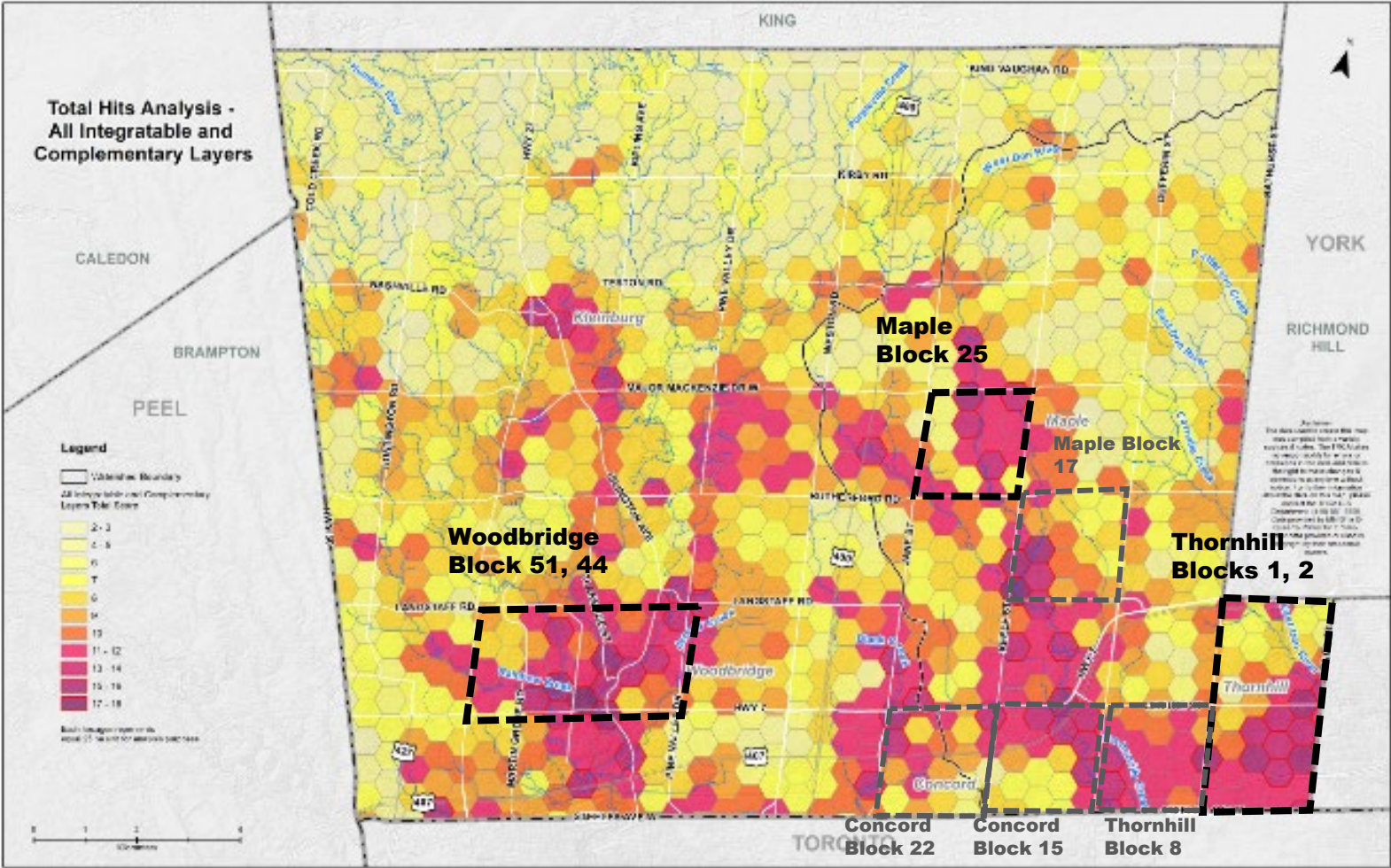
Neighbourhood Selection Process



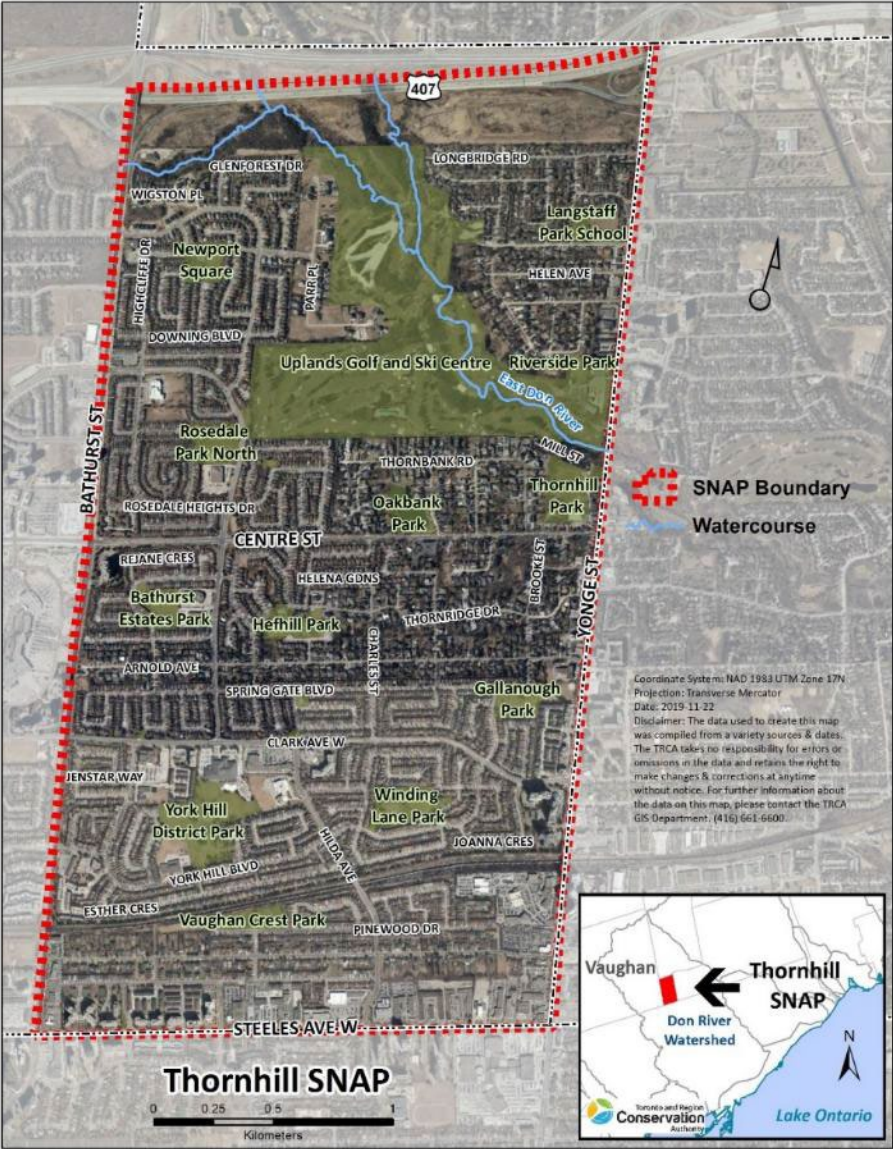
25 ha Hexagonal Units



Diagram courtesy of the City of Mississauga, 2010



Selection Process: Thornhill Neighbourhood



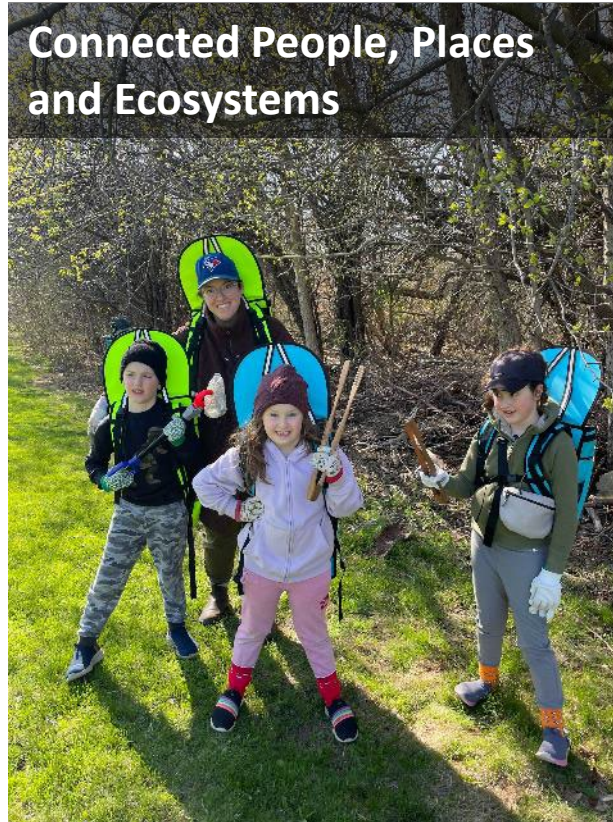
Key Priorities:

- Flood Vulnerable Area
- High priority for LID
- Sensitive target fish species
- Highest energy use in Vaughan
- One of highest water use in York Region
- Urban heat stress
- Areas of concentrated disadvantage

Planned Capital Projects

- Gallanough Area SWM EA
- Gallanough & Yorkhill Park Revitalization
- Garnet A. Williams CC Restoration
- Road Improvements /Active Transportation (Clark, Centre, Atkinson, Hilda)
- South York Greenway (407 Corridor)

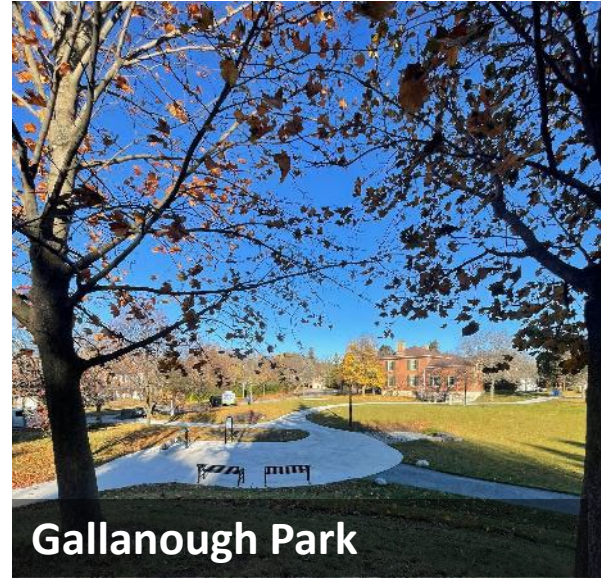
Action Plan: 3 Action Areas



Action Plan: 4 Signature Projects

PUBLIC REALM SIGNATURE PROJECTS

Innovative projects that will demonstrate how multiple co-benefits and diverse, neighbourhood-wide objectives can be achieved on the site.



Gallanough Park



Climate Ready Homes

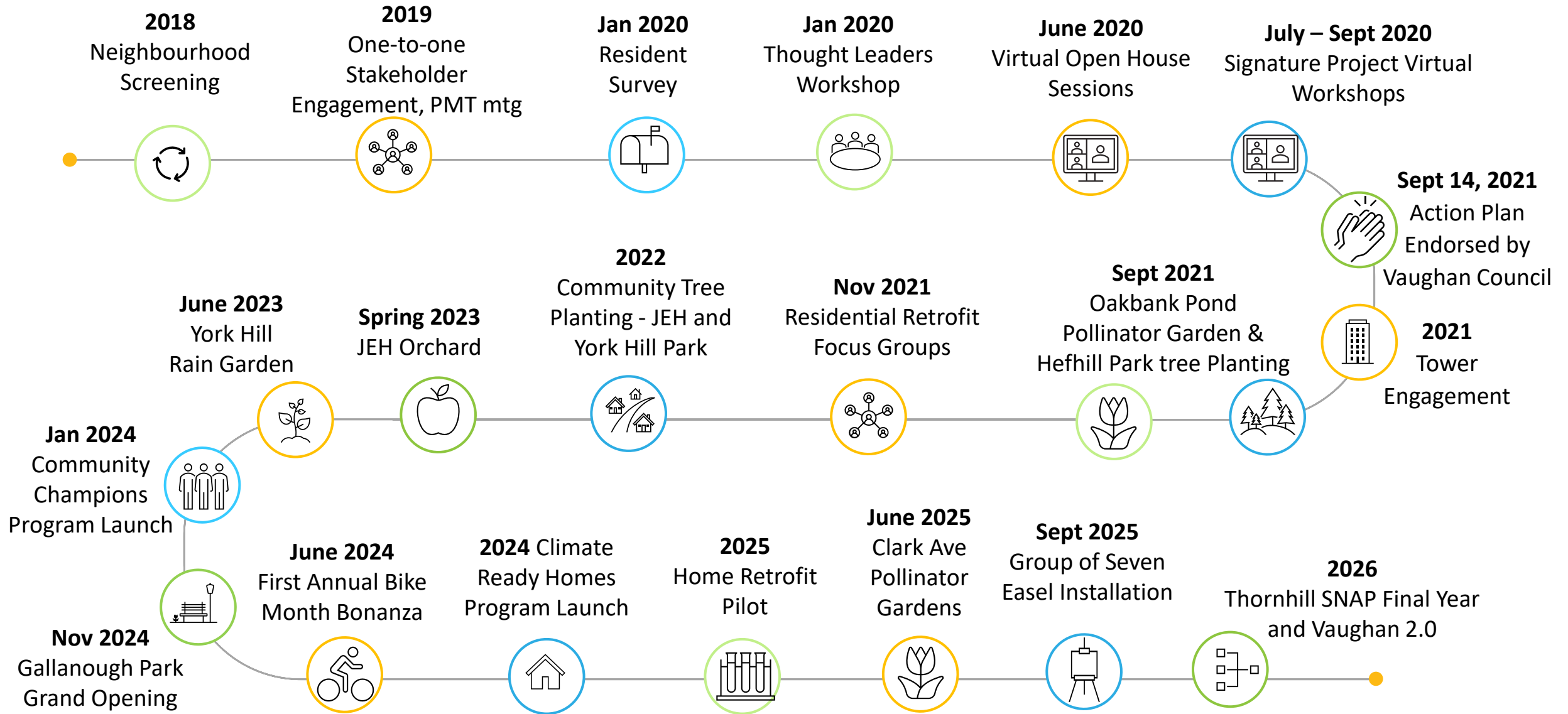


Complete Streets



York Hill Park

Thornhill SNAP High Level Project Timeline



Note: This is a high-level timeline of the Thornhill SNAP, highlighting key milestones and projects. It does not capture all of the initiatives, events, and projects that were implemented

Thornhill SNAP Metrics to Date



70
events hosted



1186
participants



1820
learning hours



50
community partners
and funders



20 - 60
community
champions



27
home
consultations



36
home retrofit
actions



9
pollinator
gardens



4479
trees, shrubs and
wildflowers planted



8
public spaces
enhanced



15
Interpretive
Signs installed



2
private towers
engaged



75
balcony
gardens



8
raised
garden boxes

Implementation Highlights

Action Area One

Connected People, Places and Ecosystems

- Educational, Cultural and Community Programming
- Green Infrastructure
- Active Transportation
- Parks and Open Space Planning



Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: Events



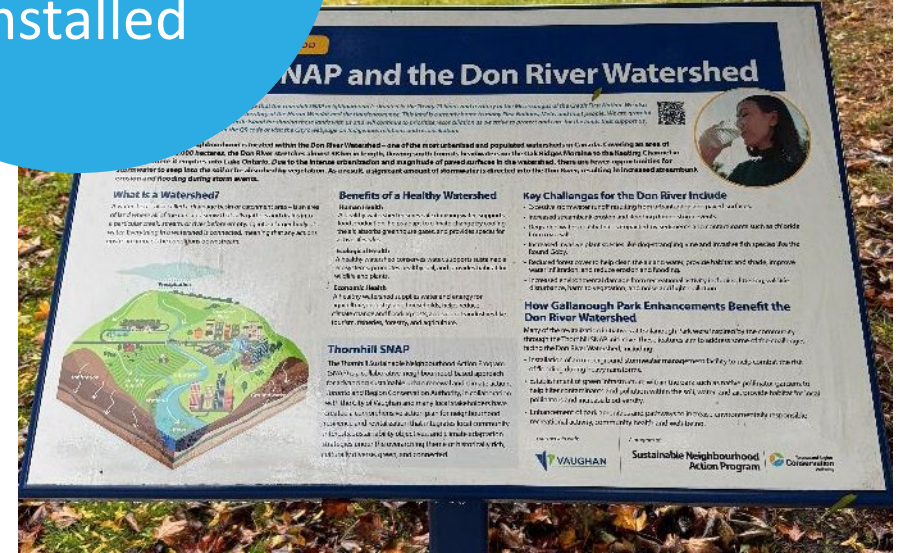
64 Events
913
Participants



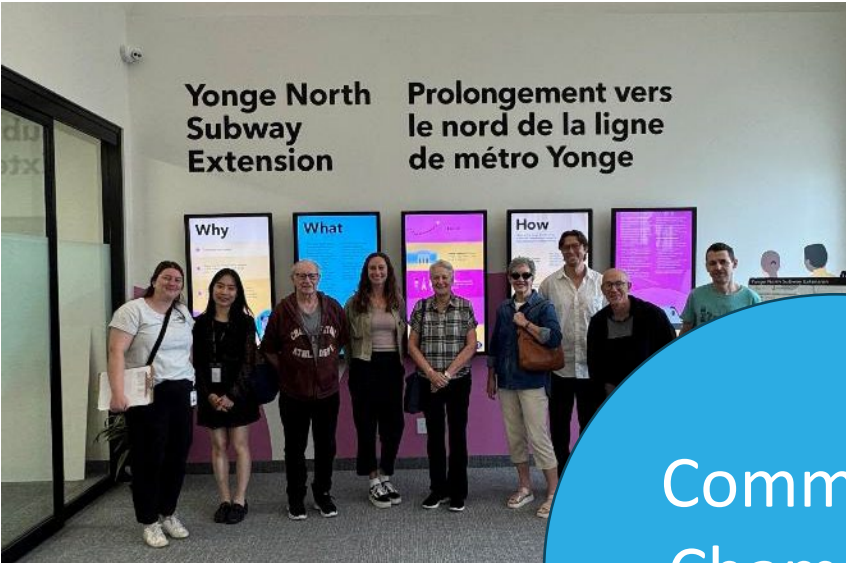
Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: Signage



14+
Interpretive
Signs
Installed



Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: Community Champions



Community Champions Program

Litter clean ups, social events, skills training



Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: Green Infrastructure

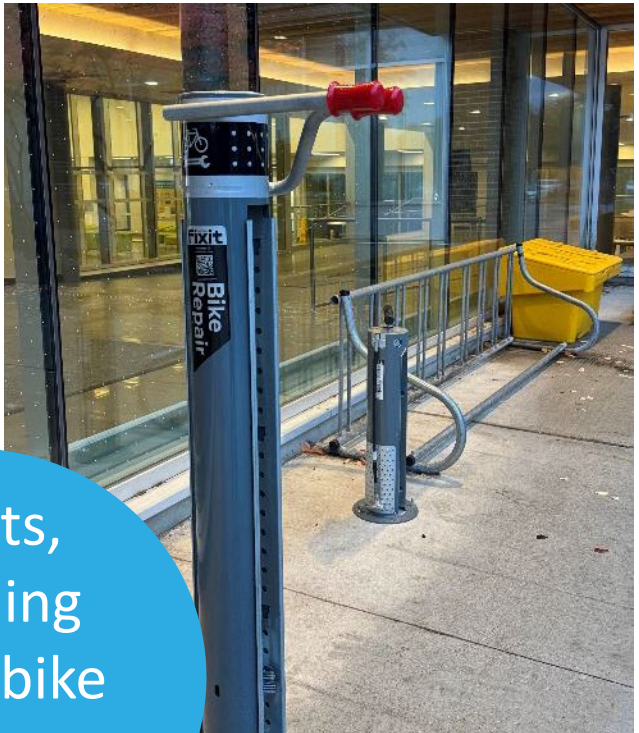


7 pollinator gardens
1 rain garden
1 urban ag
14 res trees

4,000 plants

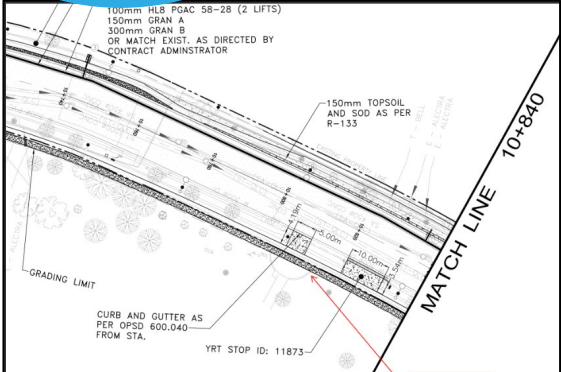


Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: Complete Streets



Complete Streets

Events, planning input, bike repair station



Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: Gallanough Park



Gallanough Park

pollinator gardens, games tables, interpretive signs



Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: York Hill Park

BEFORE



York Hill
Park

Rain garden
Tree/shrub
planting,
interpretive
signs



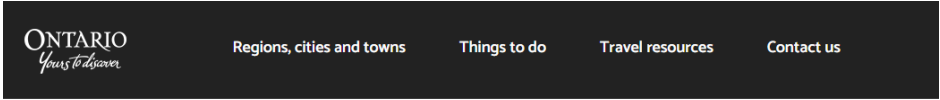
AFTER



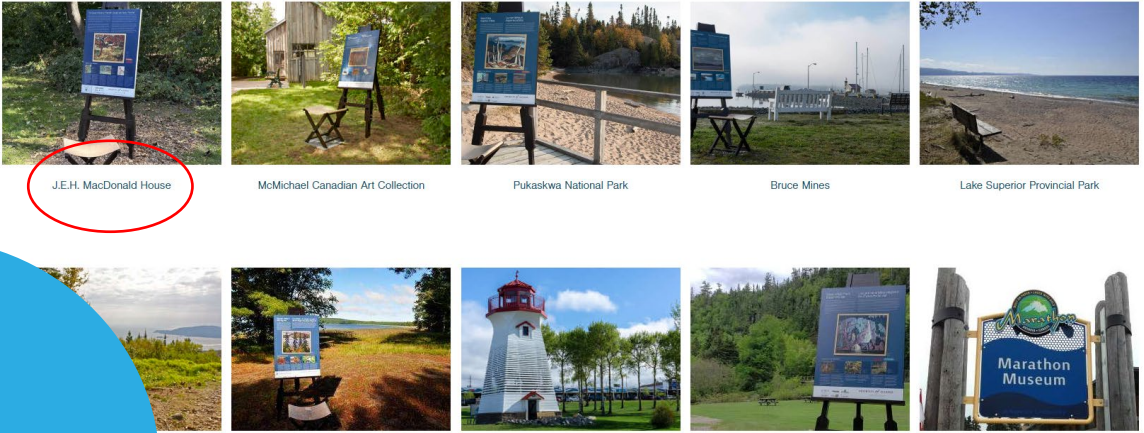
YORK HILL DISTRICT PARK

* This map recommends proposed actions and projects based on community and stakeholder feedback. Feedback of implementation and special locations may vary and can change. In addition, changes and refinements during the design and construction phases will be necessary.
 * Proposed easements within school property will be subject to further discussion with the School Board.

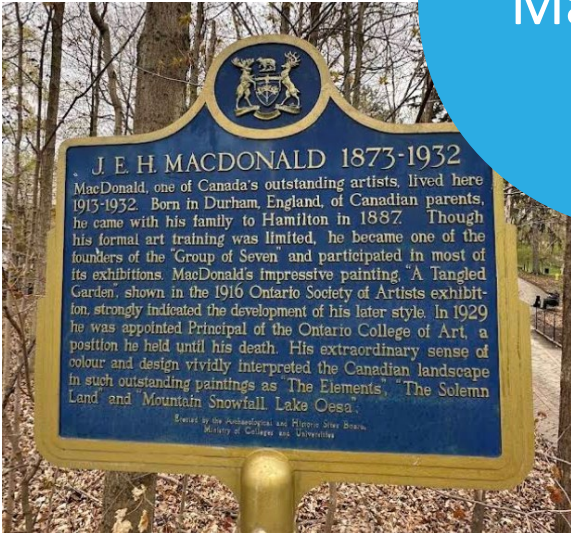
Connected People, Places and Ecosystems: 121 Centre Street



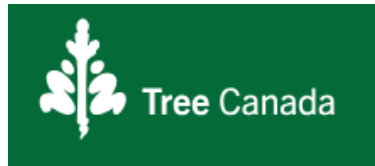
Group of Seven experience route: Greater Toronto Area



J.E.H.
MacDonald
House



Connected People, Places and Ecosystems



50
Community
Partners
and
Funders



Action Area Two

Residential Retrofits

Climate Ready Homes Program

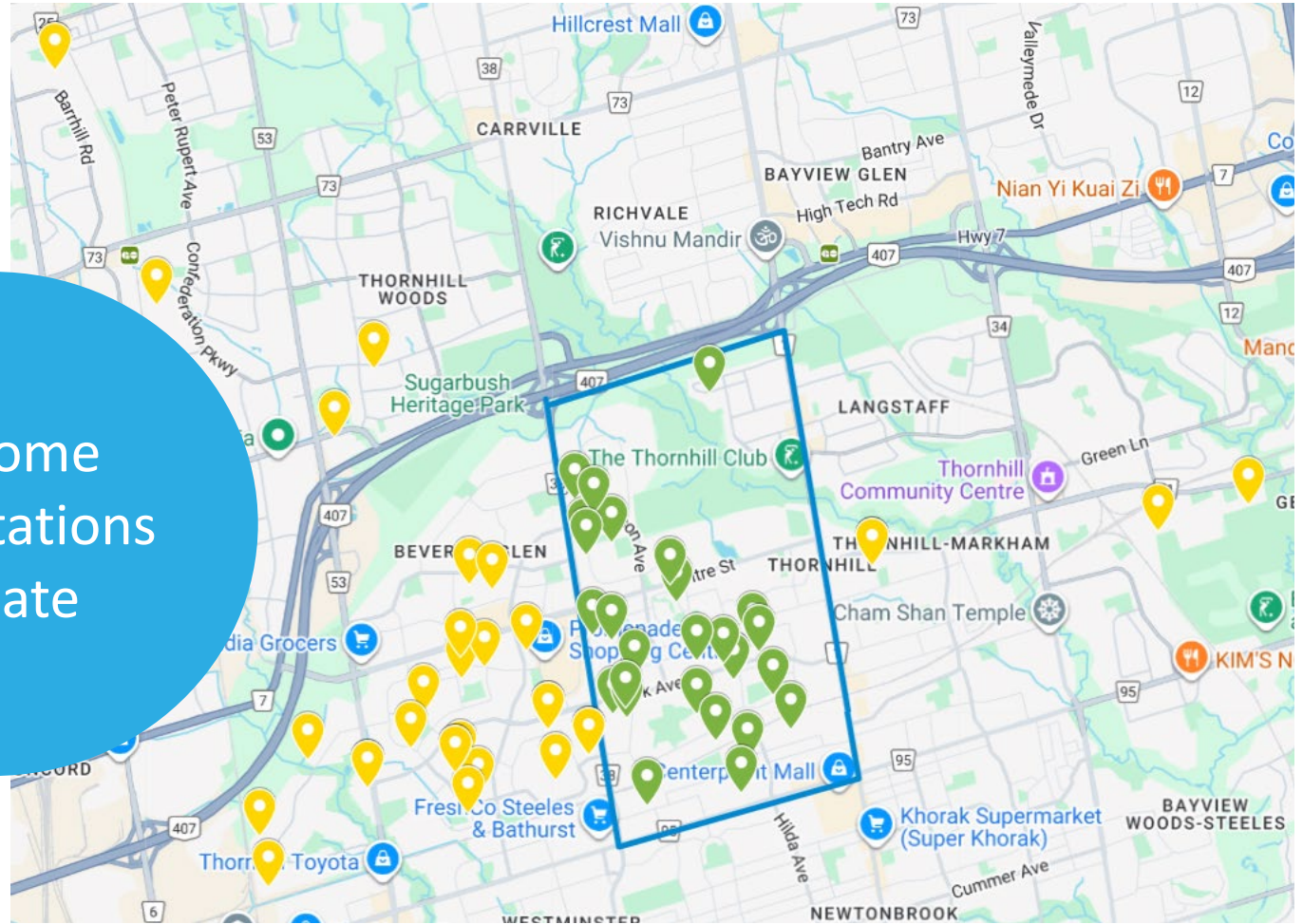
- Home Consultations
- Home Retrofit Pilot
- Educational Workshops and Events





Residential Retrofits: Home Consultations



27 home consultations to date



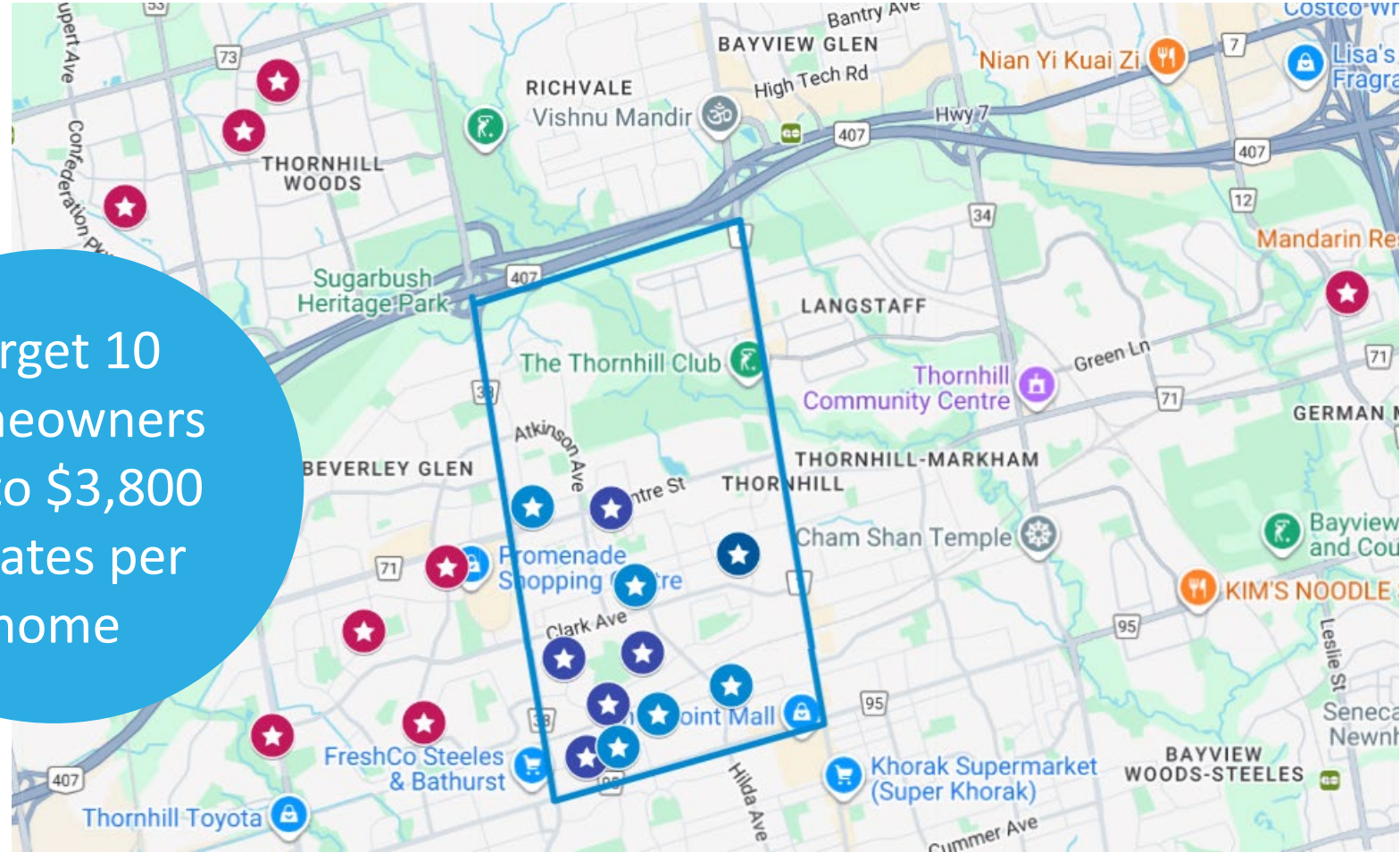
-  Home consultations completed
-  Applicant outside Thornhill SNAP boundary – indicates broader community interest

100% satisfaction rate from participants
82% have implemented free incentive
36 retrofit actions completed to date

Residential Retrofits: Home Retrofit Pilot

- Expert guidance
- Financial support
- Focus on energy efficiency and resilience measures
- Seven active applications to date

Target 10 homeowners
Up to \$3,800 rebates per home



- ★ Application received
- ★ Active participant – signed agreement in place
- ★ Applicant outside Thornhill SNAP boundary – indicates broader community interest

Pilot Participant Testimonials

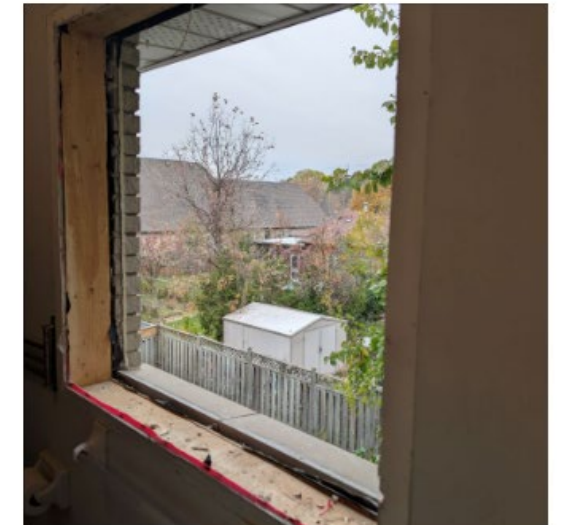
“I joined the Thornhill SNAP Home Retrofit Pilot program in 2025, and it's been an incredible step toward making our home more sustainable. Through the program, we're taking advantage of the Solar and Battery grants to install solar panels and a Tesla Powerwall3 battery storage system. We're also layering in support from the Canada Greener Homes Loan, Home Renovations Savings program, and Tesla Powerwall3 rebate. It's great that the Home Retrofit Pilot program is so flexible, allowing us to combine these various incentives to offset the high upfront costs of going solar—something that's a huge barrier for many homeowners right now. We already drive a Tesla and are considering converting more of our energy consumption to electric, so this aligns perfectly with our goals.

The SNAP resources have been extremely helpful, providing practical advice on key considerations and smart questions to ask contractors. Selecting the right team for a project like this can feel intimidating, but the guidance made the process much more manageable—leading us to choose INTOCHARGE, who are handling all our permitting and logistics, which has been a massive enabler. Overall, I'm grateful for the program's availability and how it's empowering us to switch to green energy. I hope it continues to support others who want to make the leap but are held back by finances, especially in these challenging economic times—everyone deserves access to these opportunities!”

- Khanh

“I am excited to be a part of this Pilot and start this journey! I've had a genuinely great experience with the program. Very grateful to have been selected and I'd love to see more people participate. I also attended the Seal and Save: Home Air Sealing Workshop in September 2025. It was well structured, and the Q+A session was helpful in understanding how I can make these updates to my home. I plan to complete Do-It-Yourself (DIY) air sealing alongside the window upgrades I have planned”

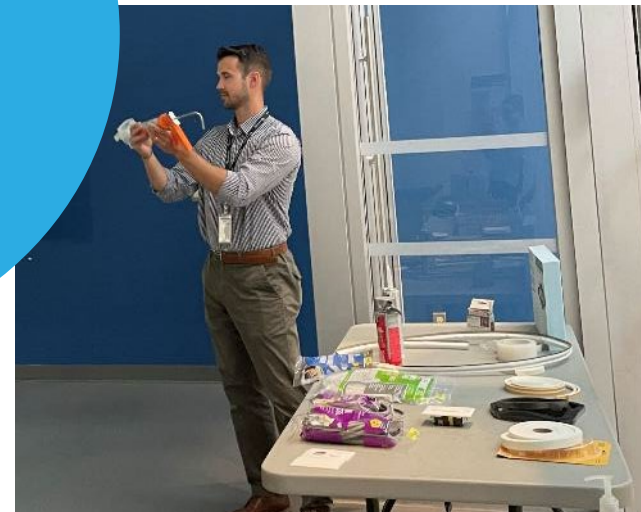
- Danny



CRHP Workshops and Events



5 workshops
275 participants
annual home
show



Rainwater Harvesting

Rainwater harvesting is the ancient practice of capturing and using rainwater and it's making a comeback! Harvest Rain! All household water usage in the summer goes to watering plants. You can collect rainwater in the summer and use it for watering plants, flushing toilets, and watering lawns. This is a great way to save water and reduce your water bill.

What's so great about rainwater?

- Rainwater is soft
- Rainwater is better for plants
- Rainwater is free
- Rainwater is a resource

Installing a rain barrel

Step 1 - Pick Your Barrel

Step 2 - Choose Your Location

Lawn Care

The lawn is the most prominent landscape in residential areas across Canada. Many homeowners spend hundreds of dollars a year on lawn care and products including fertilizers, water equipment and tools. This is the water, soil, and the environment. Fortunately, an attractive lawn can be maintained without chemicals and with minimal water and fuel. Follow the steps below to create a healthy, healthy lawn that will last all year long.

Feed the soil

The growing principle of organic lawn care is to nourish the soil.

- Apply organic fertilizer in late summer or early fall to further respond soil fertility and increase organic matter content.
- These slow-release products will not burn grass, nor will they contribute to ground water pollution.
- Leave clippings where they fall. They are the perfect fertilizer - free, convenient and full of nutrients. They boost soil fertility by up to 50% and provide much-needed organic matter. Many municipalities no longer collect clippings.
- Use quality mulching mowers or better, mulching blowers. Other mowers can be allowed to do the job. Remove the bag and use the discharge chute or chipping kit under the mower, or use a collection kit if your mower does chipping in clumps. Avoid clumps with soft grass.

Aerate

Remove and fill soil from the top of your lawn to improve circulation, allowing oxygen and air to penetrate. Hire a professional lawn care company to aerate your lawn, or rent an aerator from the local hardware store and do it yourself. This is best done in the fall when soil conditions are optimal for grass to grow.

Customers receive and fertilizer bags for free. Direct and product feedback is the only operating company and ongoing business.

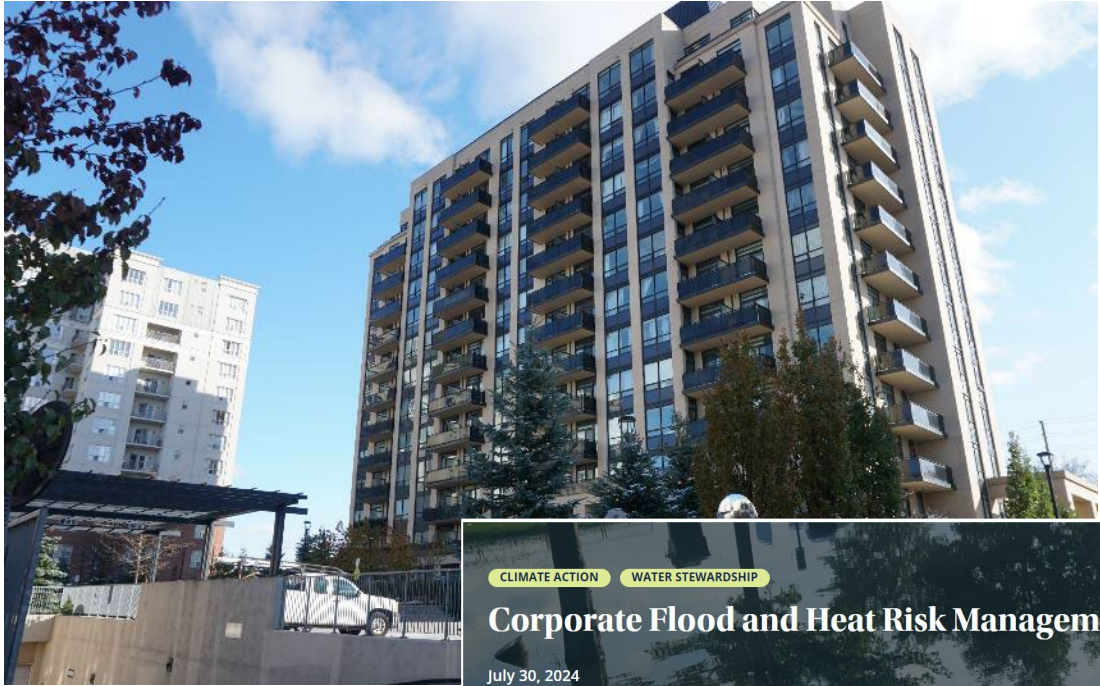
Action Area Three

Greening and Humanization of MURBS, Commercial and Institutional Properties

- Tenant engagement
- Property greening and resilience
- Foster connections to neighbourhood



Greening and Humanization of MURBS, Commercial and Institutional Properties



4 properties
2 pollinator beds
2 fruit trees
500 plants
75 balconies
2 urban ag



CLIMATE ACTION WATER STEWARDSHIP
Corporate Flood and Heat Risk Management
July 30, 2024



Partners in Project Green

Brought to you by:
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and Toronto Pearson

SNAP Budget

| Year | SNAP Phase | Total Budget | Total from Vaughan | Other Funding Sources |
|---------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| 2019 | Action Plan Development | \$246,000 | \$93,900 | \$152,100 - FCM Green Municipal Fund (Note 2019 budget spent over 2020 and 2021) - received by COV |
| 2020 | Action Plan Development | \$22,970 | | \$22,970 - Transition 2050 – received by TRCA |
| 2021 | Action Plan Development | \$20,000 | | \$20,000 - TD Friends of the Environment (Oakbank Pond Park), Enbridge Municipal Energy Plan Incentive (CRHP); York Region Greening Action Partnership (Hefhill Park) - all received by COV |
| 2022 | Implementation | \$96,295 | \$61,800 | \$34,495 - TD Green Spaces (York Hill Park); Tree Canada (York Hill Park) - received by COV; Enbridge Fueling Futures (York Hill Park) - received by TRCA |
| 2023 | Implementation | \$134,962 | \$116,602 | \$18,360 - EcoAction (York Hill Park, interpretive signage, JEH, Oakbank and planting events) – received by TRCA |
| 2024 | Implementation | \$208,930 | \$205,930 | \$3,000 - Canadian Wildlife Federation (Clark Ave Pollinator Way) – received by TRCA |
| 2025 | Implementation | \$233,618 | \$233,618 | |
| 2026 - 2027 | Implementation – Final Year Thornhill and Vaughan 2.0 | \$331,350* | \$243,850* | \$87,500 - Peter Gilgan + RBC (for CRHP throughout all of Vaughan, including workshops, consultations, rebates, staffing; leveraged because Vaughan is a SNAP partner) – received by TRCA |
| TOTALS | | \$1,294,125 | \$955,700 | Leveraged an additional 35%, or \$338,425 |

* Estimated values

Open Recommendations

Connected People, Places and Ecosystems

- **Gallanough Park amphitheatre** – out of scope for Park Revitalization, insufficient funds
- **York Hill Park remaining activity zones** – delayed due to Parks Delivery timelines
- **Other greenspaces general improvements** – lack of time and funding
- **Complete Streets wayfinding signage, local routes/map, rest areas, bike rack program** – lack of time and funding
- **Conservation Heritage District interpretive plan** - lack of funding

MURBS, Commercial, and Institutional Properties

- **Consistent engagement** – efforts were not fruitful/owners not interested

Lessons Learned

Staff Communication and Collaboration

- Need **regular meeting schedule for staff** engagement from onset of project, through action planning and into implementation - critical for success
- **Timely discussions about scope and budget** can guide SNAP efforts for fundraising and maximize project impact
- Weighing **needs of community versus staff capacity** for maintenance



Agreement and Budget

- Aligning SLA term with budget cycle

Action Planning

- Action plans should **be more specific, but still flexible** – overly broad becomes hard to pinpoint key recommendations
- **Dream big, but recommendations must be actionable**



Lessons Learned

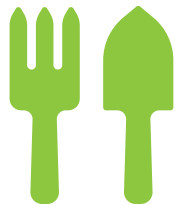
Community Engagement

- Early is best to gain trust and sense of ownership
- Need many opportunities to reach people – one size does not fit all
- Some sectors can be hard to reach – need connections and creativity
- Set clear expectations for community



Plan for Legacy Support

- Establish Thornhill SNAP Community Champion Network early
- Ongoing maintenance of green infrastructure
- Climate Ready Homes – pilot participant engagement



Feedback from Vaughan Staff

What We Heard:

- Opens opportunities for enhancement over several years
- Helps inform residents upfront about projects
- Brings overall awareness about context of a site
- Funding helps with improvements outside of state-of-good repair
- Strengthens grant funding applications
- Confirms funding investments

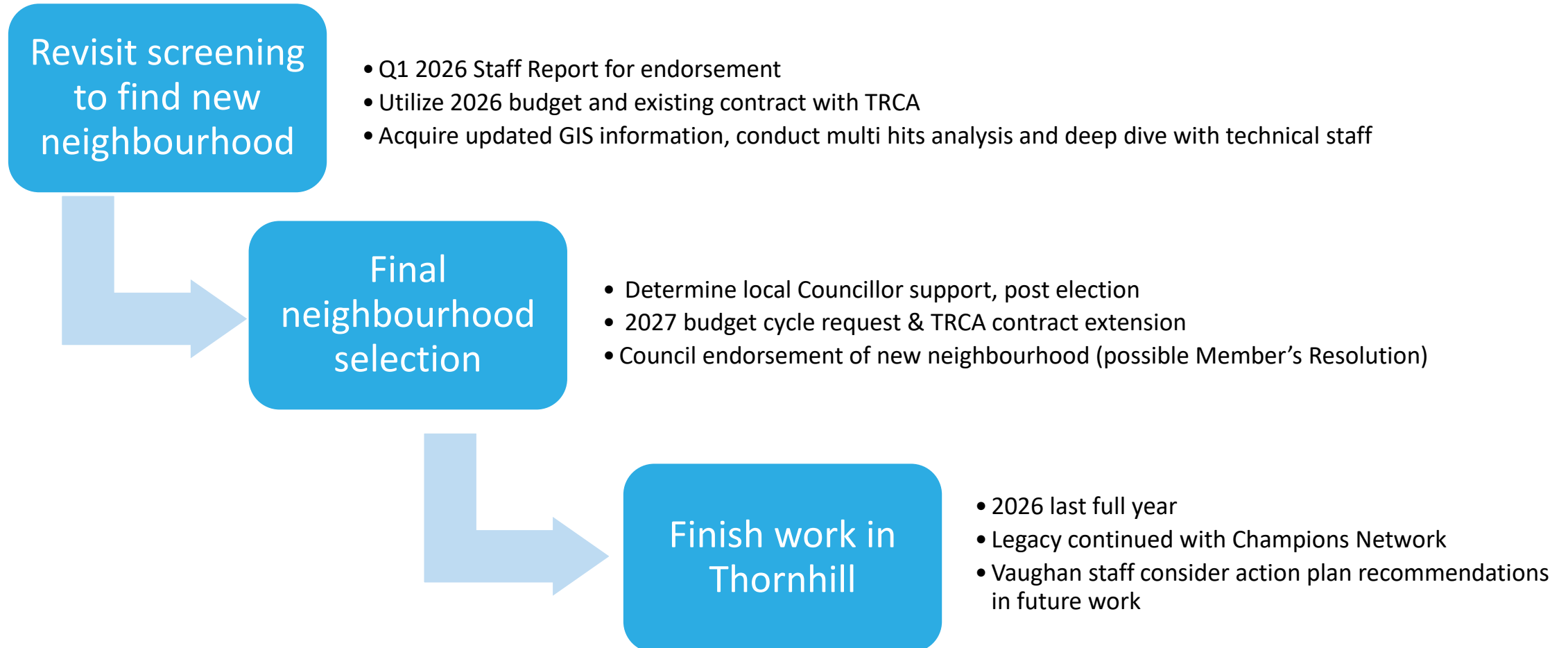
"I truly love to see when people get involved from the community, this helps to promote the work we do as a department and empowers the community to take sustainable practices into their own hands. This program has also been a great way to educate people about the plant material we use around the city."

"We have used the SNAP initiative to support funding requests, grant applications, implementation of projects etc. When projects can demonstrate that they align with several city needs and goals, they are prioritized more and are easier to implement"

"SNAP helped to justify advancing all park improvements at the same time"

"SNAP led and hosted two Bike Month Events to support new infrastructure in the Thornhill area which we wouldn't have been able to do without the support of SNAP and TRCA"

Vaughan SNAP 2.0 – Next Steps (2026 in review)



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Thank you!

