

Communication : C2
VMC Sub-committee
March 2, 2021
Item # 2

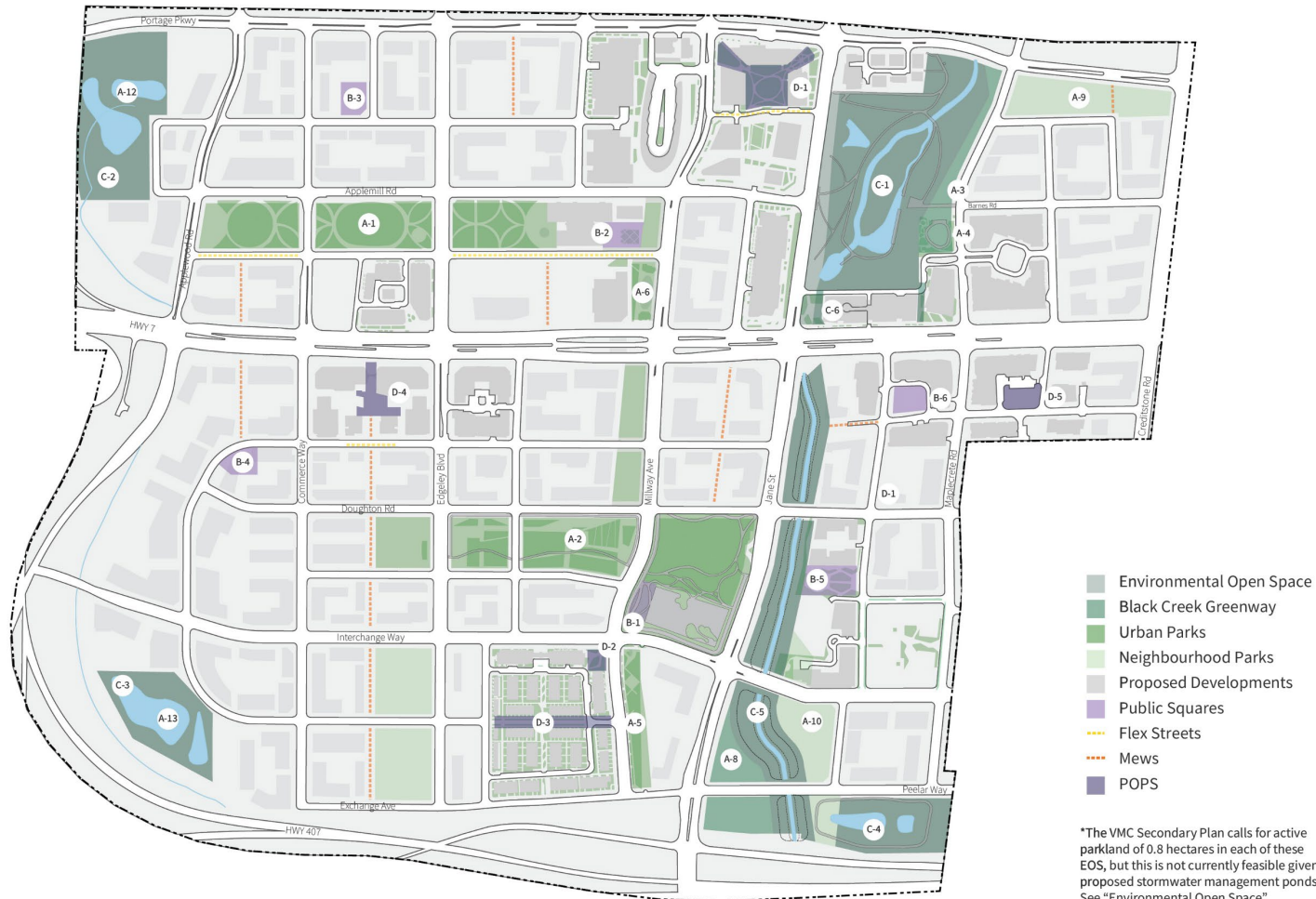
VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan Update

The City is undertaking the **VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan** to guide the timely development of parks and open spaces in the VMC and create a **world class public realm**.

Introduction

Study Progress

- The findings of the Assessment Report, as previously reported, have provided the City with **valuable insight** into **demographics, service levels, and benchmarks** to guide the timely provision of parkland in the VMC and made clear that **active parkland and social infrastructure are critical priorities** for the VMC
- The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan has **advanced** and has **prepared multiple scenarios** for the development of parks and open space in the VMC



*The VMC Secondary Plan calls for active parkland of 0.8 hectares in each of these EOS, but this is not currently feasible given proposed stormwater management ponds. See "Environmental Open Space".

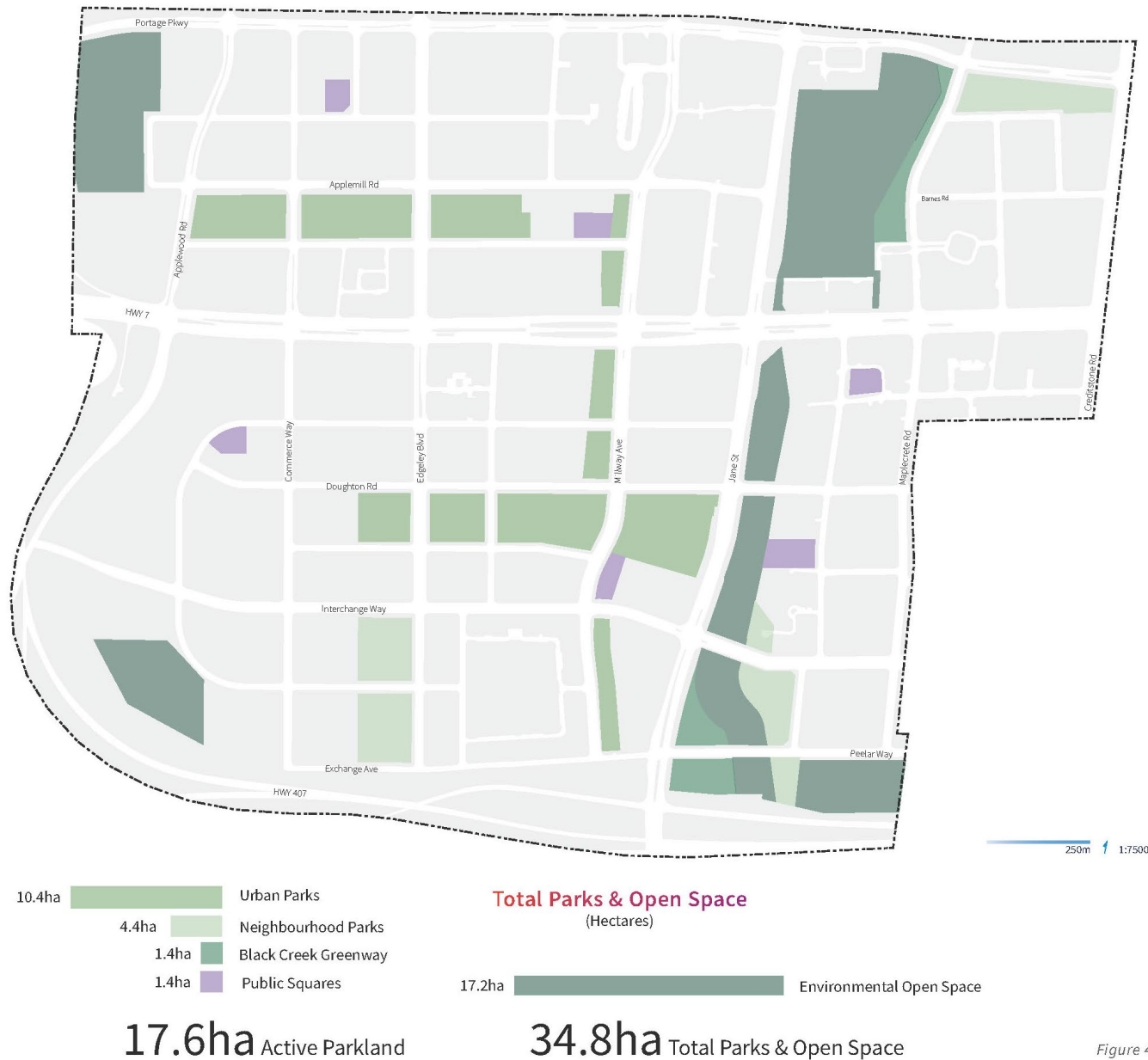
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Inventory of VMC Parks & Open Space

Analysis

Assessment Report Key Points

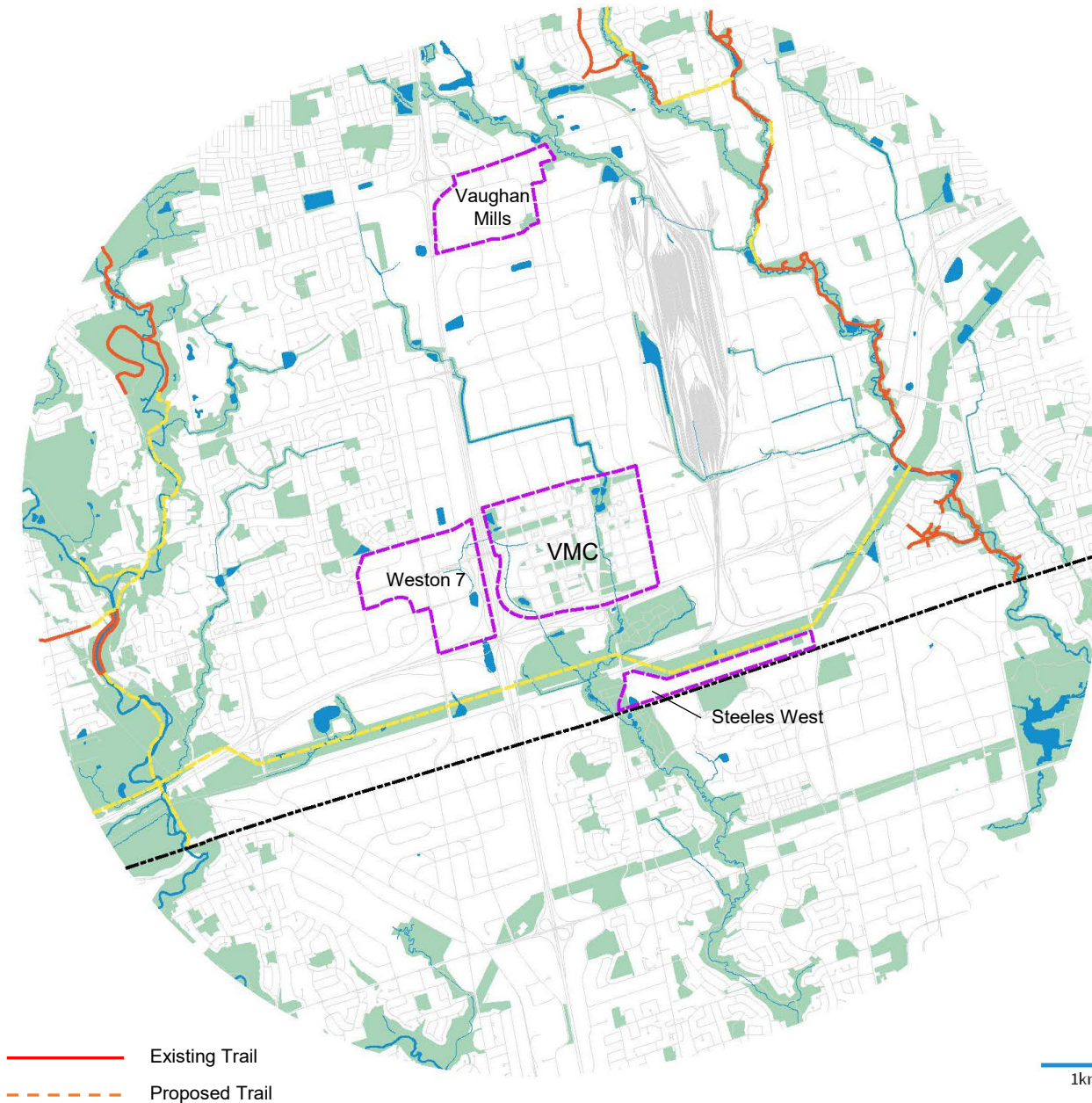
- ‘**Active parkland**’ supports a wide range of uses and recreational facilities
- Active parkland and social infrastructure are **critical priorities** for the VMC
- Existing parks and open spaces within the VMC, or immediately adjacent to it, may be explored for **potential expansion and/or improvements** to service the new downtown’s population
- **VMC** is uniquely situated among **three major greenways** running along the Humber River, Black Creek, and Don River West



Analysis

Assessment Report Key Points

- Greenways are **linked** by the future **Vaughan Supertrail** through the hydro corridor south of Highway 407
- A convenient, safe **connection** would provide VMC residents with access to many kilometres **of trails, parks and green spaces**
- South of 407 are **two large parcels** of publicly-owned land where **active parkland** could be located:
 - 40-hectare MTO lands
 - 13-hectare Black Creek Pioneer Village North Lands



Inventory of Parks & Open Spaces within 5km of VMC

Figure 30

There are **opportunities** to add active parkland and improve the public realm both within and adjacent to the VMC.



Principles

Balance Parks in the VMC

- Create a Parks and Open Space Master Plan with a **compact, balanced, and meaningful** parks and open space network **within** the VMC boundary
- Outdoor facilities should **reflect the unique needs** and demographics of a **dense urban population**
- Parks and open space in or adjacent to the VMC should be **programmed according to a hierarchy** that **recognizes the frequency and importance of use** to ensure that facilities are appropriately located

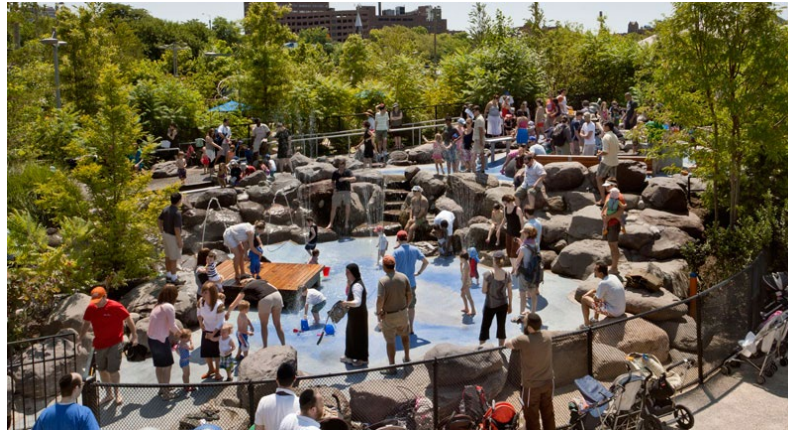




Principles

Implement Parks Outside the VMC

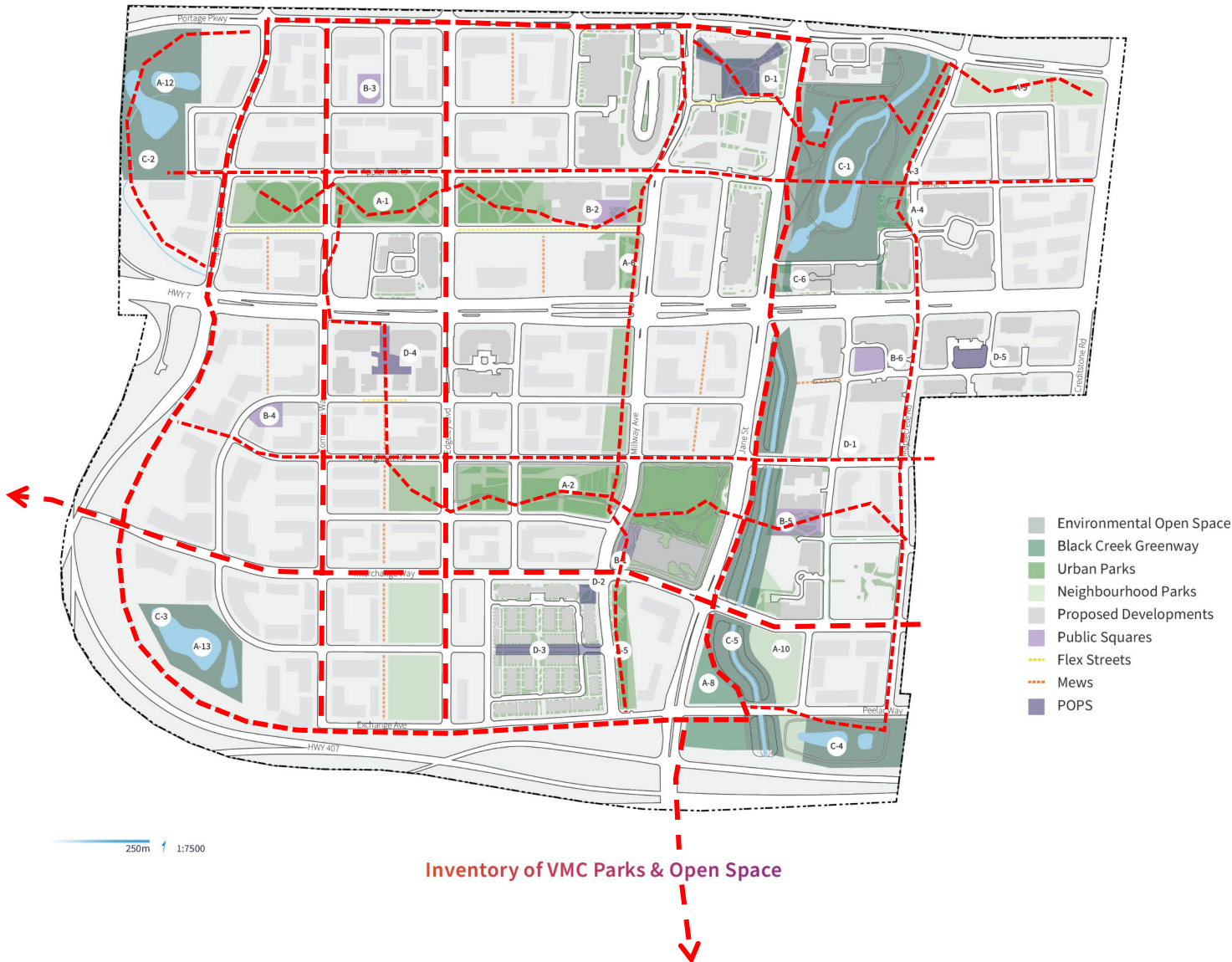
- Facilitate the planning and design of parks **outside** the VMC boundary that include **sports facilities** with **large footprints**
- Parks and open space within and adjacent to the VMC must be **conveniently and safely accessible** from any part of the VMC – **roads should not function as barriers** to a connected VMC

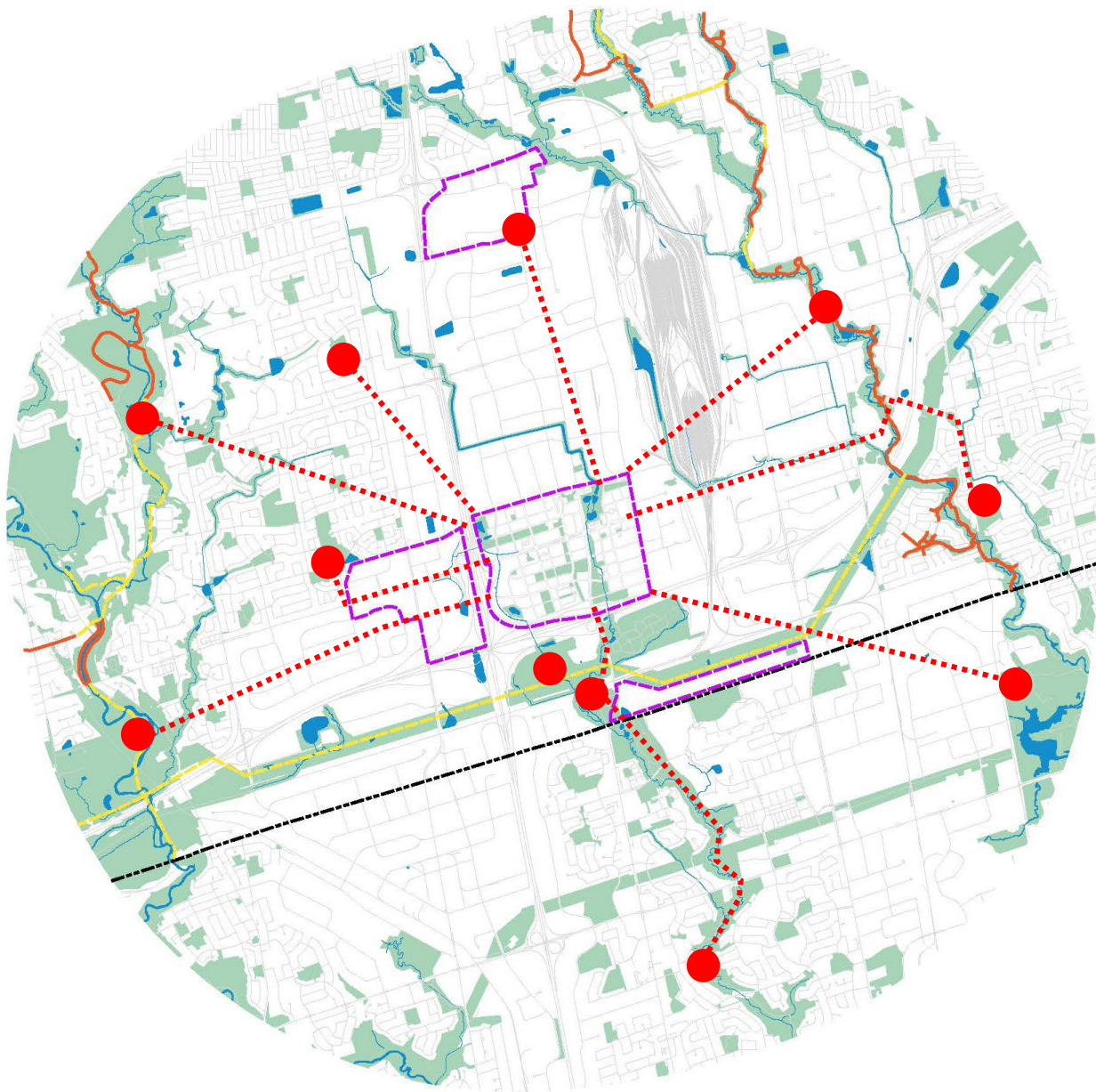


Principles

Strengthen Connectivity

- Challenge due to legacy conditions that **prioritize vehicles** – for example, Highway 7 and Jane
- **Investment** in bridges, tunnels, and safe surface **crossings** effectively **increases** the **amount of open space** available to residents
- Design for a **sustainable future** created through **density**, not a legacy condition
- Partner with MTO on lands along south and west of VMC to create a continuous **‘green ribbon’** around VMC
- Minimize **storm ponds** to create the greatest area for **passive recreation** and **improve connectivity**





Principles

Strengthen Connectivity

- **Within** the VMC boundary and to existing and proposed parks **outside** of the VMC
- Create a safe, convenient **circulation system** – the **optimization** of parkland requires **safe, convenient access**
- A safe and convenient **pedestrian and cycling connection** should be made **south** to an extension of the Vaughan Super Trail in the Hydro Corridor south of the VMC to provide VMC residents with **access to many kilometers of trails, parks, and open space**

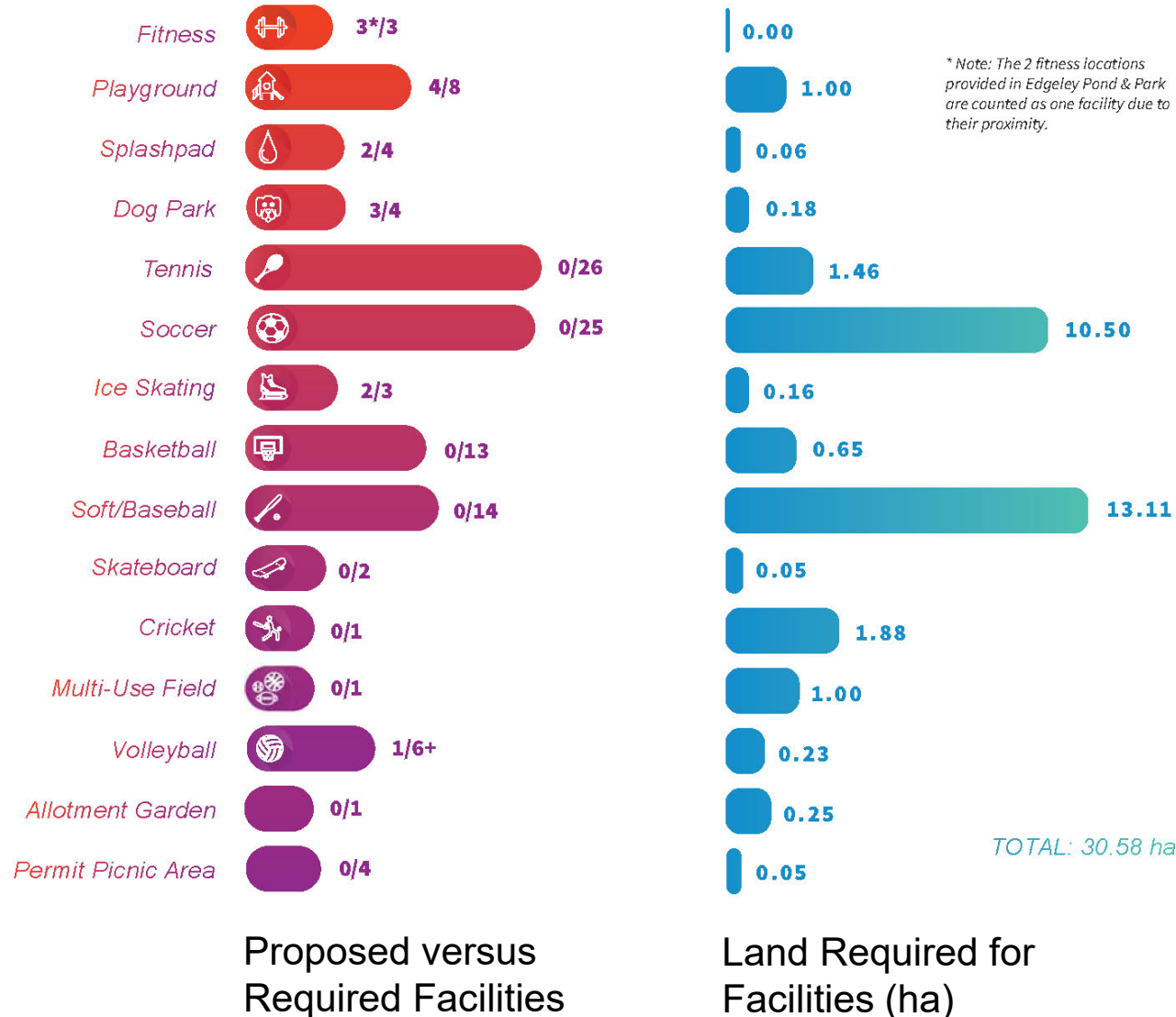
The study has explored several **scenarios** that **build on** the identified principles and background analysis.

Foundations

Scenario Foundations

The tasks informing the master plan scenarios include:

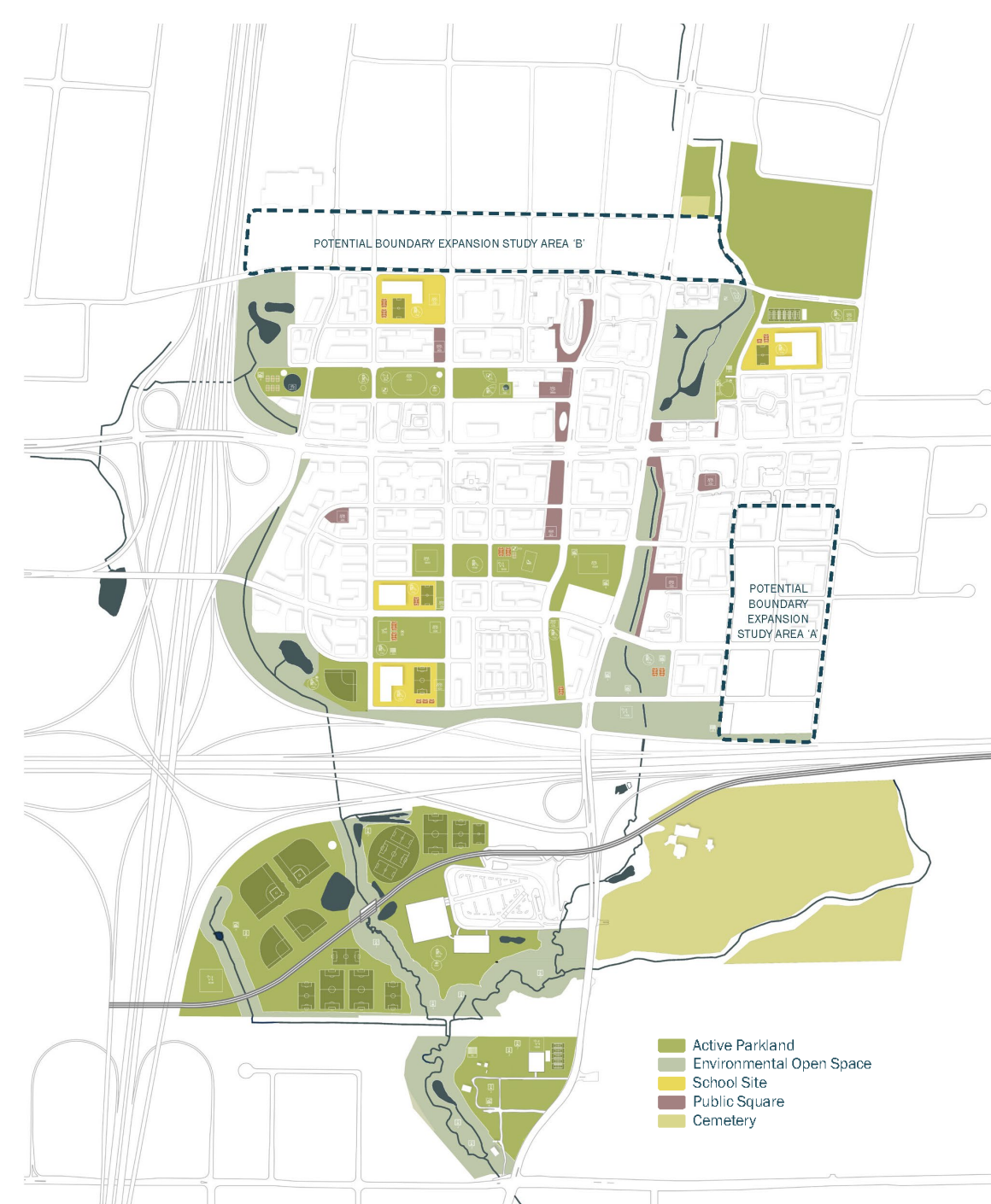
- A demographic analysis of the VMC (in Assessment Report)
- A study of park facility requirements based on projected populations and demographics (in Assessment Report)
- A study of facilities that fit within the parkland defined in the VMC Secondary Plan (2010)
- A study of potential additional parkland available within the VMC boundaries
- A study of parkland potential near the VMC and its capacity to absorb facilities



Scenarios

Overall Opportunities

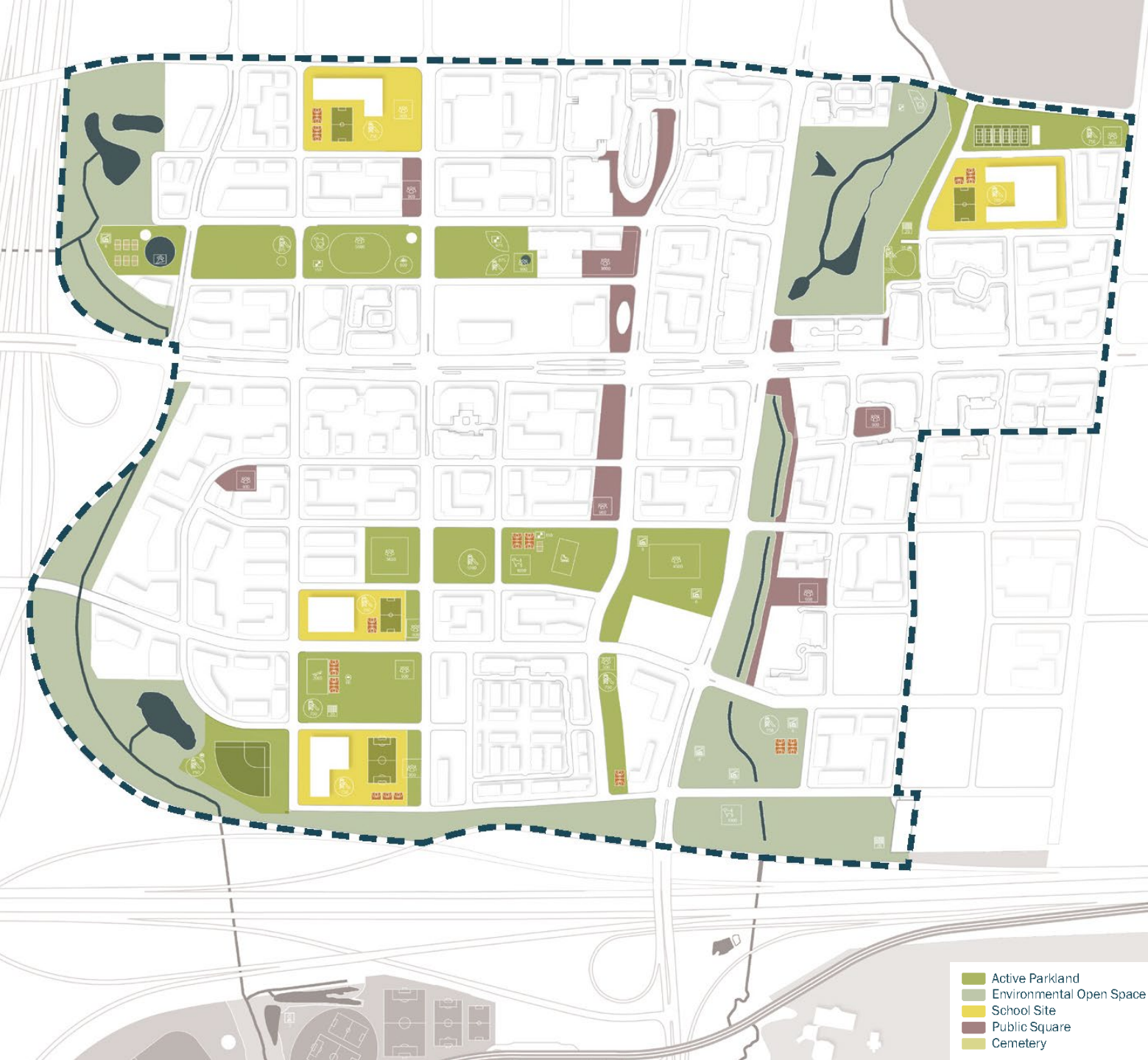
- **Optimize** active parkland **within VMC**
- **Coordinate** facility types and access **with school boards**
- Acquire lands **south of Highway 407**
- Acquire lands **north of Portage Parkway** adjacent Black Creek
- Designate significant **active parkland** in **VMC Potential Boundary Expansion Study Areas**
- Ensure the **circulation network** supports convenient and safe access to open space



Scenarios

Optimize Parkland Within the VMC

- **Intensify** park facility distribution **within the existing parkland** defined in the VMC Secondary Plan (2010), including **adding a small amount of parkland**
- Design **efficient, flexible** park space
- Coordinate with **school boards**:
 - Include sports and recreational facilities in **school yards** in overall facilities plan
 - Ensure facilities in school yards are **accessible when not used by schools**





Scenarios

Optimize POPS to Complement Public Realm

- **POPS** can be an **important** component of the public realm, but are **not a replacement for parks**
- Tend to be ‘urban’ – designed to discourage certain uses, minimize maintenance for private owner
- Results of the Assessment Survey suggest that **green space** is particularly **valued by the public**
- Require developers to **design POPS with a ‘green’ feel** – for example, Transit City POPS

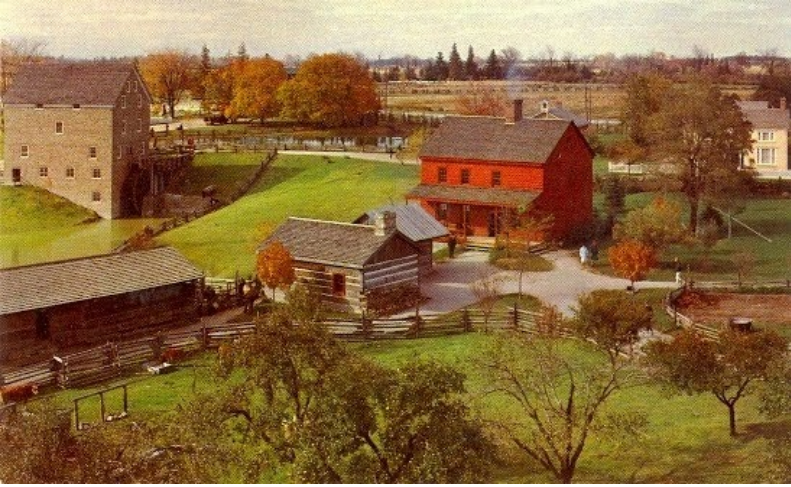
**Image by Claude Cormier & Associes and SmartCentres*

Scenarios

Expand South

- Expand south to create **new parkland** south of Highway 407 and west of the 407 subway station
- **MTO Lands** south of 407 provide potential site for District Park
- Many larger-scale **outdoor recreational facilities** could be located there
- Safe, convenient **pedestrian & cycle crossing over 407** required
- Could also serve other **Vaughan intensification areas**
- **Further investigation** with MTO, TRCA and Hydro Authority **required**

Active Parkland
Environmental Open Space
School Site
Public Square
Cemetery



Scenarios

Black Creek Pioneer Village

- **North Lands** portion of **Black Creek Pioneer Village** is potentially available as parkland and EOS
- Some larger-scale **outdoor recreational facilities** could be located there, depending on heritage matters, but it is very suitable for **smaller events, community gardens, and picnicking**
- **TRCA** communication of November 9, 2020:

“We also remain interested in working with the City on connecting the growing population of the VMC to our nearby greenspaces in Vaughan including the north property of Black Creek Pioneer Village.”

Scenarios

Expand Black Creek North

- Expand north to create new parkland adjacent the **Black Creek north of Portage**, effectively **enlarging Edgeley Pond and Park**, and potentially in other sites
- Park adjacent Black Creek has benefits:
 - **Enhances** park user **experience**
 - Allows for **ecological restoration** of waterway
- **Expanded Black Creek Area** should include active parkland and EOS east of Black Creek
- Addition of up to **11.5 hectares** east of Black Creek would allow for **District Park**
- **No highway crossing required**

Scenarios

Boundary Expansions

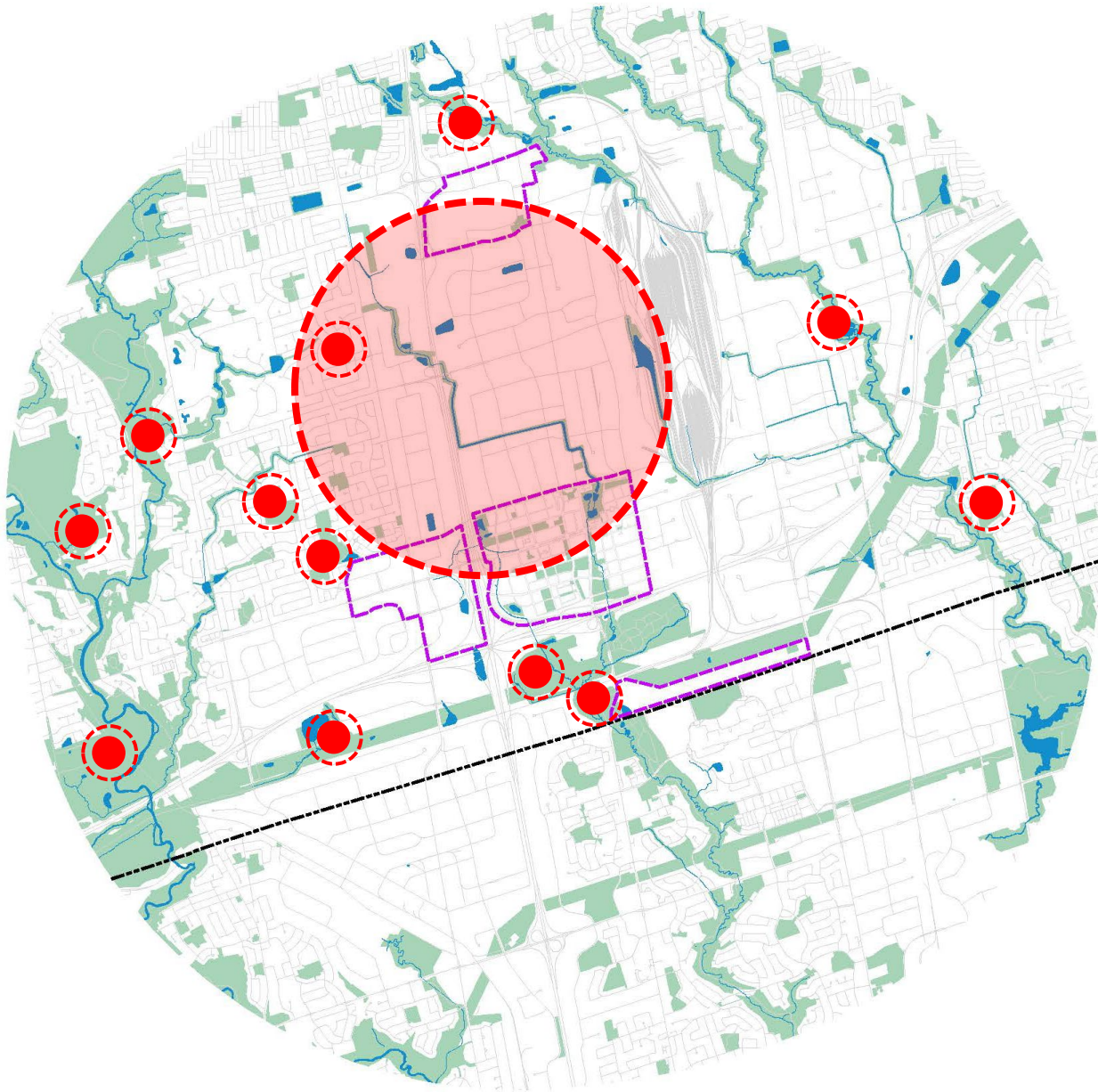
- If expanding **east** ('A'), create new parkland between **Maplecrete** and **Creditstone**
- If expanding **north** ('B'), create new parkland **north of Portage**
- If **Potential Boundary Expansion Study Areas** added to VMC, **active parkland** provision in these areas should be at a level that helps address **shortfall** across VMC
- **Social Infrastructure, EOS and POPs** planned for Expansion Areas should **complement** the public realm



Scenarios

Other Expansion Areas

- Explore parkland opportunities **outside the VMC boundary** that may also serve other intensification areas per Council approved policy
- Invest in **new or upgraded park facilities** to increase capacity and level of service



Inventory of Parks & Open Spaces within 5km of VMC

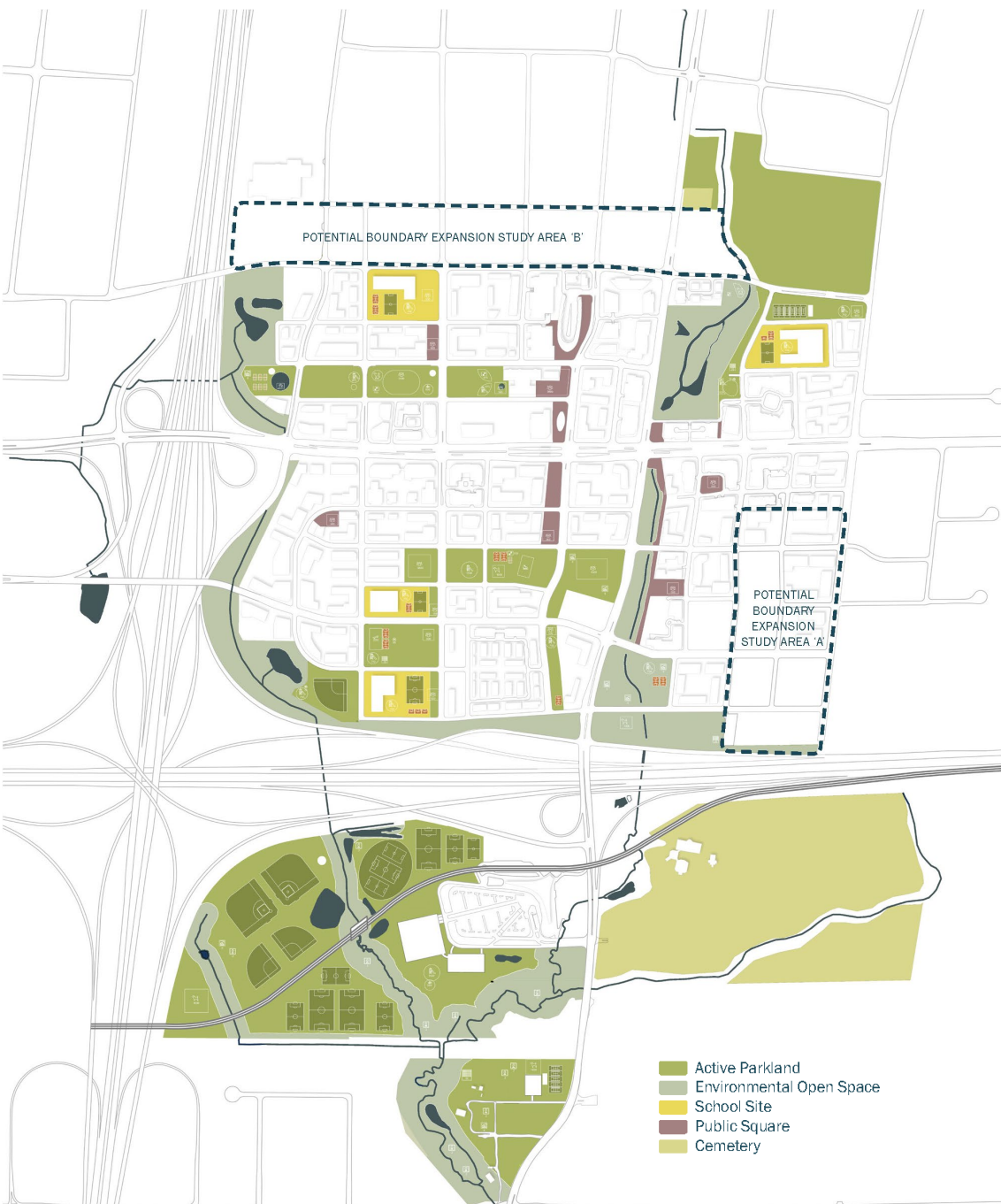
Figure 30

If the **opportunities** for adding active parkland and improving the public realm are successfully pursued, the parkland in the VMC will continue to support a **complete community**.

Potentials

Potential for Active Parkland

- Potential total active **parkland inside** the VMC: **18.3 hectares**
- Potential total active **parkland outside** the VMC: **61.2 hectares**
- Potential total active **parkland: 0.6 hectares/1000**
- Likely to **make VMC a leader** among GTA Growth Centres
- These scenarios, which can be implemented over time in a **measured response to development**, will provide the City with **options for service level delivery**, and ultimately create a diverse, multi-functional, and seamlessly **interconnected parks and open space network**.



**As per constraints outlined in November 2020 VMC Sub-committee report*

Potentials

Potential for Facilities

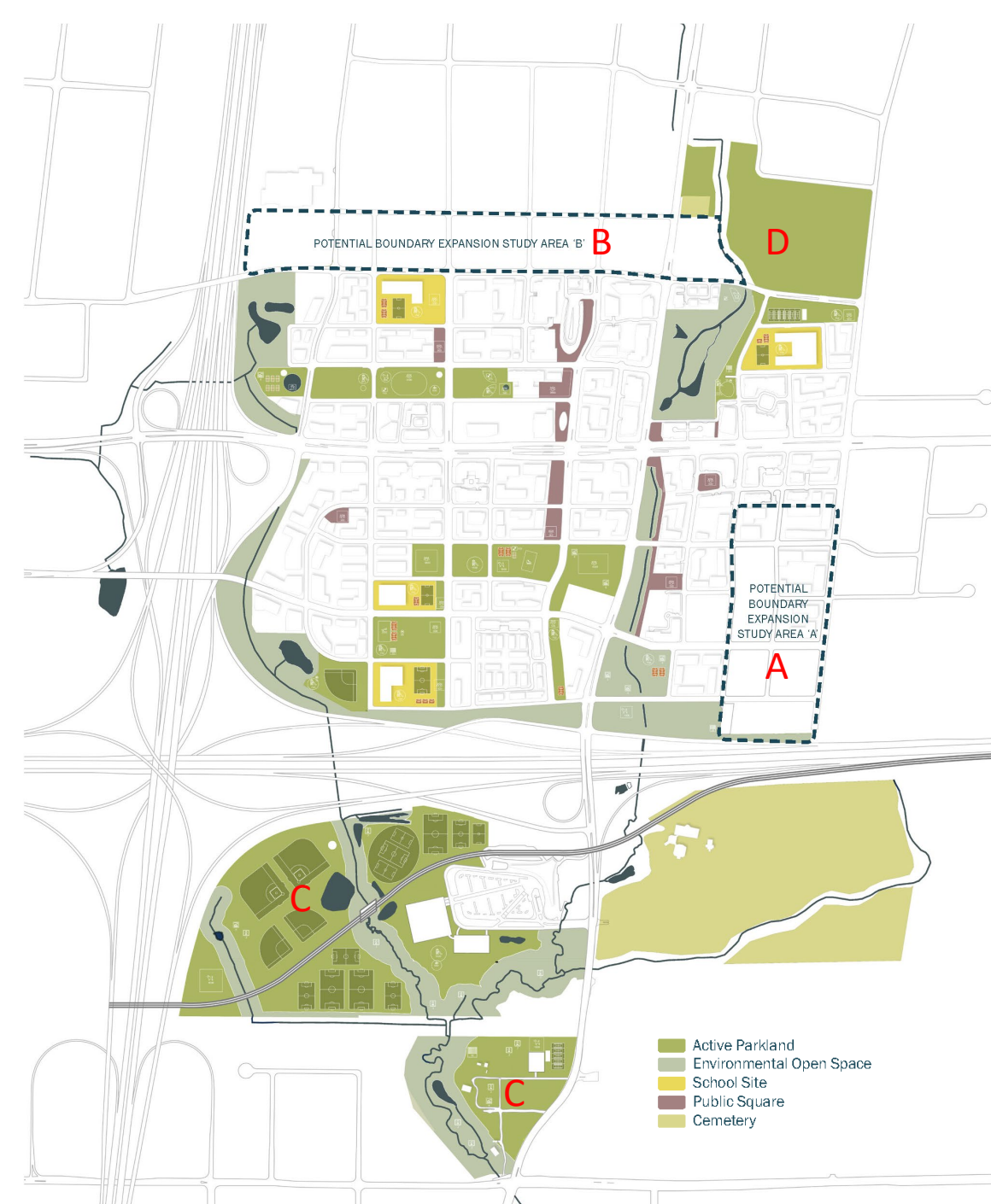


- **72%** of provided '**urban facilities**' – dog parks, community gardens, picnic areas, gathering spaces – located inside the VMC boundary
- Potential of **118%** of required **smaller sports and recreation facilities** – pleasure skating, basketball, tennis, volleyball, adult fitness – with 73% of facilities within the VMC boundary
- **91%** of required **larger sports and recreation facilities** – soccer, baseball, softball, hockey – with 21% of facilities within the VMC boundary

Potentials

Notes on Implementation

- Should Potential Boundary Expansion Study Areas “A” and “B” be included in the VMC Secondary Plan Review process, additional parkland will be required within the expanded boundary. Proposed park size, typology, and configuration within these areas would be subject to the VMC Secondary Plan Review process.
- Proposed parkland in area “C” is subject to further analysis and collaboration with public agencies including Infrastructure Ontario and TRCA.
- Proposed parkland in area “D” will not be included in the VMC Secondary Plan Review process and will be subject to a future long-term park planning study.



Wayfinding

Startup

- The consultant has begun the **signage and wayfinding design process**, focusing on the public realm
- The study has defined an area encompassing the **mobility hub, part of Edgeley Pond and Park, and Strata Park** for the initial wayfinding design exercise.
- This area was chosen because it includes most of the **types of parks and public realm spaces** likely to **require signage** across the VMC.



VMC PARKS AND WAYFINDING MASTER PLAN



The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) is Vaughan's emerging downtown. The City of Vaughan is undertaking the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan to guide the timely development of parks and open spaces in the VMC and create a world class public realm. It includes the creation of a signage strategy to make it easier to navigate Vaughan's new downtown. The study presents a rare opportunity to think boldly about the city, the way people understand and move through it, and the role of parks and open space in modern urban life.

Collecting feedback from the community is vital to the success of this plan. Through collaboration with residents and stakeholders, the City is committed to developing a Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan that is innovative, accessible, sustainable and safe, and fosters connectivity, physical activity, health and wellness for all citizens.

A survey was available from Oct. 16 to Nov. 30 for citizens to share their thoughts on potential park and open space amenities and desires for wayfinding systems. The survey is now closed; thank you to those who participated. Results and findings from the survey will be posted to this webpage so check back often for updates and future opportunities for engagement.



Engagement

Virtual Connections

- Current consultation methods are focusing on **virtual connections**
- Upcoming engagement will include a **recorded virtual focus group** with members of the public, **followed by online feedback** on the proposed scenarios
- Video of the focus group presentation and an interactive engagement tool on **Bang the Table** will be **available to the public for an extended period**



Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan - Next Steps

Modify Plan for Scenarios

- **Modify overall plan** based on scenarios: VMC expansion areas, more information on **adjacent lands**

Refine Plan

- **Refine parks and open space plans:** define hard/soft spaces, locate all facilities and add tree canopy
- **Overlay circulation networks** and suggested locations and characteristics of **POPS**
- **Integrate** designs for **North Urban Park, South Urban Park, and Black Creek Revitalization Area**

Continued Community Consultation

- Present draft master plan scenarios to **community** for **feedback**

Connect with VMC Program

Christina Bruce
Director, VMC Program
Christina.Bruce@vaughan.ca

Amy Roots
Senior Manager, VMC Program
Amy.Roots@vaughan.ca

Jennifer Cappola-Logullo
Manager Development
Engineering, VMC Program
Jennifer.Logullo@vaughan.ca

Gerardo Paez Alonso
Manager Strategic Parks
Initiatives, VMC Program
Gerardo.PaezAlonso@vaughan.ca

vaughan.ca/VMCParks



DOWNTOWN

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METROPOLITAN CENTRE