

NORTH OF THE NITH

TRAILS AND OPEN SPACES MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 2026

COUNTY OF Brant Simply Grand

SCATLIFF + MILLER + MURRAY
visionary urban design + landscapes

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Cover photo from Explore Waterloo Region. The Hydrocut in Kitchener, Ontario.

CHAPTER 01:
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



Introduction

This Master Plan is the culmination of a two-year process that builds upon on-going efforts to enhance the recreational and ecological value of the North of the Nith.

Purpose

The Master Plan establishes a bold yet pragmatic long-term vision that guides the development of a connected, sustainable, and accessible trail network across the North of the Nith over the next 20 years.

The Master Plan balances the protection and enhancement of the natural environment with enhanced recreational opportunities. The Plan is supported by an Implementation Strategy which outlines short, medium, and long term projects and initiatives the County can undertake in collaboration with the Community and First Nation Partners to carry out the vision.

Objectives

Eight Master Plan objectives have been developed with input from the public, Community Partners, and First Nation Partners:

- Enhance recreational opportunities.
- Incorporate Indigenous place-keeping and values.
- Help people learn about the cultural and natural history of the Nith River with interpretive elements and places for outdoor education.
- Protect and improve natural areas.
- Reduce safety risks presented by natural hazards such as steep slopes, flood-prone areas, and areas of erosion.
- Restrict ATV and dirt bike use.
- Ensure North of the Nith remains a valuable and sustainable natural space for future generations through careful planning and ecological restoration.

Structure

The Master Plan has five primary chapters:

Chapter 01 - Introduction and Background. Describes the Master Plan's purpose, context, engagement process, and key opportunities and constraints.

Chapter 02 - What We Heard. Overview of the engagement process and summary of key findings.

Chapter 03 - Vision and Guiding Principles. Defines the vision and guiding principles that underpin the Master Plan.

Chapter 04 - Master Plan. Illustrates the five Big Moves and design guidelines.

Chapter 05 - Implementation Strategy. Identifies projects and actions that the County will carry out to implement the vision.

History

North of the Nith has long been an important ecological and cultural place.

For generations, the Grand River valley was inhabited by Indigenous peoples who used the lands for passage, trade routes, hunting, and other purposes. During the 18th and 19th centuries, European immigrants were drawn to the fertile riverbanks for farming. By the early 1900's, growing demand made the area a key location for sand and gravel extraction, including on the site. More recently, the land has been used as a landfill (now capped) and transfer station.

Decades of human disturbance including extraction, filling, and other industrial uses have left a lasting impact on the landscape, altering the natural systems and shaping future use potential. As the North of the Nith sat vacant after industrial activity declined, natural succession began to restore portions of the site. During this time, residents increasingly used the site for informal and unauthorized recreation, recognizing the value of a landscape once considered forgotten.

The site's proximity to Paris, Ontario is one of its greatest strengths, making it a desirable destination to the growing community. In 2021, the Brant Cycling Club (BCC) proposed a single-and double-track mountain bike trail network for the site. To the east, and across the Nith River, the Barker's Bush Comprehensive Trails Master Plan (2022), includes nature trails around the Nith Peninsula Residential Subdivision.

For a full summary of the site history, refer to Appendix A.



Image 1. Existing trails in North of the Nith.



Image 2. Headlines about mining North of the Nith, Paris Star, May 15, 1952 (County of Paris Museum Archives).

Study Process

The Master Plan included a three-phase process of Understand, Explore, Decide.

Phase One: Understand

The first phase focused on learning from the land and community. The existing site was analyzed to identify opportunities and constraints present, identifying ecological characteristics and trail potential. This information formed the basis for a draft vision and initial guiding principles. Refer to Appendix A for the Existing Conditions Summary Report.

Phase Two: Explore

The next phase focused on developing design options for feedback and review by First Nation Partners, Community Partners, the public and County departments through meetings, workshops and Engage Brant.

Phase Three: Decide

The final phase focused on the development of the Master Plan and Implementation Strategy, ensuring alignment with feedback learned in the first two phases and project objectives. The final plan was presented to Council in February 2026.

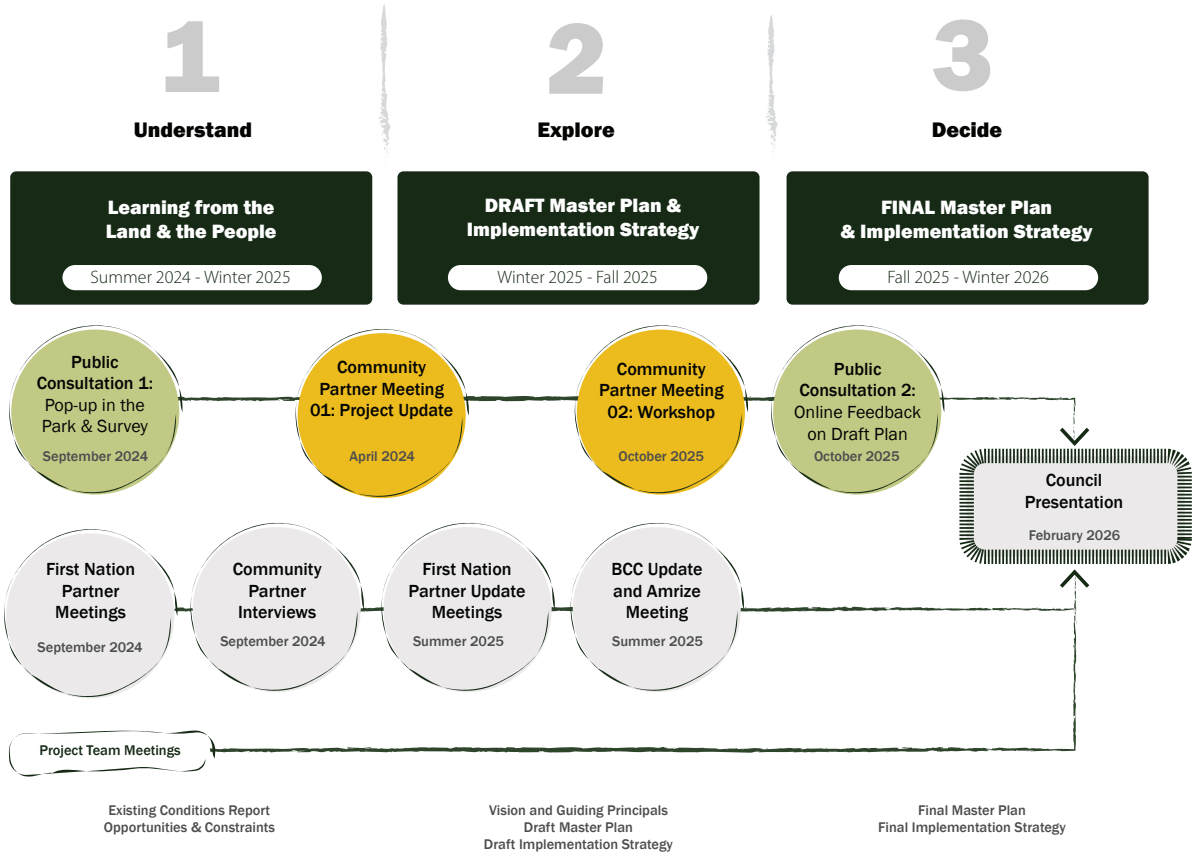


Figure 1. Master Plan Process.

Study Area

North of the Nith is a natural peninsula located along the north side of the Nith River, just west of Paris, in the County of Brant.

North of the Nith is a 392 acre (158 hectare) area of land owned by the County of Brant and the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA).

The property includes a capped landfill, an operational waste transfer station, and operational lands owned by the County of Brant. For safety reasons, the County Operational Zone will not be accessible to the general public. See Figure 3.

Currently, there are no formal public access points to the property beyond the Paris Transfer Station. Despite this, there are unauthorized trails, ATV and dirt bike uses throughout the site.

Amrize (formerly Lafarge Canada Inc.) holds an active extraction licence within the Study Area and is currently reviewing its extraction potential, which may impact the timeline for medium and long term projects.

The area contains a number of natural features including the Nith River Forest Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), the West Paris River Swamp, deer wintering areas, a waterfowl concentration area containing aquatic species at risk, a tributary of the Nith River, and natural hazards regulated by the GRCA.

Refer to Appendix A for the Existing Conditions Summary Report for a detailed inventory and analysis.



Figure 2. North of the Nith Study Area.



Image 3. Double-track trail in the upland forest.



Image 4. Rolling topography within North of the Nith.

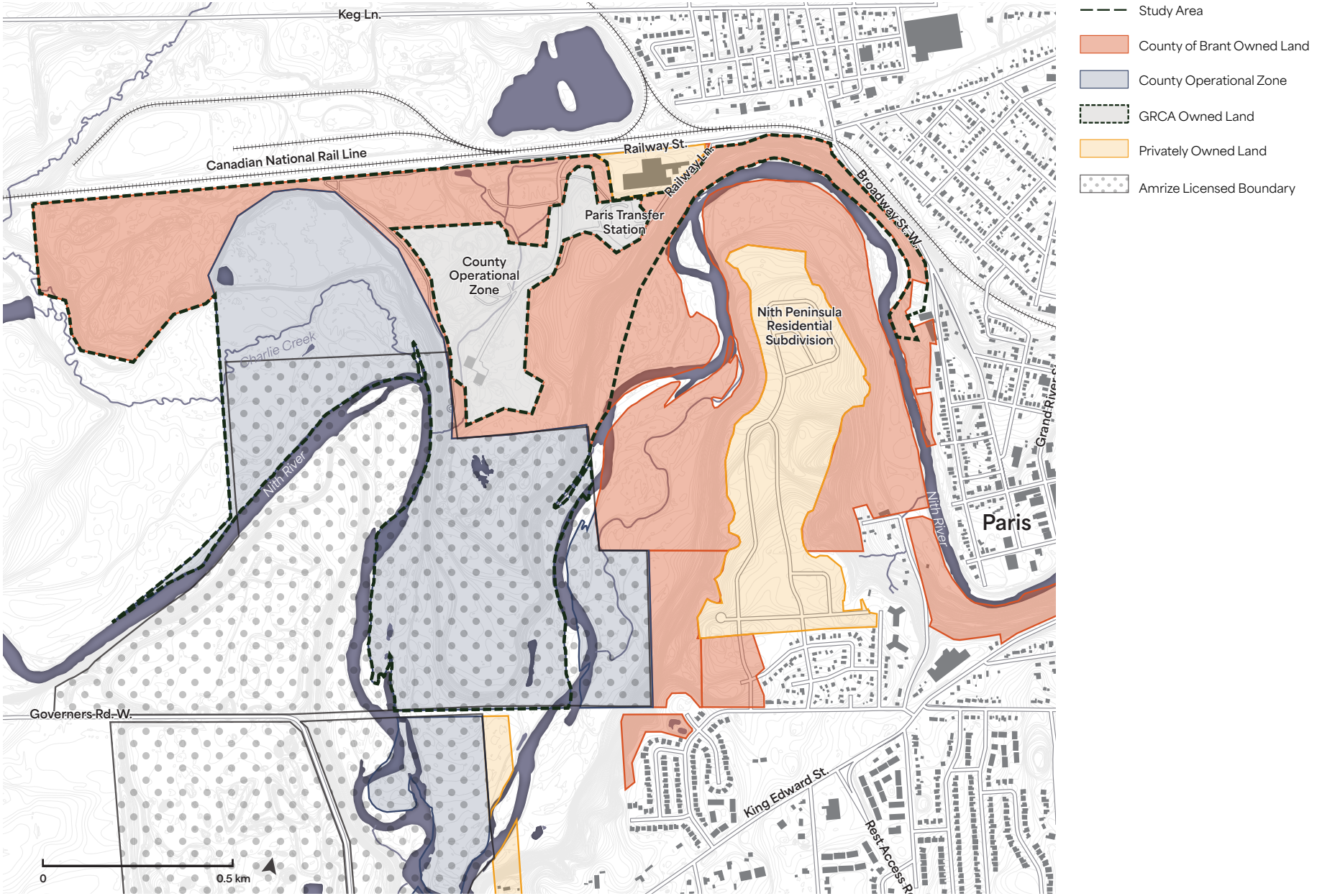


Figure 3. Ownership and Operations.

Opportunities and Constraints

The historic evolution of this place, the existing conditions, and the planning context have all informed the development of the Master Plan.

North of the Nith is an ecologically diverse peninsula next to downtown Paris with the opportunity to provide access to unique natural landscapes and sustainable recreation experiences. However, significant challenges remain, including multiple landowners, unauthorized ATV and dirt bike use, on-going County operational uses, and an active mining licence within the southern portion of the property. These factors shape how the phasing of restoration, access, and trails are recommended.

Below is a summary of the opportunities and constraints discussed in three themes: Environmental Restoration, Connectivity and Access, and Trails and Facilities. Refer to the Existing Conditions Summary Report in the Appendix for a detailed description of the opportunities and constraints.

Restore the Natural Environment

North of the Nith contains two significant water bodies: the heritage-designated Nith River and the cold-water Charlie Creek which provide important habitats for wildlife, including winter refuges for waterfowl, and numerous aquatic species at risk. The property also provides important wintering habitat for local white-tailed deer populations, spanning into the Nith River Forest ANSI. The lands have diverse ecological communities, including the Nith River riparian forest, wetlands, a reclaimed quarry, and an emerging oak savanna meadow. Invasive species such as European buckthorn and Japanese knotweed are present and large colonies of Phragmites pose ecological challenges to biodiversity near water bodies. Human disturbances, particularly ATV activity, are causing damage to the lower banks and floodplains of the Nith River.

Protecting and restoring valuable environmental features was identified as a high priority during public engagement and through conversations with Community Partners and First Nation Partners. These discussions also identified opportunities to partner in advancing restoration efforts. Priority areas identified for restoration and protection include Charlie Creek, the Oak Savanna (referred to as the Prairie Meadow in the Existing Conditions Summary Report), and the Wetlands. Suppressing invasive species, restricting motorized vehicles, and improving the sustainability and safety of the existing trail network were identified as priority actions.

Based on field assessments, desktop analysis, and input from the GRCA, Community Partners and First Nation Partners, five existing ecological communities were identified. (See Figure 4 - Existing Ecological Communities). These communities provide opportunities to create varied and themed trail experiences unique to North of the Nith. Additional detail is provided in the Existing Conditions Summary Report.

Connectivity and Access

The site's central location presents a significant opportunity to improve connectivity and public access connecting downtown Paris, Barker's Bush, and multiple regional trail systems. Despite this, the greatest constraint is the lack of formal public access. There are no designated entrances or parking areas, which limits safe and inclusive use of North of the Nith.

Currently, access is limited to a gated entrance at the end of Railway Street for County of Brant Operation's vehicles, while Railway Lane terminates at the transfer station. An unauthorized trail along the northern bank of the Nith River informally connects North of the Nith to the Penman's Pass Trail parking lot which links to several other trails. Through public engagement, there was strong and consistent support to extend Penman's Pass into the site to formalize access.

Establishing formal parking areas, defined entrances, and clear connections to existing trail networks is needed to enhance site function and user experience.

Trails and Facilities

North of the Nith contains a network of unauthorized trails created by foot traffic, cycling, and motorized vehicle use. While these trails reflect public interest in accessing the landscape, many present safety, environmental, and management constraints.

These trails lack basic features such as signage, making navigation difficult for inexperienced visitors. A lack of consistent maintenance, renders sections of the trails largely unusable at certain times of the year. Because these trails were not constructed using modern sustainable trail-building practices, some sections are steep or subject to erosion from creeks, wetlands, rain events, and seasonal flooding. While these conditions present constraints, the presence of an existing trail network offers an opportunity for targeted improvements and selective re-routing to enhance user safety and experience, improve trail conditions, and reduce environmental impacts.

Feedback from the public highlights a high priority for improvements that support hiking, mountain biking, and other low-impact activities. Enhancing the user experience through rest stops, lookout points, educational areas, all-season access, wayfinding, interpretive elements, and a mix of trail types would promote safety, inclusivity, and improve trail functionality. Preferences leaned toward sustainable, minimal infrastructure, with amenities such as washrooms and drinking fountains provided only where necessary to avoid over-development. Discussions with Community Partners indicated that approximately 30 low-impact parking stalls would be appropriate for the site.



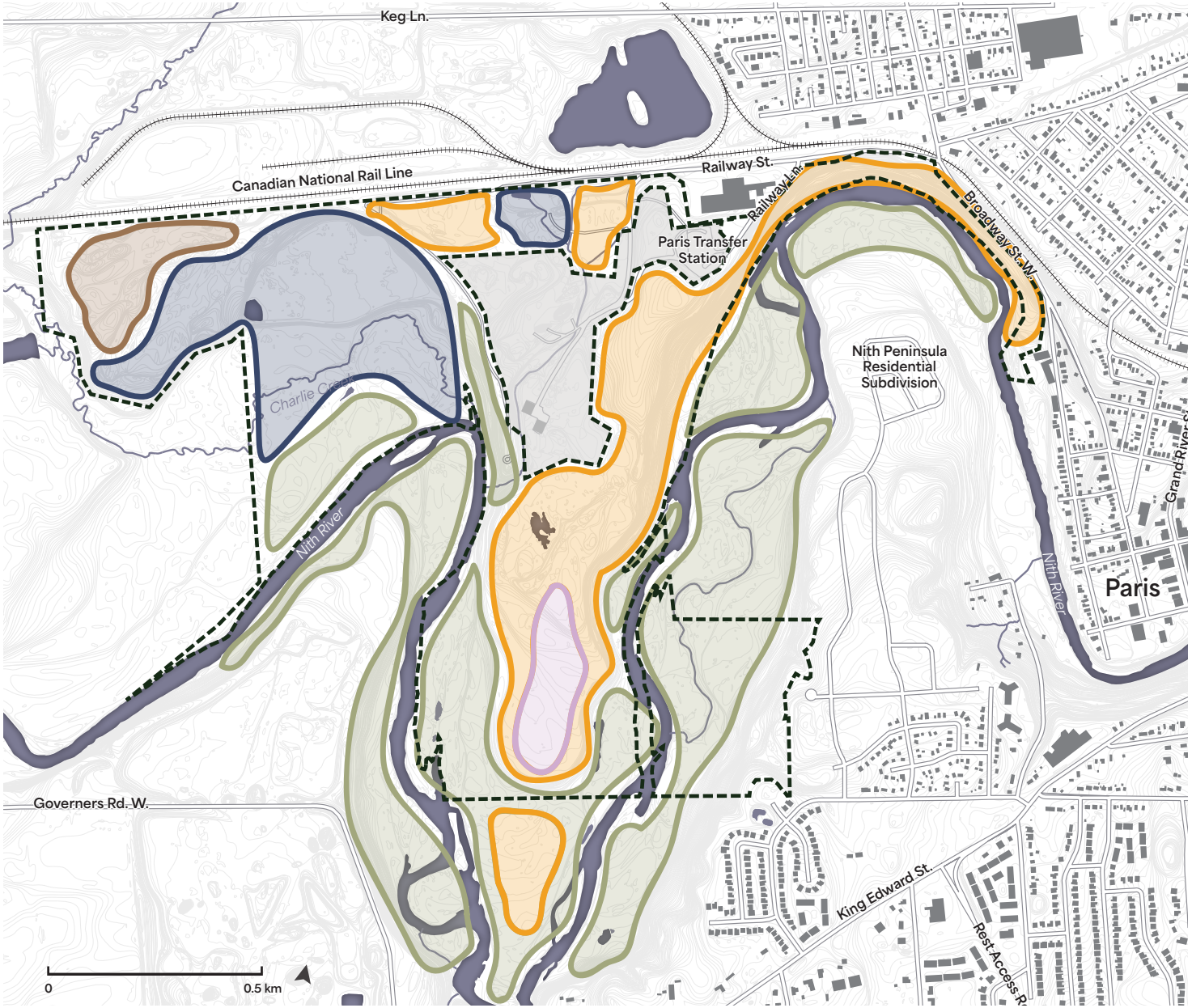
Image 5. Phragmites near Charlie Creek.



Image 6. Rutting of the trails from motorized vehicles.



Image 7. Gated gravel road west of Railway Street.



This figure has been updated since the Existing Condition Summary report per GRCA and public comments.

Figure 4. Existing Ecological Communities.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESS	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Connectivity & Access	• Near existing County trails • Close to the Paris downtown • Across the river from Barker's Bush (new residential neighbourhood) • Existing unauthorized connection to Barker's Bush via Penman's Pass	• Poor safety due to isolation • Limited access points • River and railway barriers • Steep topography • Currently no formal public access • Existing ATV and dirt bikes access points • Existing gravel road actively used by County of Brant Operations	• Railway Street Gateway Hub (public street connection) • Improve connection to Penman's Pass (regional trail network) and parking • Potential future secondary connections to Barker's Bush (i.e. crossing over the Nith River - long term)	• MOU required (GRCA / County / Community Partners) • Amrize's extraction licence
Trails & Facilities	• Brant is growing (increased demand for access to open space) • Seasonal interest • Passive recreational opportunities • Physical and mental health benefits from trails and nature	• Seasonal limitations on use • No formal recreation or trail infrastructure • Maintenance challenges due to size and isolation of site • Servicing required • No washrooms • No formal rest areas	• Formalize access to lands for health and recreation benefits • Locate Gateway Hub near Railway Street entrance (minimize environmental impact and servicing) • Provide rest areas and incorporate environmental and cultural interpretation • Education and wayfinding • Partnerships (Community Partners)	• Maintenance • MOU required (GRCA / County / Community Partners) • Conflicts between user groups (ATV/ dirt bike/hiking/mountain biking) • Conflict between operational requirement and recreational user groups
Restore the Natural Environment	• Natural heritage area close to urban centers • Importance of natural heritage space in Paris • Existing Nith River Forest ANSI • Wide variety of landscapes in one area (wetlands, forest, meadow) • Ecological succession happening in the Dunes	• Invasive species • Development limitations necessary to protect the County's active Operational Zone • Existing damage from ATV/dirt bike • Steep banks and erosion • Disturbances from past uses	• Restoration using Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation Plant list and Kayanase Greenhouse (partnership opportunity) • Flood protection • Restoration (meadow restoration with Ducks Unlimited) • Invasive species removal - early master plan priority • Themed trails based on landscape typologies • Education and interpretation • Partnerships (Community Partners and Organizations)	• Multiple regulatory challenges on lands • Balancing conservation with recreation • Flooding • Lack of data on natural environment (i.e. full extent of Species at Risk - more study required) • Ongoing warming of Charlie Creek • Peninsula not included in study area (people want to access water) • ATV/dirt bike use

Table 1. SWOT Analysis

CHAPTER 02:
WHAT WE HEARD



Consultation Methodology and Findings

The purpose of the consultation process was to involve the public, Community Partners and First Nation Parters in the development of the Master Plan.

The Master Plan consultation methodology was based on a three-phase process: Understand, Explore, and Decide. The sequence lent itself to involving Community Partners, First Nation Partners, and County staff in the process as it unfolded. A summary of the consultation process is included below.

Refer to the Existing Conditions Summary Report in the Appendix for the detailed inventory and analysis.

Online Survey

An initial online survey gathered input from Community Partners and the public about site conditions, safety, strengths, challenges, and ideas for future improvements. The survey was launched on September 4th, 2024, and was live until October 11th, 2024.

Pop-Up in the Park

An in-person Pop-Up in the Park event was held on September 14, 2024, at Lions Park in Paris. The event provided additional on-the-ground insights. Interactive activities invited participants to use stickers to identify the types of activities they would like to see included in the Master Plan.

First Nation and Community Partner Interviews

Between August 14th, 2024, and October 7th, 2024, a total of nine virtual and in-person interviews were completed with two First

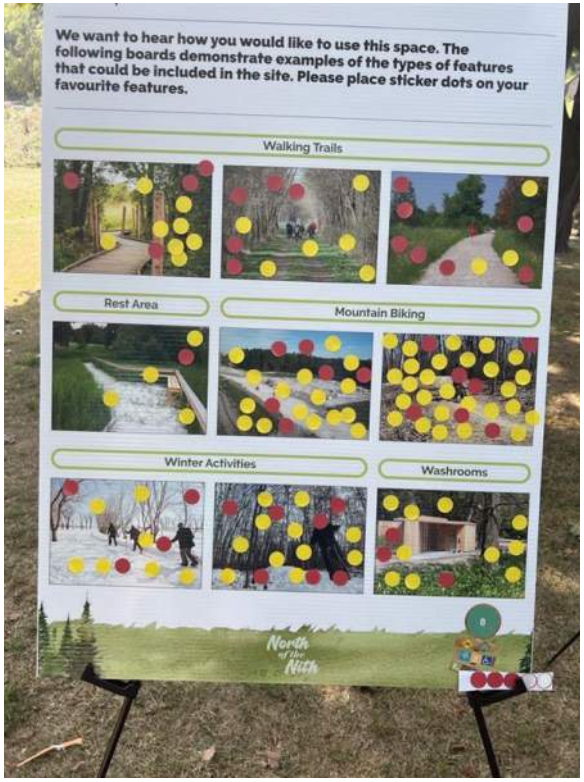


Image 8. An engagement board from the Pop-Up in the Park Event.

Nation and ten Community Partners. The interviews gathered information on significant site features, opportunities and constraints, visions, and aspirations for the Master Plan.

First Nation and Community Partner Meetings

Two in-person meetings with First Nation and Community Partners were held on April 9th, 2025, and October 21st, 2025, in Brantford. Both meetings were to present the work from Phase 1 and 2 while getting feedback and additional input.

Community Partner Meeting 01: Project Update

The Project Team presented the findings of the Existing Conditions Summary Report and discussed the draft guiding principles with Community and First Nation Partners. The discussion focused on clarifying technical and regulatory aspects of the site, strengthening the guiding principles by explicitly including safety, and better understanding access and study area boundaries. These questioned informed the direction of concept development in Phase 2.

Community Partner Meeting 02: Workshop

Drawing on the feedback shared in the first Community Partner Meeting, interviews and public engagement this workshop focused on a review and discussion of the concept development with the objective of confirming the draft Master Plan. Participants reinforced the importance of an inclusive trail network composed of a mix of pedestrian-only, shared-use, and mountain bike-only routes, and reiterated a strong interest in ongoing community involvement to support site restoration and stewardship.

Public Consultation - Online Feedback

The draft Master Plan and Implementation Strategy was then uploaded onto the project's webpage for the general public's feedback.

Summary of Findings

To the right, is a high-level summary of what we heard during the overall process during engagement events.

What We Heard Summary

Trails

- Plan for a mix of trails (mountain bike trails, shared trails, pedestrian trails)
- Incorporate signage and wayfinding

Sustainability

- Balance preservation and passive recreation
- Avoid paved paths and over-development

First Nation Collaboration

- Partnership opportunities on restoration projects
- Incorporate Indigenous storytelling through wayfinding, interpretive signage, and place-keeping initiatives
- Explore ceremonial space opportunities

Environmental Impact

- Restore native habitats
- Control invasive species
- ATV and dirt bike enforcement needed

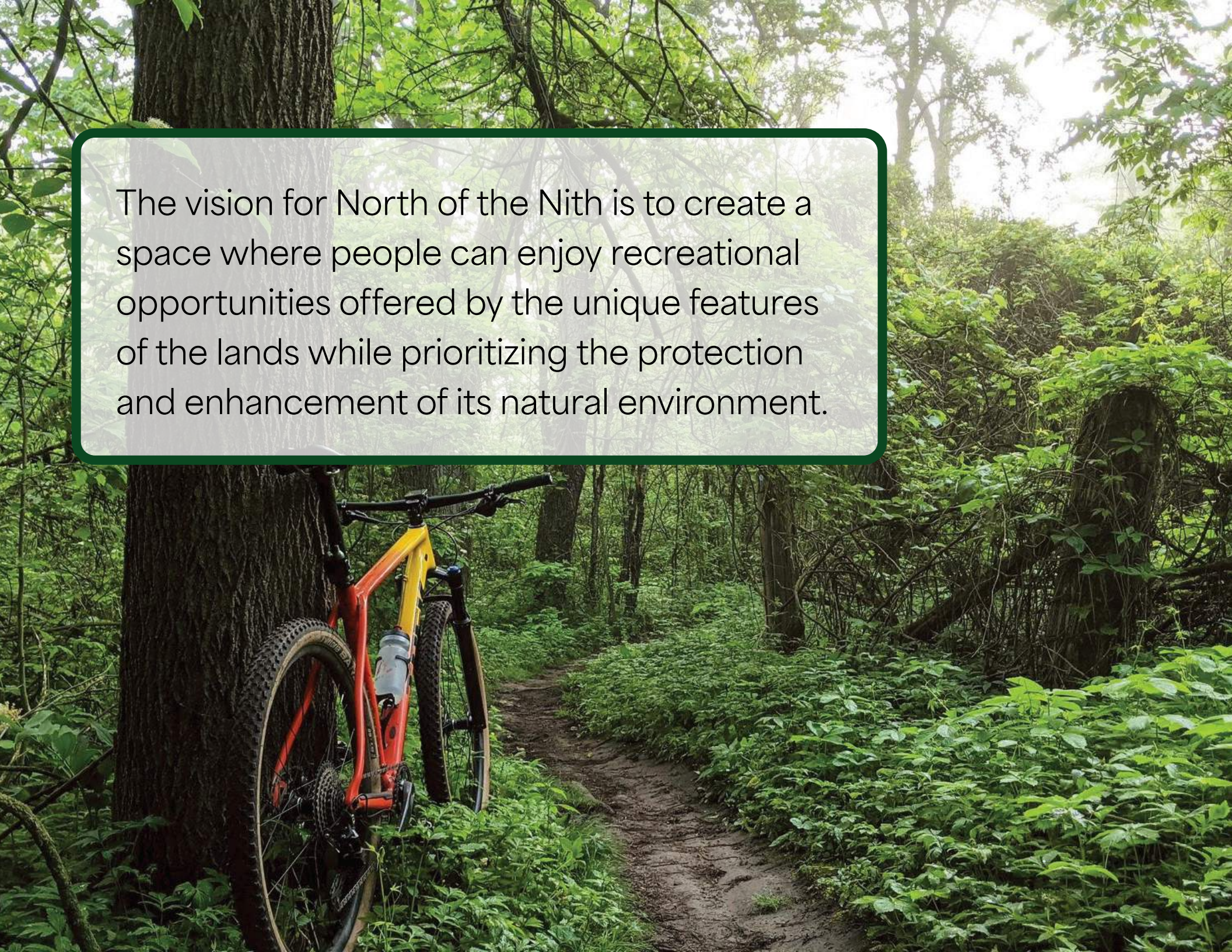
Multi-Use Compatibility

- Include accessible design that supports users of all ages and abilities
- Ensure safety for all users

CHAPTER 03:
VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Courtesy of City of Warman.



The vision for North of the Nith is to create a space where people can enjoy recreational opportunities offered by the unique features of the lands while prioritizing the protection and enhancement of its natural environment.

Guiding Principles

The following six Guiding Principles, informed by the existing conditions analysis and community input, will guide the Master Plan.



Protect & Restore

- Prioritize revitalization of ecosystems, restoring habitats, and championing biodiversity through active stewardship, education, and dedicated care.
- Site new trails and amenities away from environmentally sensitive areas.
- Conserve natural features in line with preservation policies and best practices.
- Conduct ongoing, focused studies and inventories of the natural environment, guided by Master Plan recommendations, to support informed and adaptive conservation.



Safe, Accessible and Inclusive

- Create shared community spaces where all visitors feel welcome.
- Link North of the Nith trails to Paris and the greater region. These connections will enhance safety, accessibility, encourage exploration, and promote active transportation, fostering a deeper relationship between people and nature.
- Improve access into North of the Nith by establishing a formal public entry with potential facilities such as parking, washrooms, and signage to support future use.



Enhance Visitor Experience

- Collaborate with partners to introduce diverse, year-round park experiences, that balances recreation with conservation.
- Provide a diverse trail network that includes shared-use, pedestrian-only, and mountain biking trails.
- Designate a dedicated area specifically for mountain biking trails to support varying skill levels and minimize user conflicts.



Collaboration with First Nation Partners

- Honour the rights, responsibilities, and cultural significance of Indigenous communities through language and naming/re-naming of spaces, trails, viewpoints, and gathering and ceremony.
- Incorporate Indigenous place-keeping practices through ongoing, meaningful collaboration with First Nation communities.



Education

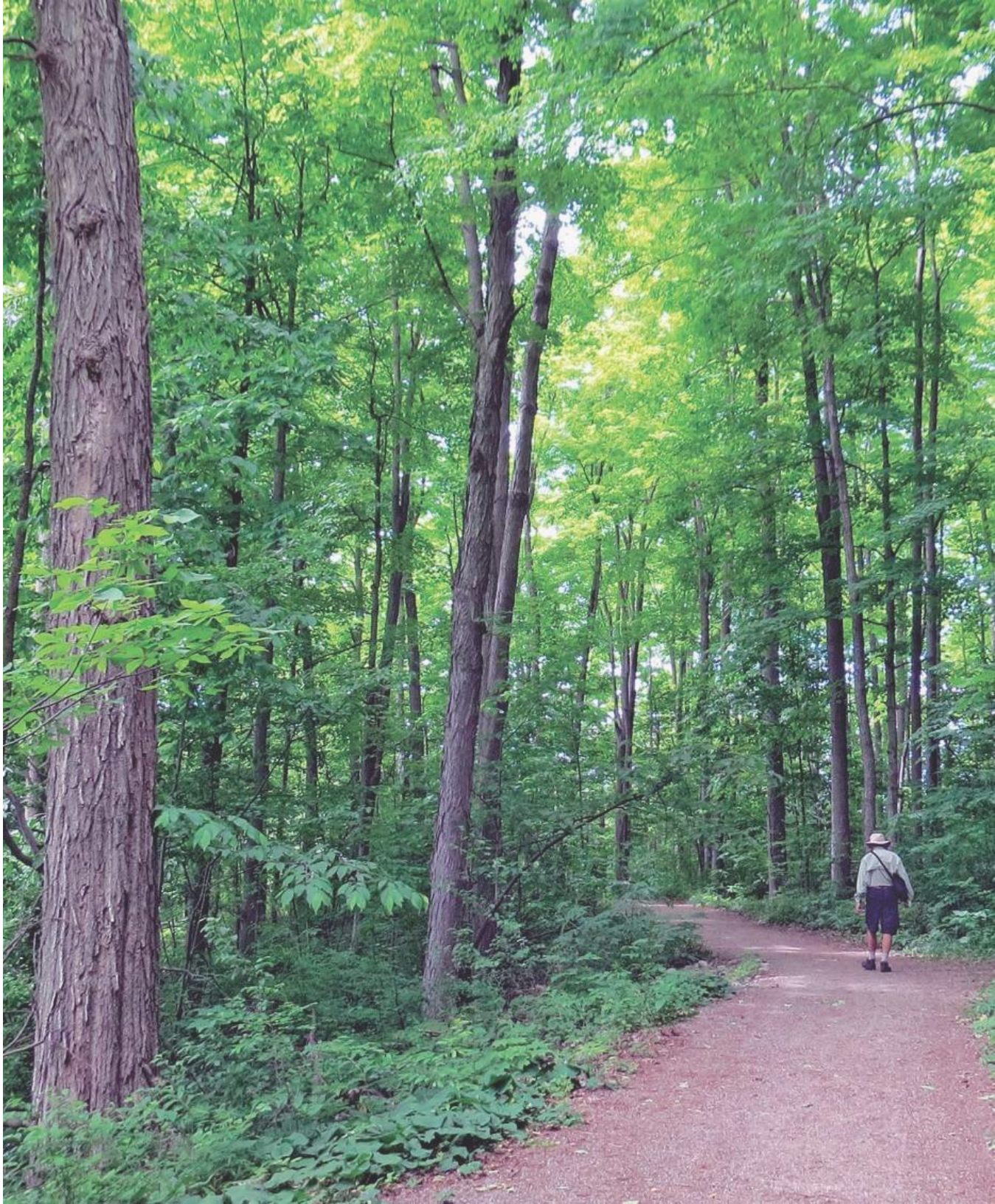
- Explore opportunities to expand partnerships to deliver nature-based public programming and education within the park, including Indigenous teachings, land-based practices, and school trips.
- Incorporate interpretive elements throughout the site to tell the story of the land's cultural and natural heritage and ecology.



Community Involvement and Stewardship

- Create spaces that enhance visitor comfort and support environmental education and advocacy.
- Encourage partnerships with community groups and other organizations in the implementation and stewardship of the Master Plan.

CHAPTER 04:
MASTER PLAN



The Master Plan

Grounded in site analysis and shaped by community input, the Master Plan envisions for a connected, welcoming landscape that celebrates nature and recreation.

The Master Plan focuses on improving connectivity from the surrounding region, formalizing trails, providing outdoor recreation amenities, and enhancing access to the natural environment while protecting it as well.

With an extensive trail network already in place, the goal is not to create new trails. Instead, the Master Plan aims to improve on the existing unauthorized network. This will be accomplished by adopting sustainable trail construction, improved standards of maintenance, and rerouting sections that impact sensitive areas.

Based on the analysis of the site and feedback from public, Community Partners and First Nation Partners, Five Big Moves (below) were identified to guide the Master Plan. Together, the Big Moves create a unified framework that invites people to explore, experience, and connect with North of the Nith.

The Demonstration Plan (Figure 6) describes the overall vision. The Demonstration Plan is intended as a high-level roadmap rather than a detailed design. The timing, scope, and final configuration of projects will evolve through future studies, approvals, partnerships, and time.

The Demonstration Plan shows the primary trail network, and a key recommendation is for the establishment of a Trails Committee to lead the development of secondary trails within the site to ensure sustainable trail development through-out. The secondary trails present an opportunity to develop up to +/- 5-7 km of dedicated mountain bike trails.

The Demonstration Plan should be read in conjunction with the Implementation Strategy in Chapter 5.



Figure 5. Five Big Moves.

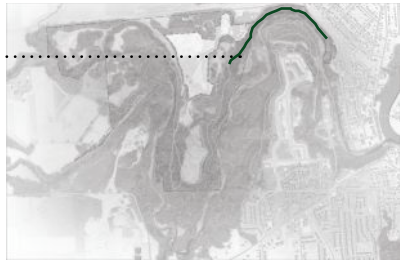


Figure 6. Demonstration Plan

Big Move 1: Penman's Pass Extension

Penman's Pass Extension is an early project that will function as a shared-use trail and a primary gateway into North of the Nith for all users.

Project 1.3
Penman's
Pass Extension



As an extension of Penman's Pass Loop, this trail offers an important connection between the North of the Nith, the regional trail system, and Barker's Bush. It functions as a key east-west corridor, linking users to destinations including the Mountain Bike Trail Park and the Oak Savanna Loop. Public input identified this access point as a highly desired connection into North of the Nith. Upgrades are needed to address existing grading and erosion issues.

Guidelines

- Apply the County of Brant's Woodland Trail A - Trail on Wooded Slope detail so the trail is accessible to the general public. This detail is to be amended to include natural surfacing or a compacted granular base to support multiple users and sustainable trail practices. See Appendix E for standard detail.
- Minor upgrades such as drainage, bridges/ boardwalks, erosion control and slope stabilization should be completed to ensure trail sustainability and user safety.
- Design the trail with slopes no steeper than 10% to reduce erosion and accommodate a wide range of users. Align the trail diagonally to contours wherever possible to reduce re-grading impacts.
- Ensure disturbed edges and slopes are restored appropriately (seeded, erosion blanket if requires, leaf litter, etc) with a maximum 1:1 backslope.
- Incorporate proper drainage techniques such as outsloping, rock armoured dips, and grade reversals into trail design to prevent erosion and reduce long-term maintenance.
- Install clear and consistent signage along the improved trail, including two trail markers, two trailhead signs, and one entrance sign (Project 2.6) to ensure the route's shared-use character.
- Include two lookout points along the trail taking advantage of views of the Nith River and include rest areas. The exact location is subject to detailed design and to be approved by the future Trails Committee.
- Secure GRCA approvals prior to construction.



Image 9. Example of woodlands trail.

Big Move 2: The Mountain Bike Trail Park

Repurpose the capped landfill into a vibrant, community-designed mountain bike trail system.

Project 1.5
The Mountain Bike Trail Park



The capped landfill features undulating topography, avoids sensitive areas, requires minimal Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) approvals (as of September 2025), and has no archaeological impact, making it an ideal site for a mountain biking area. Partnering with the Brant Cycling Club could support funding, construction, and on-going maintenance, enabling the development of over 2.0 km of dedicated mountain biking trails as well as future secondary trails throughout the site.

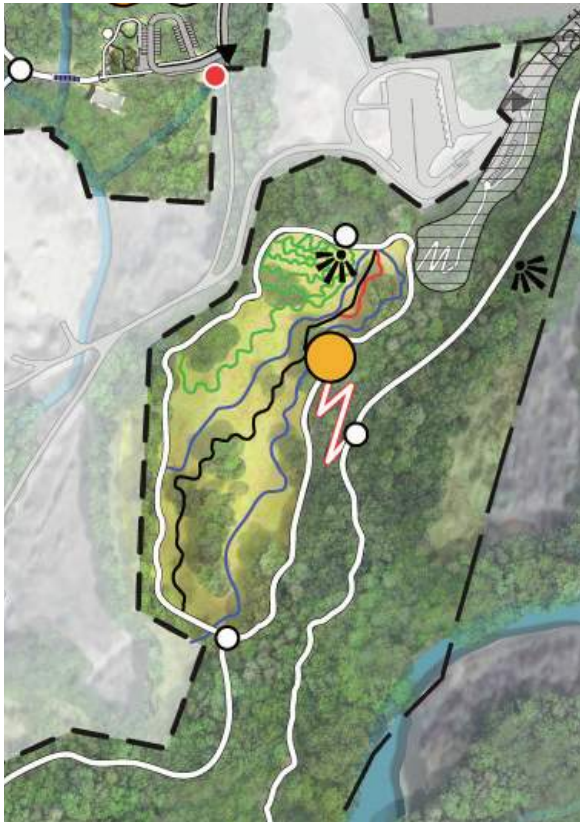
Guidelines

- Trails within the park should vary in difficulty to accommodate a variety of skill levels and riders and designed for rider progression. See Figure 7 - Conceptual Layout Plan on the following page.
- Access to the Mountain Bike Trail Park will be via the Penman's Pass Extension, so upgrades to Penman's Pass should be timed to open concurrently with the bike trail park. If Railway Lane is upgraded in the future, a second entrance could be added, lead by Operations (Project 2.11).
- As the site was previously used as a landfill, the cap cannot be disturbed. All bike park features must be designed as raised tread construction to avoid excavation, grading, or anchoring that would disturb the cap, in accordance with MECP guidance.
- The capped landfill monitoring wells must remain, be accessible, and be protected from any trail development.
- Provide clear and adequate signage throughout the Mountain Bike Trail Park, including one trailhead sign, a kiosk displaying trail maps and routes, and wayfinding signage at all key decision points.
- Construct a shade structure in an easily accessible location within the trail park to provide rest and comfort for riders.
- Prior to development, construction, operations and maintenance, and access agreements with BCC must be finalized (Project A1), the ECA Amendment must be approved (Project 1.1) and, the County Operational Zone fencing must be secured (Project 1.2). Construction access will be from Railway Street.
- Consider a direct trail from the Gateway Hub to the Mountain Bike Trail Park in the future. This connection requires either an overpass or lockable gates to maintain County Operations access.



Image 10. Trails for all ages and skill levels.

Figure 7. Conceptual Layout Plan of Mountain Bike Trail Park.



Colour	Trail Difficulty	Length
	Green	890m
	Blue	775m
	Black Diamond	458m
	Double Black Diamond	90m
	Total Length of Proposed Trails	2,213m



Image 11. Opportunity to host events and competitions.



Image 12. Well-defined trail signage at Turkey Point Mountain Bike Club in St. Williams, Ontario.



Figure 8. Mountain Bike Trail Park Artist's Rendering. The capped landfill provides a unique opportunity to develop low-impact, dedicated mountain bike trails. Trail signage and amenities such as shade and seating will enhance usability and create a dedicated, bike-focused area, supporting a high-quality mountain bike facility for the Paris community.

Big Move 3: Environmental Restoration and Protection

There is a shared commitment to protecting and restoring the natural environment through best practices, long-term management, and community stewardship.

Figure 9 and the narrative below identify recommendations for seven types of restoration. These have been developed in conjunction with input from the GRCA, Community Partners, and First Nation Partners.

1. Grading and Drainage Improvements:

Where existing trails are affected by steep or eroded slopes, or where washouts occur, implement modern sustainable trail practices such as:

- Reroute trails with steep slopes and reduce grades where topography challenges pedestrian or cycling use.
- Stabilize adjacent slopes using a mix of herbaceous and woody plantings.
- Apply erosion control blankets where soils are unstable.
- Install new culverts where surface drainage crosses trail alignments.
- Upgrade existing crossings at flowing watercourses and drainage areas.
- Where rerouting is not feasible, implement physical grade improvements such as stone steps.

2. Priority and Managed Natural Habitats:

- Develop strategies to improve the quality of Priority Natural and Managed Habitats (see Figure 9). This may include re-vegetation efforts aimed to improve biodiversity and ecological value of the Oak Savanna Meadow.
- Where potential Species at Risk habitat exists, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) shall be consulted to determine if additional mitigation or compensation is required to address requirements under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).



Image 13. Double track trail washed out from rainfall.



Image 14. Oversteep trail.



Image 15. Oak Savanna Meadow.

3. Invasive Species Control Areas

- Adopt a comprehensive, long-term management approach that targets priority invasive species, including Phragmites, European Buckthorn, and Japanese Knotweed, and Dog Strangling Vine across North of the Nith.
- Prioritize invasive species suppression within ecologically sensitive and high-impact areas. Initial efforts to focus on Phragmites stands adjacent to Charlie Creek, as well as The Marshlands Loop.
- Integrate invasive species management with ecological restoration efforts by ensuring that restoration planting and habitat enhancement follow immediately after invasive species suppression, helping to re-establish native biodiversity and support long-term site recovery.
- Follow recognized best practices, including the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's Best Management Practices, to guide treatment methods, timing, and monitoring.
- Combine qualified contractors with a coordinated volunteer workforce to expand capacity and support long-term stewardship of North of the Nith.

4. Charlie Creek Restoration

- Explore the rehabilitation options from Summer Temperature Trends in Lower Charlie Cheek Near Paris, Ontario report by Freshwater Conservation Canada (formerly Trout Unlimited: Middle Grand Chapter) and explore the feasibility of Options 1, 2, and 3.
- Refer to Invasive Species Control Areas for Phragmites invasive species suppression within Charlie Creek.
- Improve riparian habitat through tree/shrub plantings within a 10m setback either side of the creek after Phragmites suppression by contractor.
- Further investigation the Tufa deposits near where Charlie Creek intersects groundwater seeps as part of the Charlie Creek restoration project.

5. Reforestation Areas

- Reforest and stabilize areas along the northern property line to remediate erosion and deter unauthorised ATV access.
- Develop planting plans in accordance with the Grand River Conservation Authority's recommended species lists and the Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation's significant species list.
- Explore partnership opportunities with Kayanase Native Plant Nursery to support



Image 16. Cold water creek restoration on Waddle Creek. Courtesy of Watersheds Canada.



Image 17. Erosion of natural banks caused by motorized vehicles.

restoration and reforestation efforts.

- Collaborate with Community Partners such as Brant for Nature and the Brant Tree Coalition to support restoration through volunteer engagement.

6. Decommissioned Trails

- Restrict use of existing informal trails in sensitive or hazardous areas (e.g., wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, significant wildlife habitats, species-at-risk habitats, and operational lands) through immediate and on-going management efforts.
- Use low wooden fencing or other fencing techniques to guide movement and keep users on designated trails.
- Clearly mark decommissioned trails at the beginning and end with signage and clear barriers such as fencing, boulders or brush barriers. See Trail Decommissioning detail in Barker's Bush Trails Master Plan (See Appendix F).
- Partner with Community Partners to support ecological restoration of these disturbed areas.

7. Wetland Restoration

- Implement targeted wetland restoration measures in the northern portion of North of the Nith to control Phragmites, mitigate habitat loss, and deter unauthorized ATV use, supported by on-site education.
- Construct a boardwalk and interpretive trail system near the primary entrance, incorporating a mix of elevated and at grade pathways to provide controlled access.
- Highlight historical relics located within the wetland areas where appropriate.
- Enhance visitor experience and understanding of wetland restoration by incorporating environmentally sensitive lookouts, seating areas, and interpretive signage
- Decommission existing informal trails through the wetland and floodplain near Charlie Creek, and implement fencing, signage, invasive species suppression, and reforestation planting to support long-term restoration.



Image 18. Example of decommissioned trail barriers.



Image 19. Historical relic in the Marshland Loop.

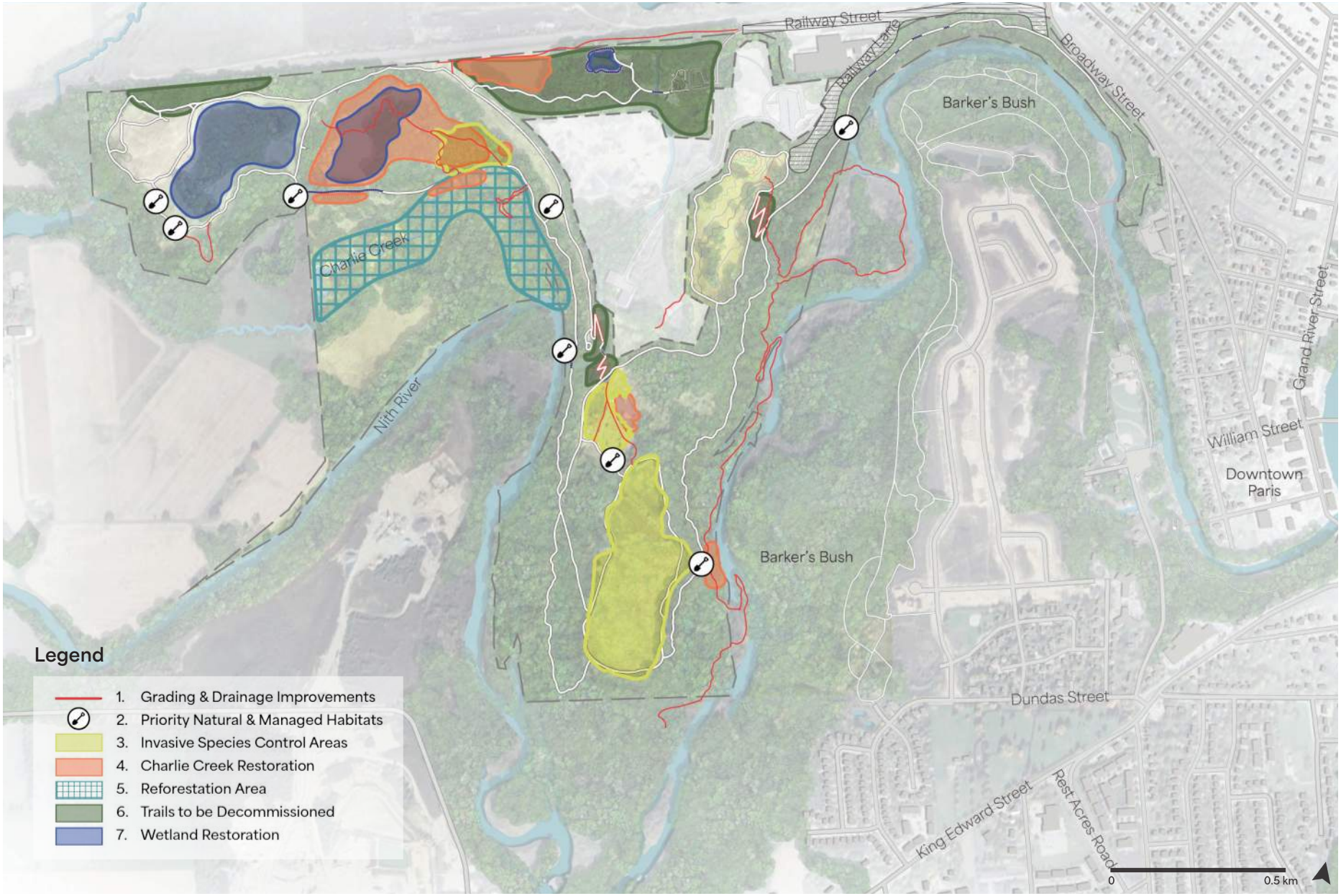


Figure 9. Restoration and Protection Diagram.

Big Move 4: Loops and Links

Organize the trail network into six themed loops that follow and celebrate the site's existing landscape typologies.

The Master Plan establishes a primary trail network organized around six distinct trail loops, each defined by themed routes that respond directly to the site's existing ecological communities. These trails are intentionally shaped by what is already present on the land, allowing users to experience the site's varied natural character, ecological conditions, and spatial qualities.

Together, the trail loops create a connected and legible network that is deeply rooted in the site's diverse ecosystems and cultural heritage, reinforcing a strong sense of place while offering a range of recreational experiences.

Refer to Figure 15 for the intended use for each trail.



The Oak Savanna Loop

The Oak Savanna is composed of a central meadow bordered on all sides by dense upland forests and specimen oaks. The primary trail should be located along the meadow's perimeter to offer access and views, while maintaining protection of the sensitive interior landscape. The area south of the Mountain Bike Trail Park is outside of the ecologically sensitive areas and a medium priority for secondary mountain bike-focused trails.



The Dunes Loop

Historical aggregate quarry operations at the property have shaped much of north-west corner. The trail running along the forest edge will remain the primary route for the Dunes Loop. This area is a high-priority location for secondary mountain bike-focused trails.



The Marshland and Boardwalk Loops

South of the CN rail line, the site contains a range of wetland features, including ephemeral pools, depressions associated with former borrow pits, and swamp communities. These wetland systems differ ecologically from other areas of the site, offering a distinct landscape and trail experience.

Two trail loops are included in this area: the Marshlands Loop and the Boardwalk Loop. Both include marshland restoration, interpretive signage, boardwalks, and interpretive historic relics.

Focused on nature and passive use, the Marshland and Boardwalk Loops are a low priority for mountain biking.



The Rivers Edge Trail

The slopes of the Nith River valley are characterized by a mature deciduous forest canopy which is a defining feature of the site. These riparian forest communities support high canopy-level species diversity and a well-developed understory of shrubs, forbs, grasses, sedges, and rushes.

The existing top-of-bank trail forms the primary Rivers Edge Loop offering scenic views and links the western portion of the site to Penman's Pass Extension. Access to the Nith River is located where the slopes are gentler.

The Rivers Edge has a lower potential for a network of mountain bike trails due to its sensitive ecology.



Mountain Bike Trail Park

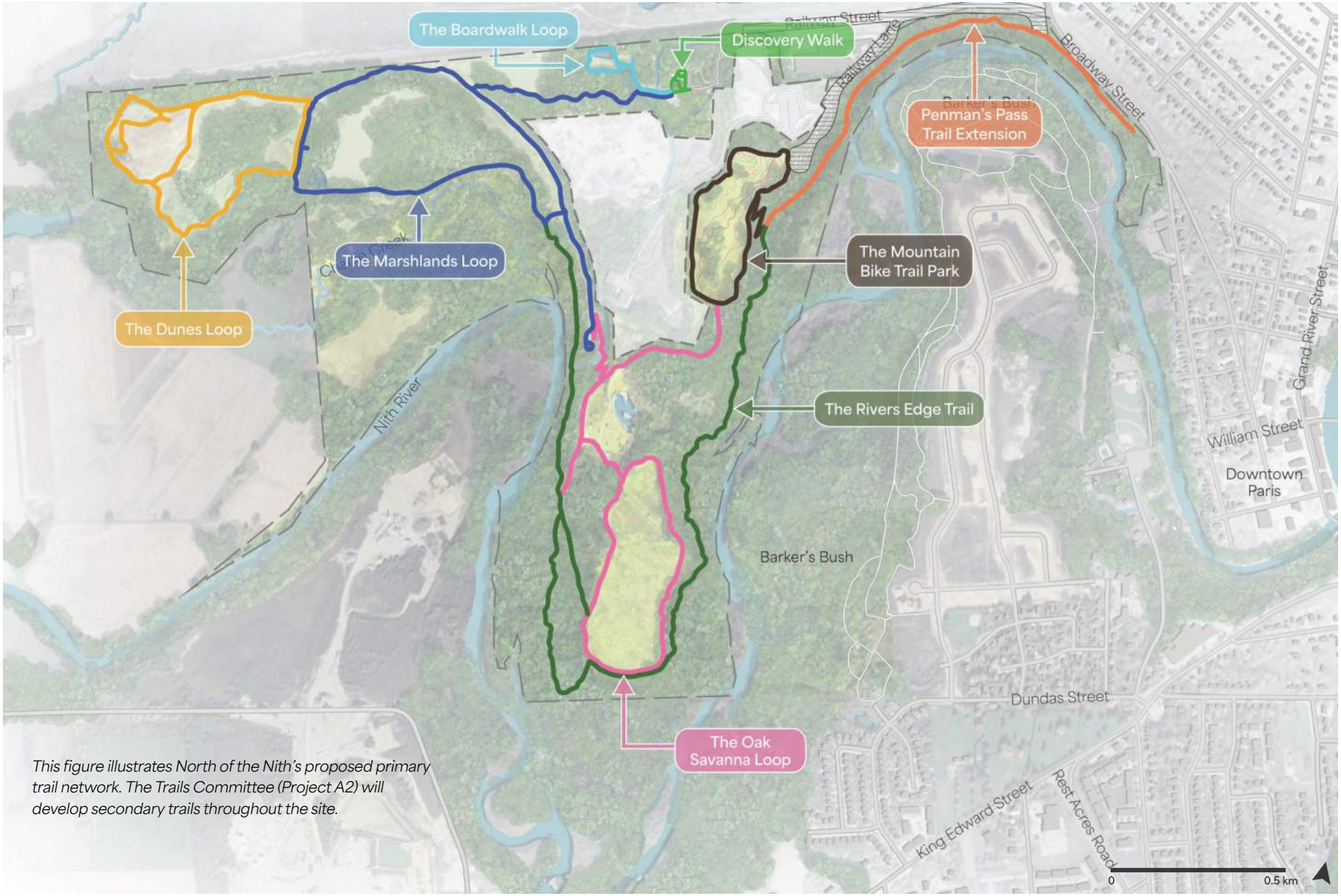
The Mountain Bike Trail Park is the number one priority for mountain biking trails. This 10 acre (4 hectare) facility located atop the capped landfill provides an ideal setting for mountain biking without encroaching on sensitive environmental areas. The landscape is characterized by grasses and scattered woody vegetation and offers sweeping views of the lower lands to the west and the Nith River valley and floodplain to the east. See Big Move 2.



Penman's Pass Extension

The Penman's Pass Extension is envisioned as a primary trail gateway into North of the Nith, establishing the area's identity as a landscape of nature and respite from the surrounding urban environment. Beginning at the existing Penman's Pass parking lot near downtown Paris, the trail follows the north bank of the Nith River and shares the scenic qualities of the Rivers Edge Trail, with intermittent river views and a strong connection to the riparian forest canopy. See Big Move 1.

Penman's Pass Extension is located in an ecologically sensitive area and the priority is on establishing the primary trail only.



This figure illustrates North of the Nith's proposed primary trail network. The Trails Committee (Project A2) will develop secondary trails throughout the site.

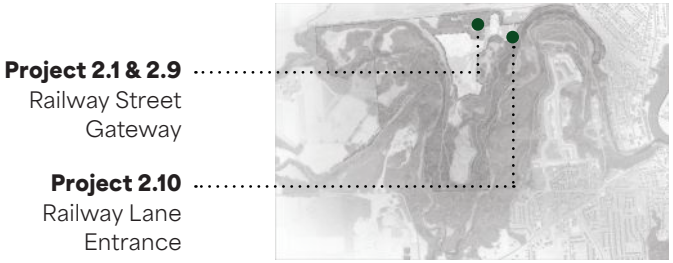
Figure 10. Primary Trail Network.



Figure 11. Boardwalk Loop Artist's Rendering. The proposed Boardwalk Loop will provide an accessible, immersive wetland experience while minimizing disturbance through the use of a boardwalk. Located near parking, the trail offers convenient access to nature and learning opportunities, supported by interpretive signage highlighting the site's natural and cultural heritage.

Big Move 5: The Park Entrances

Two park entrances entrance are envisioned to provide clear and welcoming points of public access.



The Master Plan establishes a primary gateway to North of the Nith, while recognizing opportunities for a future secondary entrance to enhance safe, welcoming access. Entrance upgrades should include parking, wayfinding, and supporting amenities.

Both entrances are located at the ends of public roads that will continue to provide Operational Zone Access. Should County of Brant look to upgrade these roads in the future, protected multi-use paths will be considered as part of the design/upgrades to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and strengthen connectivity (Project 2.11). Potential road widening would require slope stability analysis and property acquisition .These upgrades will require collaboration with CN, adjacent property owners, and utility stakeholders. Roads and Operations to lead this initiative as there are no upgrades to these streets within the Capital budget.

Railway Street Gateway Guidelines:

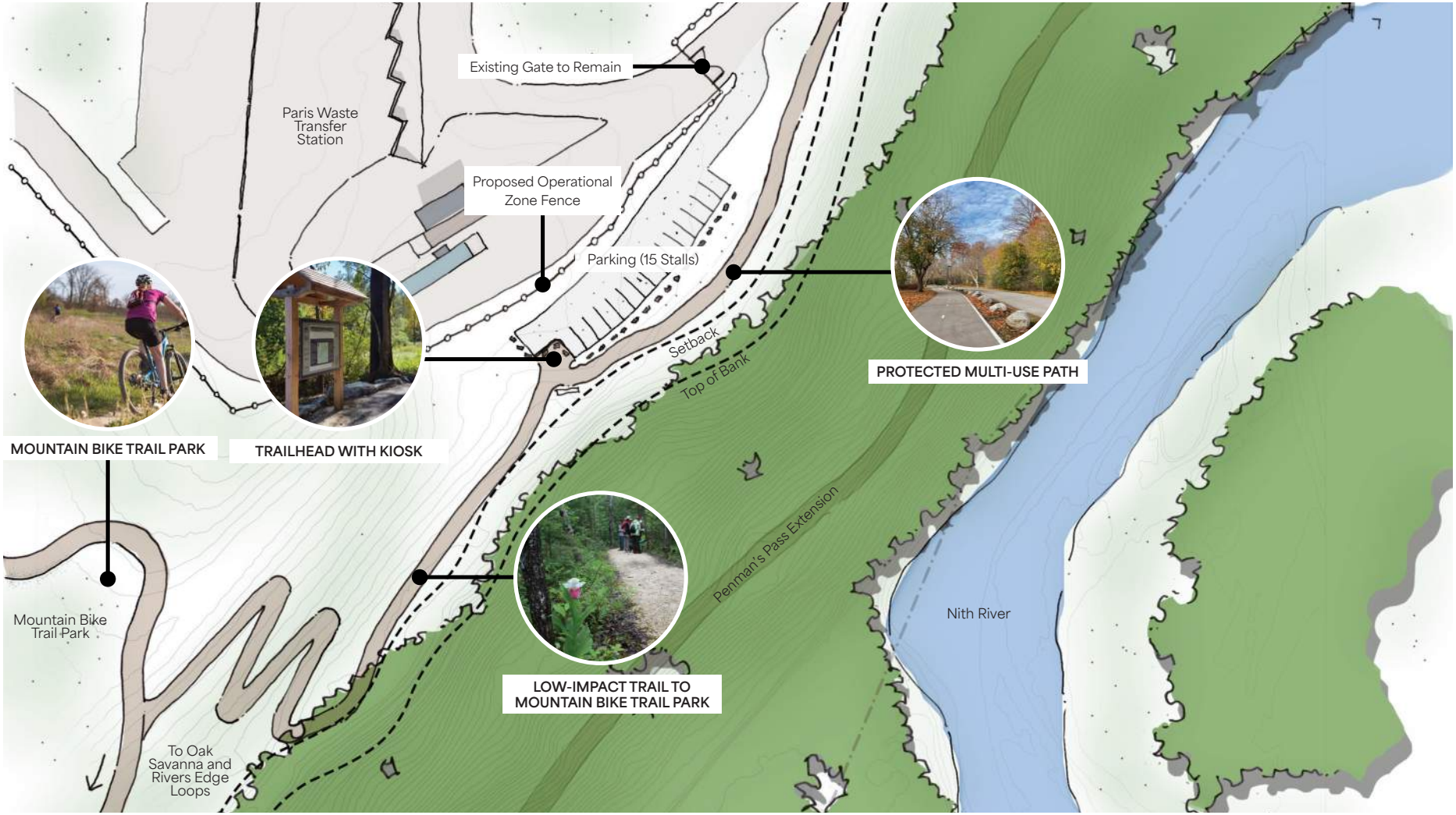
- Develop a 30-stall gravel parking lot and upgrade the existing gravel access road from the Railway Street gate, incorporating traffic-control boulders and a protected multi-use path to safely accommodate operations vehicles, cars, and cyclists using low-impact design measures.
- The Park Entrance should include one primary entrance sign to signify a strong sense of arrive. Signs should be large, highly visible and reflect the character of North of the Nith.
- Establish a welcoming park entrance to North of the Nith that supports future use and facilities, including trailhead signage, composting washrooms, picnic and gathering spaces, Indigenous art or a welcome feature (Project 2.6), as well as amenities to support year-round activities.
- Create an accessible, pedestrian-only loop trail, the Discovery Walk, at the entrance, designed to support school programming, outdoor learning, and inclusive access to nature for all users.
- Protect space for future expansion, including additional parking and the potential siting of an Education Centre Building, dependent on demand and funding.
- The Park Entrance site should be assessed for plants and animal species (nesting/ breeding/burrow site) before construction begins.

Potential Future Railway Lane Entrance Guidelines:

- Provide a 15-stall gravel parking lot at the western end.
- Establish a welcoming park entrance to North of the Nith that includes a trail marker or kiosk.



Figure 12. Railway Street Gateway Hub Conceptual Layout.



This figure illustrates a potential future concept for the Railway Lane entrance. The County's Operations department would be responsible for leading this work in coordination with any future Railway Lane improvements.

Figure 13. Potential Future Railway Lane Entrance Conceptual Layout.



Figure 14. Gateway Hub Artist's Rendering. A welcoming site entrance with clear signage will improve accessibility, wayfinding, and comfort for visitors, while trailhead amenities and directional markers enhance navigation and safety throughout the site. An outdoor classroom will further support inclusive outdoor learning and programming for all ages.

Non-Site Specific Project Guidelines

Trail Guidelines

- Consider a trail network that accommodates diverse user needs, including shared trails, pedestrian-only paths, and mountain bike-only routes.
- Trail design should reflect the intended user. Mountain bike trails should include appropriate technical and flow features, while pedestrian-only trails should prioritize gradual slopes, stable surfaces, and overall comfort, with all trails designed to balance user experience, safety, and environmental protection.
- Maintain trails for both summer and winter use to support year-round recreation, including snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in winter.
- Design each trail to reflect its identified theme (see Big Move 4), whether natural ecosystems, landscapes, or cultural heritage, and incorporate interpretive signage or features that promote stewardship and engage multiple users.
- Site secondary trails away from sensitive or hazardous areas. A terrestrial assessment may help to understand how best to minimize impacts on the surrounding landscape and habitats.
- Reroute trails away from over-steep and toe erosion hazard areas.

Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage System Guidelines

General Signage Design

- Follow the established signage hierarchy and application chart from the County of Brant's Trail Master Plan (2017).
- Design signage to match Barker's Bush sign "family" to ensure visual continuity and familiarity
- Keep signage simple, attractive, and easy to understand.
- Construct posts and supporting structures from natural materials consistent with the site's character.
- Ensure all signage is durable, easily cleaned, and simple to repair.
- Establish a regular inspection and maintenance schedule to update signage and maintain a high-quality user experience.



Image 20. Provide opportunity for snowshoeing.



Image 21. An example of a low-impact educational sign with trail marker.



Image 22. An example of a low-impact educational sign with trail marker.

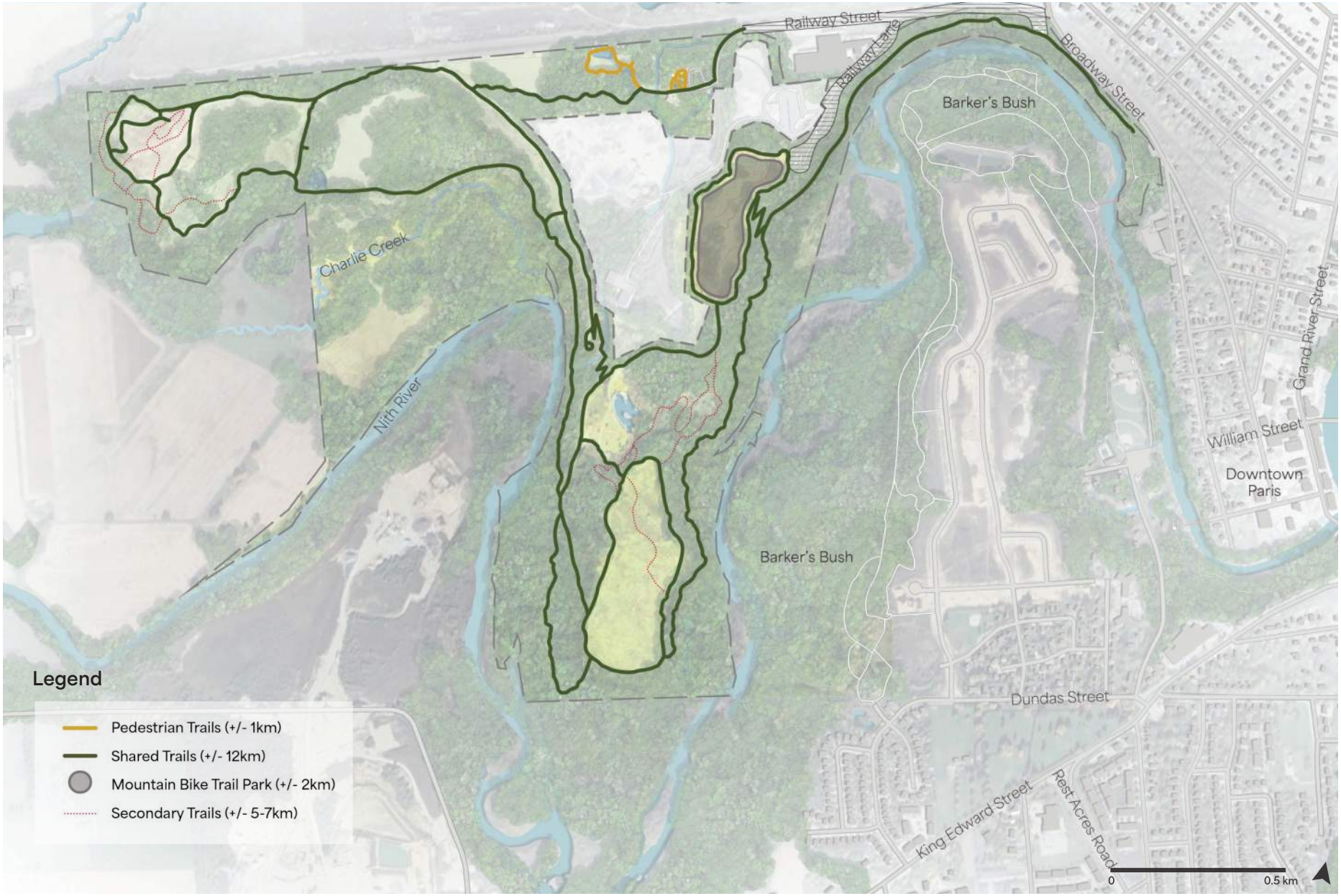


Figure 15. Primary Trail User Types.

Refer to Big Move 4 for high-priority secondary trail areas.

Wayfinding Signage

- Provide large kiosk-style signage at trailheads, main entrances, and major decision points.
- Install smaller directional markers at intervals and minor decision points.
- Conform trailheads with the Trailhead, Mid, and End of Trip Facilities Guidelines in A Comprehensive Trails Master Plan for Barker's Bush.
- Include the following information on wayfinding signage:
    + Clear mapping of the trail network.
    + Trail difficulty rating.
    + Intended trail users (shared, bike-only, or walking-only).
    + Trail names and distances.
    + Estimated travel times.
    + Elevation change and cross slope.
    + Trail surface material.
    + Accessibility information (e.g., wheelchair accessible routes).
    + Seasonal Trail Closure / Maintenance / Hazards

Interpretive Signage

- Incorporate educational content about the environment and impacts of human disturbance.
- Include interpretive signage highlighting the natural and cultural significance of the site.
- Collaborate with First Nation Partners to share Indigenous history, names, and stories relevant to the project area.
- Design signage to be adaptable for additional needs, such as closing off trails during select times.



Image 23. Example of trail signage at The Hydrocut, in Kitchener Waterloo, Ontario.

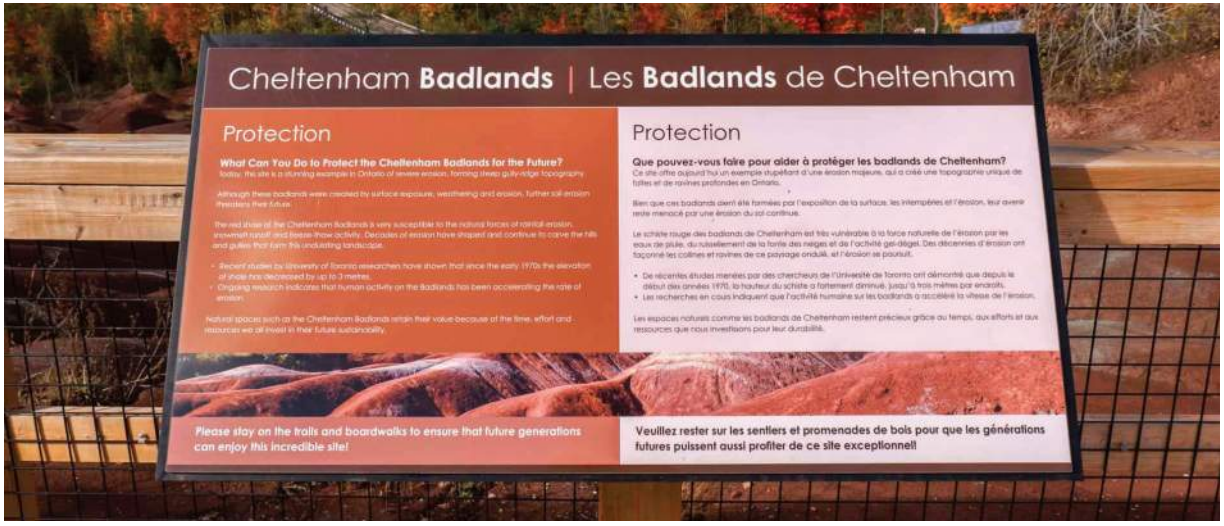


Image 24. Interpretive signage about protection and stewardship of the Cheltenham Badlands.

Lookouts and Observation Points Guidelines

- Limit access to sensitive areas by directing visitors to designated lookouts or observation points, minimizing disturbance to surrounding environments.
- Select locations that avoid sensitive features, minimize erosion risk, and prevent the formation of desire paths.
- Determine precise locations in consultation with Trails Committee and through on-site planning, ensuring environmental preservation remains a priority.
- Position lookouts or observation points directly adjacent to a trail or at the end of a path extension no longer than 50m, with clear sightlines to support safety and discourage illegal activity. Informational signage should be placed at decision points when lookout or observation point is off a path extension.
- Distribute lookouts or observation points evenly along the trail network to provide consistent opportunities for rest and viewing.
- Design spaces to be larger than a single bench but not large enough to encourage gatherings (more than 10 people). Spaces with benches much have an adjacent accessible pad per the County of Brant accessibility standards.
- Use materials consistent with the character of the themed trail where the lookouts or observation points is located.
- Incorporate interpretive or educational signage where appropriate to highlight natural, geological, or cultural features including history relics.

Trail Switchbacks and Slope Stabilization Guidelines

- Design trail switchbacks with a maximum gradient of 5%, following the County of Brant's Trail Master Plan Gradient Guidelines.
- Space switchbacks evenly to maintain a consistent slope and user-friendly trail alignment.
- Implement ecological restoration around switchbacks and disturbed areas to stabilize soils and discourage off-trail use.
- Incorporate appropriate drainage features at switchbacks to minimize erosion and prevent washouts.
- Reinforce the inside turns of switchbacks with rocks, logs, or other natural materials to prevent trail widening.
- Provide edge protection where trails are adjacent to steep slopes, in accordance with hillside trail requirements from the County of Brant's Trail Master Plan.



Image 25. Designated lookouts prevent visitors from entering sensitive areas.



Image 26. Switchback restoration planting for slope stabilization.



Image 27. Armourstone rest area near lookout point.

- Construct railings from durable materials designed to blend with the natural environment.
- Where feasible, integrate benches or small lookout/observation points near switchbacks to provide rest opportunities and encourage users to remain on the designated trail.

Boardwalks Guidelines

- Boardwalks should follow the County of Brant's Trails Master Plan Guidelines and conform with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).
- Detailed designs of any new development shall be submitted to the GRCA for review and approval within the regulated boundary (see Figure 20).
- Use boardwalks sparingly, primarily to traverse sensitive or wet areas such as wetlands and floodplains.
- Design boardwalks to guide users and discourage leaving the trail; incorporate vegetated buffers or screen plantings where appropriate.
- Provide pull-outs or widened nodes for rest, observation, and interpretive opportunities.
- Include educational signage highlighting significant ecological, cultural, or historical features.
- Ensure universal accessibility with gentle slopes, firm surfacing, and edge protection.
- Use durable, low-maintenance materials that resist rot, rust, and UV degradation.
- Consider seasonal closures or access restrictions during sensitive wildlife periods (e.g., nesting, spawning).

Indigenous Placekeeping Guidelines

- Engage in meaningful consultation with First Nation Partners to ensure their expertise informs planning and design.
- Ensure lands and waters remain accessible for Indigenous communities to gather, conduct ceremonies, and feel welcome.
- Commission Indigenous artists to integrate public art that reflects local cultures and histories.
- Incorporate Indigenous languages, storytelling, and perspectives into all wayfinding, interpretive, and educational signage.
- Include Indigenous culturally significant plants in restoration and rehabilitation projects.
- Seek opportunities to partner with each First Nation on projects to support economic development and capacity building.



Image 28. Low-impact boardwalk.



Image 29. Indigenous language on trail signage.



Image 30. Example of interpretive signage communicating natural and Indigenous importance of the habitat at Brokenhead Wetland Interpretive Trail and Boardwalk.

CHAPTER 05:
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



Implementation Strategy Summary

30

Total Projects and Initiatives

Estimated Improvements Per Phase

Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-10 Years)	Long Term (11+ Years)
$2.1m	$1.4m	$4.8m

3 Phases

Short (1-5 Years)

Medium (6-10 Years)

Long (11+ Years)

Potential Key Partners Includes:

- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- GRCA
- Brant Cycling Club
- Brant Waterways Foundation
- Brant for Nature
- Ducks Unlimited
- Freshwater Conservation Canada
- Kayanase
- Amrize

Implementation Strategy

The North of the Nith vision will be realized over time through coordinated collaboration among departments, agencies, First Nation Partners, and Community Partners.

Phasing and Pricing

The following Implementation Strategy lays out the steps, projects or process that the County can undertake in the short, medium, and long term. Multiple departments will need to collaborate to deliver the Master Plan recommendations successfully.

Each project includes a brief description, an identified project lead, potential partnership opportunities, and a high-level cost estimate. This Master Plan provides a strategic framework to support future funding opportunities and investment. At this time, no projects have secured funding, and cost estimates are presented as ranges reflecting the Master Plan level of design.

The Implementation Strategy proposes a phased approach that progresses from east to west and north to south across the site to minimize potential impacts related to potential future Amrize work. If Amrize decides to move forward with mineral extraction, then this Master Plan can inform the vision for the restoration of their lands.

The Implementation Strategy is flexible so projects can advance incrementally, independently, or sequentially, depending on timing, coordination, and conflicts. The County will develop a Capital Plan based on this strategy. The Capital Plan may adjust the sequence of projects based on funding and partnership opportunities.

Phase 1 starts with a focus on completing the foundational studies, partnership agreements, and approvals required to support future capital implementation, paving the way for physical projects to begin. This phase is anticipated to include the Penman Pass Extension and the initial development of the Mountain Bike Trail Park. Phase 2 focuses on implementing core infrastructure, the primary trail network, and restoration projects. Phase 3 includes projects that are dependent on Amrize activities or require more substantial capital investment.

Partnerships and Funding

Implementation partners have been identified for each project. These include the GRCA, First Nation Partners, and private or volunteer organizations.

Encouraging cost sharing, partnership funding, and resource sharing will help support community-led implementation and stewardship of the Master Plan and make effective use of community capacity.

A list of possible grants and funding sources include:

- Ontario Community Environment Fund
- Wetlands Conservation Partner Program
- Great Lakes Local Action Fund
- Invasive Phragmites Control Fund
- Invasive Species Action Fund
- Community Conservation Fund (OFAH Foundation)
- Species Conservation Program
- Private Donors

PHASE 1: Short-Term Projects (1-5 Years)



Figure 16. Short-term Projects.

Table 2. Short-term Projects.

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
A1	Agreements: Construction, Operations and Maintenance, and Access	Finalize the maintenance agreement with the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA). Develop an access agreement with Amrize. Initiate and formalize partnership and/or stewardship agreements with key Community Partners. These initiative must be completed before any project work can begin.	County of Brant - Community Services and Legal Services	GRCA, Amrize, Community Partners	$25,000
A2	Create the Trails Committee	Form a committee composed of representatives from the Brant Cycling Club (BCC), Brant for Nature (BFN), and Brant Waterways Foundation (BWF) to establish the secondary trail network in North of the Nith. The County's project lead will coordinate with other County departments and will provide guidance and assistance as necessary. This includes identifying and refining trails that avoid sensitive areas and supporting a balanced range of trail types (mountain biking, walking, shared). The committee could also be responsible for monitoring trail closures and potential water access points in future phases.	County of Brant - Community Services	BCC, BFN, BWF	Community
1.1	County of Brant Paris Landfill Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) Amendment	Update ECA based on Master Plan Recommendations. Must be completed before any work on the Mountain Bike Trail Park and any other project begins.	County of Brant - Operations	N/A	$10,000

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
1.2	County of Brant Operational Zone Fence	This is the top priority project and must be completed first. Security upgrades are essential as parts of the North of the Nith lands remain operational. The project includes perimeter fencing, signage, and gates as required with a vegetated buffer to block views, screen operations, and maintain the natural trail character.	County of Brant - Operations	N/A	$350,000
1.3	Penman's Pass Trail Extension to the Mountain Bike Trail Park	The Penman's Pass Extension is a significant project that could be among the first to be completed, due to its strong connectivity with existing County trails and Penman's Pass parking lot and is unlikely to be impacted by Amrize. As an important entrance into North of the Nith, the extension will serve as a shared-use trail for all users. Formalize the existing trail from the Penman's Pass trailhead along the river's north bank. Minor upgrades—such as drainage, boardwalks, erosion control, and slope stabilization—will improve safety, usability and maintenance. The trail will connect Penman's Pass and its parking area to North of the Nith, linking the site to the broader trail network. Apply the County's Woodland Trail standards (1-1.5 m width). Conduct a slope analysis and site-specific assessments to pinpoint priority areas along the river's north bank (south of Railway Street) where slope stabilization and erosion measures are needed to ensure trail safety and long-term durability. Monitor trail use at 1 and 3 years to assess if further improvements are required based on volume of users. The project requires small bridges, slope stabilization, and GRCA approvals. The design will be tendered to a design/engineer firm with guidance and input from key Community Partners.	County of Brant - Community Services	GRCA, BCC, BWF, Kayanase	$600,000-$800,000

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
1.4	CN Fence	The County has installed a new fence along the CN property line at the site's northern boundary.	County of Brant - Community Services	CN	$100,000 - Completed
1.5	Mountain Bike Trail Park	Develop the capped landfill, approximately 7 acres of open space, into a high-quality mountain bike trail network accessible from Penman's Pass Extension. This phase includes the design and construction of mountain bike trails, access from Penman's Pass Extension via a switchback, installation of wayfinding signage, and a shade structure. Prior to development, construction, operations and maintenance, and access agreements with BCC/BWF must be finalized (Project A1), the ECA Amendment must be approved (Project 1.1) and, the County Operational Zone fencing must be secured (Project 1.2). Staging and construction access will be provided through the County Operational Zone via Railway Street. Trails and facilities may be built incrementally in accordance with the construction agreement. The Bike Trail Park entrance will be from the Penman's Pass Extension, so improvements to Penman's Pass must be timed to open concurrently with the bike trail park.	County of Brant - Operations	BCC, BWF, Amrize	$250,000 - Foundational (starter trail network, limited mileage, functional amenities). $500,000 - Enhanced (more extensive trail system, higher quality features) $800,000 - Destination (top-tier facility with a large, interconnected network, amenities, and a distinctive character that attracts regional visitors).
1.6	Southern Peninsula	Continue conversations with GRCA to include peninsula lands in the trails and open spaces plan.	County of Brant - Community Services	GRCA, Private landowner	Action

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
A3	Invasive Species Removal Strategy	Invasive species management across the North of the Nith lands should focus on suppressing key species such as Phragmites, European Buckthorn, and Japanese Knotweed through a comprehensive, coordinated strategy. This long-term strategy should clearly define the scope of work by prioritizing suppression in critical areas–particularly existing Phragmites stands–while supporting biodiversity in locations such as Charlie Creek (Project 2.4), its riparian zone, and the Marshlands Loop. The strategy should also identify a volunteer workforce to supplement contractor efforts, follow the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's Best Management Practices, and require a mandatory site visit at tender before each phase of work. Ecological restoration projects should be coordinated and scheduled immediately after invasive species suppression in affected areas to maximize effectiveness and ecological recovery.	County of Brant - Community Services	BFN, GRCA, Kayanase, BWF	$5,000-$10,000 Removal Strategy Study. Undertake a focused study to identify and prioritize removals. $50,000 Invasive species removal completed by contractor.
A4	Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) Scope / Environmental Studies Assessment	Figure 19 shows projects located within the County's Environmental Impact Study (EIS) setback. It is recommended that an Environmental Impact Study Scope Assessment be conducted to determine the appropriate level of EIS required for each project in this strategy. The goal of this assessment is to narrow the focus of the subsequent environmental analysis making future projects more efficient to start. This is a prerequisite study to all other projects.	County of Brant - Policy Planning	GRCA	$10,000

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
A5	Habitat Preservation and Enhancement Study	This study focuses on the assessment, preservation, and enhancement of turtle and deer habitats in areas affected by the proposed trail development. The primary objectives are to protect local turtle and deer populations, ensure connectivity between habitats, and minimize the ecological impact of trail construction.	County of Brant - Community Services	Six Nations of the Grand River, Kayanase, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, GRCA, BWF	$10,000
A6	ATV and Dirt Bike Enforcement Strategy	Collaborate with local law enforcement, and key stakeholders to develop and implement a strategy to restrict dirt bike and ATV activity. The strategy should enforce North of the Nith as a non-motorized area, or alternatively, explore the feasibility of creating a designated motorized recreation zone elsewhere in Brant. The goal is to integrate low impact recreational uses (hiking, cycling, etc.) within the site to increase activity, discouraging unsanctioned ATV use. Posting of signage and scheduled enforcement in winter and spring are recommended. Monitoring of ATV use in the south peninsula should also be included in the scope.	County of Brant - Bylaw	Brant OPP	$10,000

PHASE 2: Medium-Term Projects (5-10 Years)



Figure 17. Medium-term Projects.

Table 3. Medium-term Projects.

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
2.1	Parking Lot (Railway Street)	Create a 30-stall gravel parking lot with traffic control boulders and upgrade the existing gravel road up to the gate at the end of Railway Street. This parking lot is the catalyst project that will improve access to the site and formally allow people onto the lands. The upgraded access road will feature a protected multi-use path on one side, using boulders or other low-impact materials to create a safer route for operations vehicles, cars, and cyclists. Parking lot demand can be monitored and expanded as part of the Park Entrance project later on in Phase 2/3 if needed. This project can be moved to Phase 1 with coordination from Amrize if they use an alternate access to their licensed lands.	County of Brant - Community Services	Amrize, BWF, BCC, BFN	$200,000-$300,0000
2.2	The Dunes Loop	Improvements include upgrades to the primary trail, +/- 2-3 km of secondary trails in the 43 acre area, a new lookout point, and reforestation to restore and stabilize the ground while deterring unauthorized ATV access. This is an early Phase 2 project for Community Partners as there are limited GRCA approvals and Stage 2 work only requires photo documentation. This project can be moved to Phase 1 if Amrize does not proceed with extraction.	County of Brant - Community Services	BFN, Kayanase, Brant Waterways Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, BCC, GRCA, BWF, Trails Committee	$20,000
2.3	The Marshland and Boardwalk Loops	Construct a boardwalk and interpretive trail with a mix of elevated and at-grade pathways to connect visitors to the marsh, highlight historical relics, and showcase wetland restoration. Incorporate lookouts, seating, and interpretive panels to enhance the visitor experience. Decommission the existing trail through the wetland and floodplain near Charlie Creek, and complete signage, fencing, and restoration and reforestation planting immediately invasive species suppression to protect and restore the area.	County of Brant - Community Services	Ducks Unlimited, Kayanase, BWF, Trails Committee	$250,000-$300,000

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
2.4	Charlie Creek Restoration	Partner with Freshwater Conservation Canada to develop and implement a plan informed by their Summer Temperature Trends in Lower Charlie Creek Near Paris, Ontario Study (2018-2019) to enhance the cold-water habitat. Priorities include wetland restoration in the old pond basin, reconnecting cold water flows, creating habitat, as well as tree/shrub plantings within a 10 m setback either side of the creek after Phragmites suppression by contractor. Tufa deposits have been observed by Community Partners near the area where Charlie Creek intersects groundwater seeps. Further investigation of these formations will be included as part of the restoration.	County of Brant - Community Services	Freshwater Conservation Canada, Kayanase, BWF	$20,000 - $30,000
2.5	Floodplain Trail Removal	Decommission trails along the eastern edge within the sensitive floodplain and remediate the damaged areas.	County of Brant - Community Services	GRCA, BWF, Kayanase, Trails Committee	$20,000
2.6	North of the Nith Primary Entrance Signs (Penman's Pass and Park Entrance)	Develop two entrance signs to establish a strong sense of arrival. Signs should be large, highly visible, and designed to reflect the character of the park.	County of Brant - Community Services	Amrize, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, GRCA, BWF	$130,000-$150,000
2.7	First Nation Gateway Art Commission	Create a signature art piece to mark arrival into the site and celebrate the Indigenous significance to the land. Engage Indigenous communities in advisory and creative roles throughout the design process. The art piece will be located at the Gateway Hub and could also serve as part of the trailhead. Explore opportunities to connect these themes with wayfinding and interpretation.	County of Brant - Community Services	Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation	$200,000-$250,000

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
2.8	West Switchback	This link is essential to connect the Marshlands Trail Loop with the Prairie Meadow, but the existing slope exceeds 10% and is subject to erosion. Design and construct a switchback to reduce grades, provide runoff outlets, and stabilize the trail. This will require grading, signage, barriers, and careful alignment to minimize environmental impacts, but it is critical for accessibility, long-term durability, and protection of the surrounding landscape. The design will be tendered to a design/engineer firm with guidance and input from key Community Partners.	County of Brant - Community Services	BFN, BCC, BWF, Amrize	$100,000-$140,000
2.9	Park Entrance: Gateway Hub	Create a welcoming entrance into North of the Nith with facilities to support future use. Potential facilities include composting washrooms, park entry signage (Project 2.6), an outdoor classroom, an educational discovery walk trail, trailhead signage (Project B1), a picnic area, and Indigenous art or a welcome wall (Project 2.7). Protect space for future expansion of the parking lot and for the long-term siting of the Education Centre Building. The short trail loop at the Park Entrance is intended to be fully accessible and pedestrian only. At its core, the Park Entrance aims to support school programming, foster outdoor learning, and guarantee that nature remains accessible all.	County of Brant - Community Services	Amrize, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, GRCA, BWF, BCC	$100,000 - $150,000
B1	Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage System	Develop a North of the Nith specific wayfinding and signage system based on the Barkers Bush signage to integrate interpretive, wayfinding, and educational content, including multi-lingual support. A key component of the signage strategy is clearly informing users which trails are designated for mountain biking, shared use, or pedestrian-only use.	County of Brant - Community Services	Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, GRCA, Trails Committee	$35,000 - $50,000 (20 trail markers/ wayfinding signs, 6 interpretive signage, and 3 trailhead signage)

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
2.10	Potential Future Park Entrance: Railway Lane	Create a 15-stall gravel parking lot at the western end of Railway Lane to increase visitor access. Establish a second welcoming park entrance to the North of the Nith featuring a trailhead kiosk and a new trail with a switchback leading to the Mountain Bike Trail Park. Minor adjustments to the existing Operational Zone fence are required to accommodate these improvements, but the existing gate will remain. This project will require GRCA approval, slope stability analysis and adhere to geotechnical setback requirements.	County of Brant - Operations	N/A	Potential Future County of Brant Operations Budget
2.11	Potential Future Railway Street & Railway Lane Improvements	Consider improving Railway Street and Railway Lane as part of future road upgrades/widening projects by incorporating protected multi-use paths (MUPs). These enhancements will improve cyclist safety and strengthen connectivity, linking Brant's Outdoor Adventure network to North of the Nith. Coordinate with Roads and Operations, who would lead these initiatives to include scope and budget for protected MUPs. Additionally, consider including a secondary trail entrance from the intersection of Railway Street and Broadway Street. If feasible, this would serve as a new North of the Nith access point and should feature a trail marker or kiosk. This project will require GRCA approval and slope stability analysis along Railway Lane. Currently, there are no upgrades to these streets within the Capital budget. Successful implementation will require collaboration with CN, adjacent property owners, and utility stakeholders.	County of Brant - Operations	N/A	Potential Future County of Brant Operations Budget

PHASE 3: Long-Term Projects (11+ Years)



Figure 18. Long-term Projects.

Table 4. Long-term Projects.

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
3.1	Education Centre Building (Long term)	Reserve space for a future Education Centre that can serve as the front door to North of the Nith. The facility is envisioned as a small pavilion that is welcoming, functional, and ecologically sensitive, providing space for visitor orientation, discovery, and educational programming. It should also accommodate accessible public washrooms and administrative support functions. Servicing could be extended from Railway Street when required. The site should remain protected during early phases of work to ensure this opportunity can be realized as visitation grows and parking demand expands. This is a long-term aspiration and subject to sponsorship or funding opportunities	County of Brant - Community Services	GRCA, BWF, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation	$3-$4M
3.2	The Oak Savanna Loop	Implement The Oak Savanna Loop improvements, including trail upgrades, the addition of +/- 3-4 km of secondary trails in the 48 acre area, a new lookout point with interactive thematic programming, and the removal of select trails. Restore cultural meadows to native meadows to enhance habitat diversity, provide foraging and nesting habitat for grassland birds and pollinators, and complete restoration planting following invasive species suppression work. Develop a stewardship plan with Community Partner input and guidance. This work may be scheduled for Phase 2, depending on Amrize timing.	County of Brant - Community Services	Ducks Unlimited, BFN, BCC, BWF, Amrize, Trails Committee	$50,000-$75,000

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
3.3	The Rivers Edge Trail	The Rivers Edge Trail improvements include upgrades to the primary trail, a new lookout, interactive thematic programming, decommissioning of select trails through ecologically sensitive areas, minor reforestation interventions to restore and stabilize the ground while discouraging unauthorized ATV use, and restoration planting to disturbed areas. Parallel secondary trails will be developed by the Trails Committee. Both design and implementation must be carried out strategically and align with Amrize's activities in the southern portion of the site. This work may be scheduled for Phase 2, depending on Amrize timing.	County of Brant - Operations	BCC, BWF, Amrize, GRCA, Kayanase, Trails Committee	$50,000-$75,000
3.4	Decommission Trails South of the Prairie Meadow Loop	The South Peninsula is not currently included in this master plan; however, discussions with the GRCA and the private landowner regarding potential inclusion are ongoing. As these lands are among the most ecologically sensitive areas and are experiencing continual unauthorized use by ATVs and motorbikes, existing trails should be decommissioned in accordance with the established guidelines. Re-evaluate project once Project 1.6 is complete.	County of Brant - Community Services	GRCA, BFN, Ducks Unlimited, BWF, Amrize, Trails Committee	$40,000-$50,000
3.5	Park Entrance Stage 3: Parking Lot Expansion	Based on measured visitor volumes, add additional parking spaces. The timing of this expansion may be coordinated with the planning and construction of the Education Centre.	County of Brant - Community Services	Amrize, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, GRCA, BWF	$200,000-300,000

#	Projects	Description	Project Lead	Partnership Opportunities	Cost
3.6	First Nation Ceremonial Spaces	Identify and designate spaces for First Nation ceremony and community gatherings, exploring opportunities for co-management and capacity building with Indigenous communities. Develop new spaces for dedicated Indigenous use, which may include features such as a sunrise/sunset lookout or fire circle, potentially at multiple locations. Engage First Nation communities in advisory, creative, and construction roles throughout the design of these features to ensure cultural authenticity and meaningful participation.	County of Brant - Community Services	Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, GRCA	$300,000 - $350,000

Notes:

All construction projects require detailed design and design approval prior to construction.
See Figure 20 and 21 for the location of GRCA and EIS Setback. Projects within this area require coordination with and approval from the GRCA and the County and may require additional environmental studies (see A4).
See Figure 3 for the location of the Amrize extraction licence. Project timing in this area is subject to Amrize's extraction schedule.
Costs are Class D level of accuracy and subject to detailed design.
Costs are based on the existing Master Plan to date and do not consider Amrize's plan.

Permissions and Approvals

This section includes three diagrams identifying when project require permissions and approvals and Stage 2 Archeology Studies.

- **EIS Boundary.** Figure 19 illustrates all proposed Master Plan projects along with the County's EIS setback highlighted in pink. The Implementation Strategy includes a recommendation for the County to complete a Scope Assessment to determine the appropriate level of EIS for each project (Comprehensive EIS or Scoped EIS, per the County of Brant's EIS and EIP Terms of Reference Submission Guidelines), helping to narrow future environmental analysis.
- **GRCA Regulated Lands.** Projects located within the hatched boundary shown in Figure 20 will require approvals from the GRCA.
- **Archaeology**: Figure 21 identifies the areas in North of the Nith that will require Stage 2 Study.

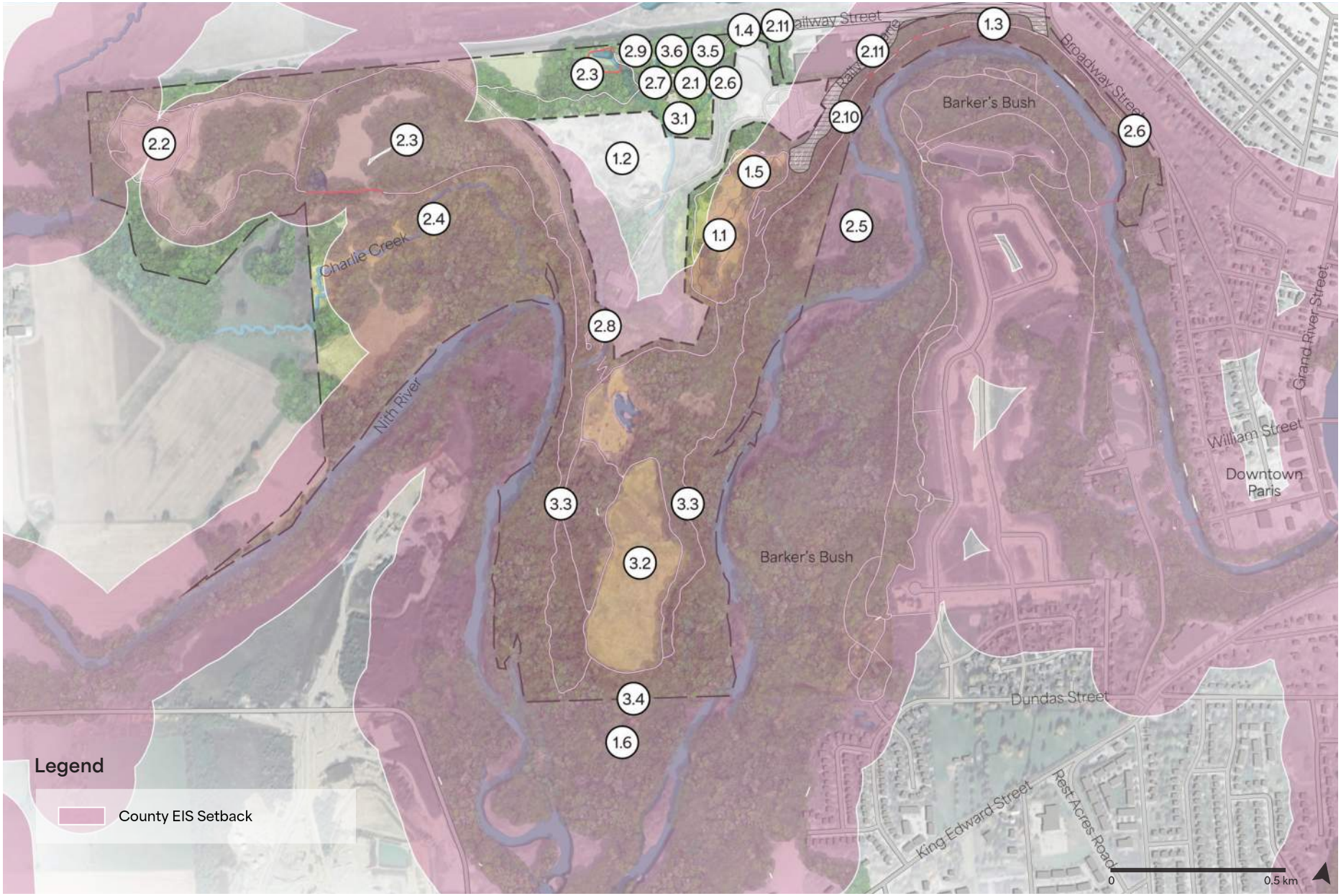


Figure 19. County EIS Setback.



Figure 20. GRCA Regulation Boundary.



Figure 21. Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment.