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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The Trent Lands and  
Nature Areas Plan is an  
ambitious undertaking  
and has set new standards  
for campus planning.*

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## A BOLD CAMPUS VISION FOR A REGENERATIVE FUTURE AT TRENT

Sparked by a community campaign in 1957 to open a post-secondary institution in the Trent Valley, Trent University today is one of Canada's top universities, recognized nationally for its leadership in teaching, research, and student satisfaction. The Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan articulates a vision that is rooted in community and a deep understanding of the land.

It guides the University towards a future of caring for and stewarding the campus at large, through a robust and connected University Green Network that includes Trent's Nature Areas, valuable green spaces, and the linkages between them.

It integrates the latest thinking on regenerative landscapes, built form, and agriculture, fostering nature-inclusive spaces across the campus.

It instills Anishinaabeg principles, Indigenous spaces, and placemaking techniques, developed in collaboration with the Michi Saagiig First Nations throughout campus planning initiatives.

It promotes opportunity – for students and community to engage in rewarding hands-on learning and discovery, and innovation and research that will contribute to a post-pandemic economic recovery and fight to combat climate change.

Trent's Symons Campus represents a substantial proportion of woodlands and wetlands within the City of Peterborough. A primary goal of the Plan is to protect, enhance and restore these assets, to foster biological diversity and sustain ecosystem function. Trent is committed to ***maintaining 60 per cent of the Symons Campus lands as Nature Areas and green space***, and to being an active caretaker for a valuable ecosystem.

The Plan integrates design excellence and emerging best practices to respectfully and thoughtfully evolve the campus into a thriving University and environment, with diverse opportunities for teaching, learning, and research, while addressing critical housing, employment, and daily needs.

The Plan is ***ambitious***, tackling challenges faced on campus, in our local communities, and across the globe. It is ***visionary***, imagining possibilities for evolution that reflect the priorities and aspirations of the University's diverse communities. The Plan is ***pluralistic***, implementing strategies based on science and Indigenous Traditional Knowledge. And perhaps most importantly, the Plan is ***adaptable***, setting out clear principles and intent, while acknowledging the need to respond to new information and changing circumstances; it produces ***harmony without rigidity***.

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## WE ARE FUNDAMENTALLY STRONG, YET WE FACE MOUNTING LOCAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

According to Macleans Magazine, Trent University has been ranked as the #1 undergraduate university in Ontario for a decade. Trent also ranks in the top spot in the province for many key student areas, including Student Services, Student Awards, Academic Advising and Extracurricular Activities. Trent's Environmental Science and Biology programs have been included in "Canada's Best Programs", a list of the top 20 programs across all universities in all categories.

Ontario's universities are vital to the province's and nation's social and economic wellbeing. A healthy and secure university prepares students for life-long careers and contributes to technological advancements and innovations, and a globally competitive economy. Universities drive local, regional, provincial, and national economies, creating jobs, providing support to local businesses, spurring innovation, and driving competition. They are leaders in the fight against climate change, disseminating knowledge and research that contribute to a real and lasting change in how we manage the environment and reduce our ecological footprint. They are inclusive spaces that bring together people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

The Covid-19 pandemic is a global crisis that has infected people in 188 countries. It has impacted businesses and people around the world, and left us wondering what's next? The vitality of our universities will be critical to Canada's economic recovery in a post-pandemic world.

## *Confronting Canada's post-pandemic recovery requires a new compass.*

Given the pandemic, the importance of this comprehensive land use plan is now even more important than when it was started. The Plan aspires to build on Trent's strengths to address environmental, economic, and social issues. It guides the responsible evolution of the campus for the future to achieve a resilient University, a healthy natural environment, and a connected community.

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## THE ROLE OF THE TRENT LANDS AND NATURE AREAS PLAN

The role of the Plan is to articulate a clear vision and framework that upholds the University's mission as a learning institution, steward of the natural environment, and community anchor.

The Plan includes guiding principles, inspiration from around the world, and emerging best practice standards to achieve the inspiring vision, with a clear process that allows for responsiveness to new information and learnings.

The Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan is a critical first step in the campus planning process. It highlights the big picture with a holistic view of the campus, informing future site-specific initiatives and building towards a coordinated and aligned vision across the various interests of the campus and its communities.



## A VISION AND FOUR PRINCIPLES HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED TO GUIDE THE EVOLUTION OF THE SYMONS CAMPUS



*Demonstrate leadership in environmental education and stewardship, respect for Indigenous Traditional Knowledge, and thoughtful integration of the natural and built environment.*

### VISION

The Trent Symons Campus lands are a precious asset, rich in natural and cultural heritage, vital to the resilience of Trent and our communities. Our vision is to create an inspiring, sustainable, and complete community to learn, live, innovate, and be active.

In our care for and use of the land, Trent will demonstrate leadership in environmental education and stewardship, respect for Indigenous Traditional Knowledge, and thoughtful integration of the natural and built environment.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES



#### LEARNING AND DISCOVERY

Ensure the Trent lands are a place where learning and discovery will thrive.



#### ECONOMIC RESILIENCE, LEADERSHIP, AND INNOVATION

Enhance the University's reputation and introduce sustainable funding sources.



#### ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AND INTEGRITY

Enhance biodiversity and ecosystem function and demonstrate leadership in environmental and Indigenous education.



#### SOCIAL RESILIENCE, COMMUNITY, AND INCLUSIVITY

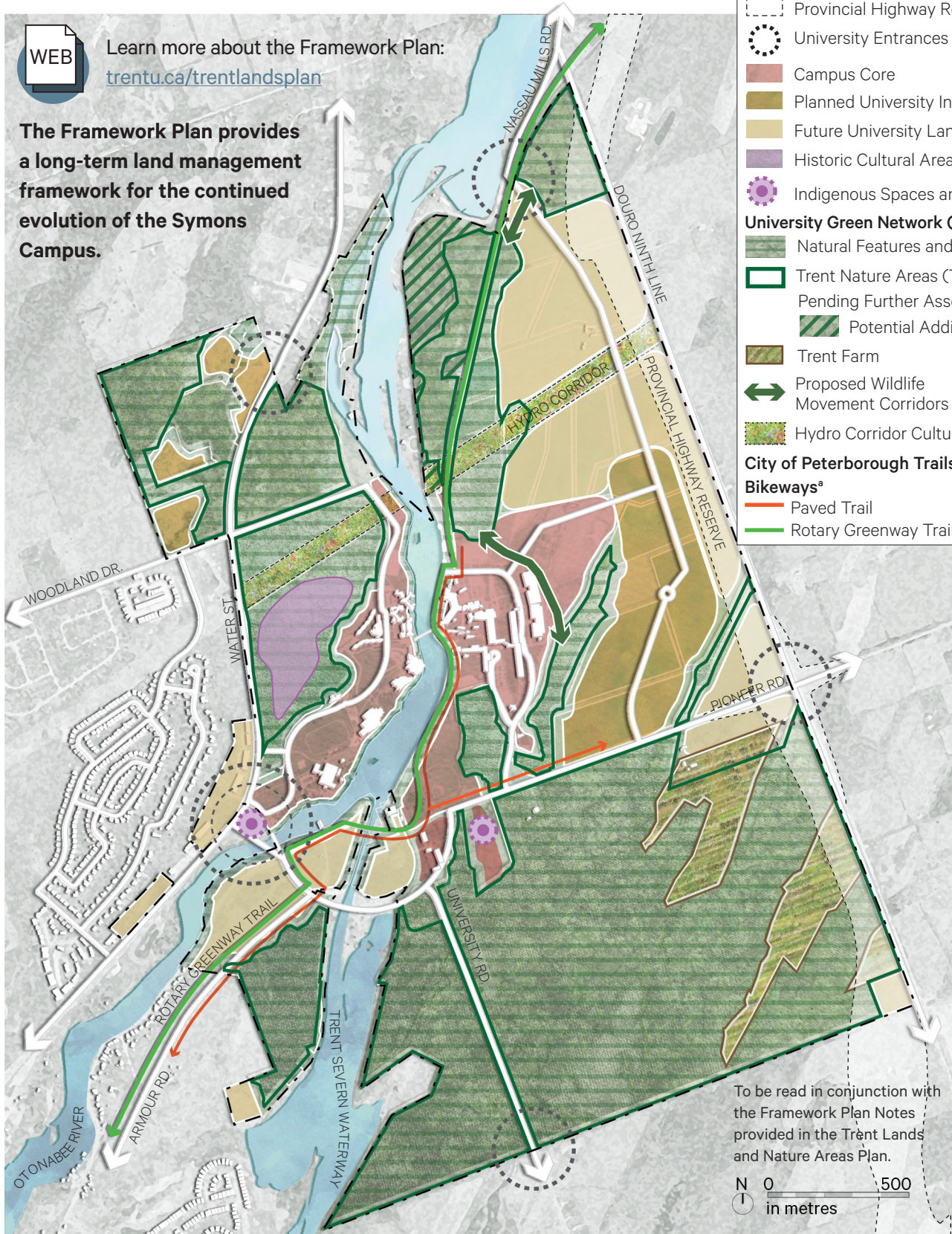
Enhance belonging and wellbeing, and provide inclusive social infrastructure.

# THE FRAMEWORK PLAN



Learn more about the Framework Plan:  
[trentu.ca/trentlandsplan](http://trentu.ca/trentlandsplan)

The Framework Plan provides a long-term land management framework for the continued evolution of the Symons Campus.



**LEGEND:**

- Trent University Boundary
- Provincial Highway Reserve<sup>6</sup>
- University Entrances
- Campus Core
- Planned University Initiatives<sup>7</sup>
- Future University Lands
- Historic Cultural Area
- Indigenous Spaces and Placemaking<sup>4</sup>

**University Green Network (UGN)**

- Natural Features and Areas
- Trent Nature Areas (TNA)<sup>5</sup>

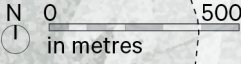
**Pending Further Assessment:**

- Potential Addition
- Trent Farm
- Proposed Wildlife Movement Corridors
- Hydro Corridor Cultural Meadow

**City of Peterborough Trails and Bikeways<sup>8</sup>**

- Paved Trail
- Rotary Greenway Trail

To be read in conjunction with the Framework Plan Notes provided in the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan.



## THE STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

The Framework Plan has four structural elements, which build upon one another to establish a coordinated framework.

### THE OTONABEE RIVER

the central and key structural feature of the campus; the hydrologic system bears considerable natural and cultural significance to the Campus and to the region at large (Section 5).

### THE UNIVERSITY GREEN NETWORK

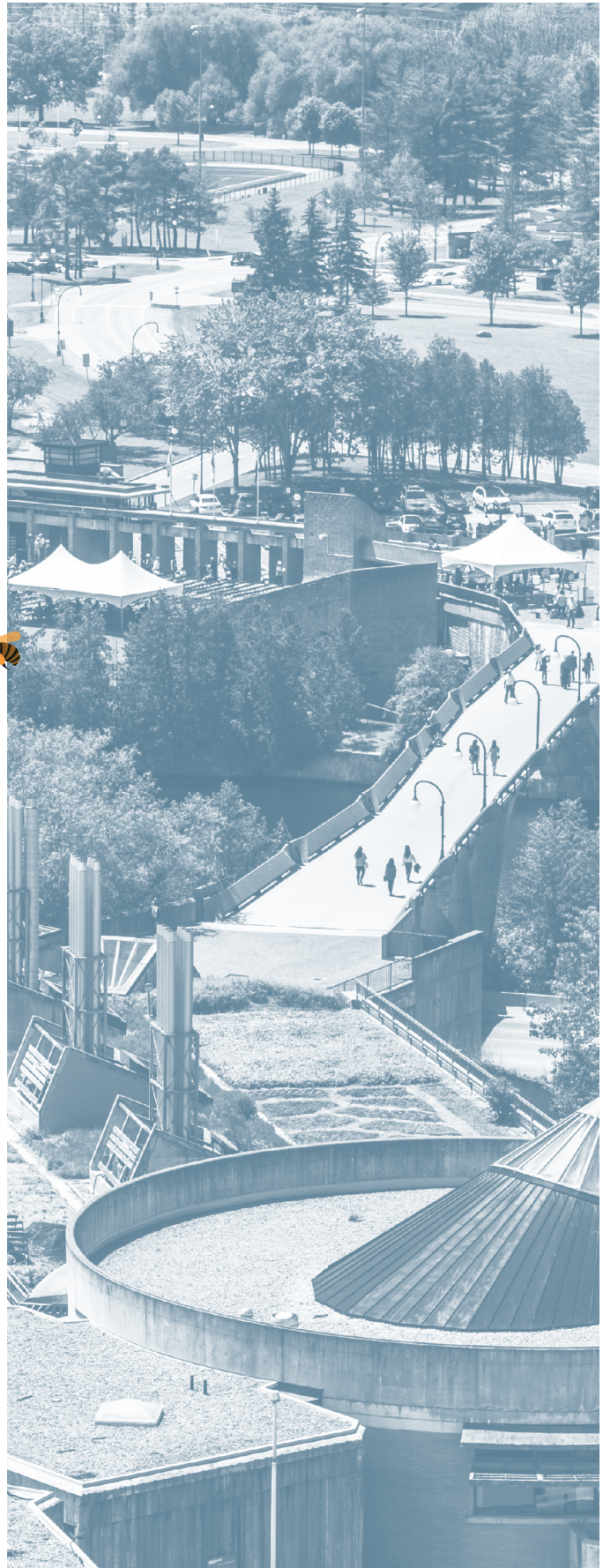
a connected natural system that includes areas for habitat preservation and creation, corridors to facilitate wildlife movement, productive landscapes, and diverse green spaces that support learning on the land, hands-on research, and opportunities to interact with nature (Section 6).

### THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICTS

areas designed to enhance Trent's academic mission, build a thriving and complete community to serve the campus, and increase the University's contributions to the region (Section 7).

### THE MOBILITY FRAMEWORK

an intermodal network that promotes active modes of travel and provides safe access and connections to the amenities and offerings of the Symons Campus and to larger local and regional movement networks (Section 8).



## OUR RESPONSIBILITY



Learn more about the SDGs online at:  
<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Trent is a place where students, the community, and diverse ecosystems can thrive. We recognize that sustaining the current status quo is not enough. The goal for the Symons Campus is to have as many positive impacts as possible. The concept of **regenerative design** goes beyond minimizing impact and maintaining current conditions to applying principles of **enriching, enhancing, and restoring our social and ecological environment**.

Within the context of a rapidly changing climate, Trent University has an opportunity to be a leader in fostering resilient and adaptable communities. From an Indigenous Traditional Knowledge perspective, the **UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, the following four aspirations can be derived:

### *a good life*

A holistic, systems-based approach, where campus and community needs are infused with natural systems, material flows, and movement of people.

### *do no harm and seek net benefit*

Our actions should extend beyond reducing harm to people, land, air, and water. We must give back to the earth, the flora, fauna, and people.

### *inclusive and mindful of the collective*

Our campus and communities should be meaningfully engaged to result in an inclusive community, integrating culture, equity, and wellbeing.

### *responsible to future generations*

Our footprint should be reduced, seeking efficient management of resources, and integrating sustainable food options for a resilient and adaptable campus.

## HOW WE GOT HERE



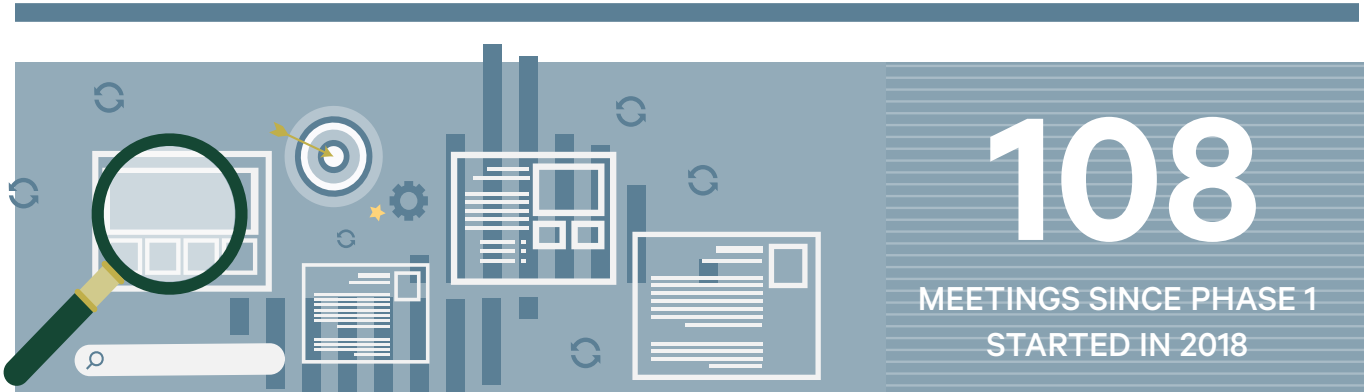
Learn more about the engagement activities at:  
<https://www.trentu.ca/trentlandsplan/plan/>

Effective public engagement and communication is a critical driver of the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan, and spanned all phases of the process.

Throughout the project, engagement activities were expanded to include a range of formats and methods to enable continuous, ongoing engagement opportunities that would solicit feedback from a diversity of campus and community groups and First Nations.

The following page outlines the key activities throughout all phases of the project.



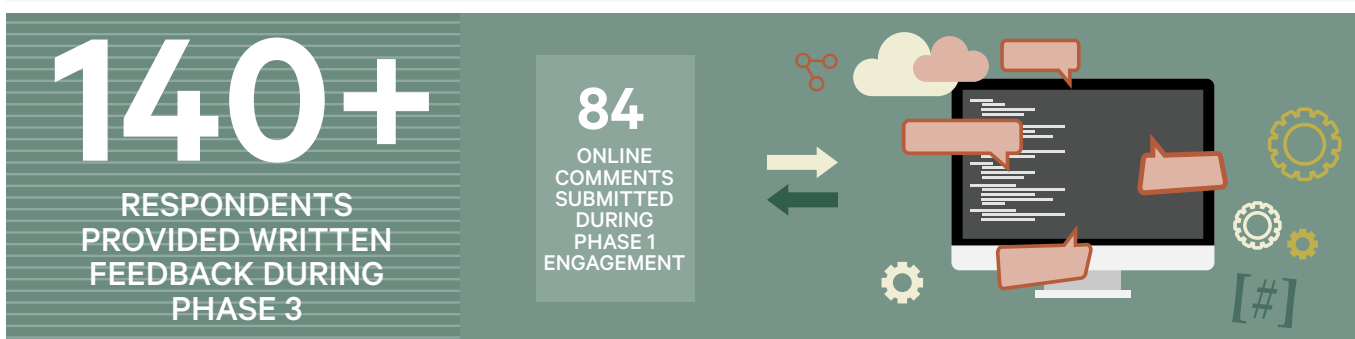


**42** MEETINGS WITH  
FACULTY, STAFF AND  
STUDENTS

**38** MEETINGS WITH  
COMMUNITY AND  
LOCAL GROUPS

**26** MEETINGS WITH  
MICH SAAGIG  
CONSULTATION  
LIAISONS, ELDERS  
AND TRADITIONAL  
KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS

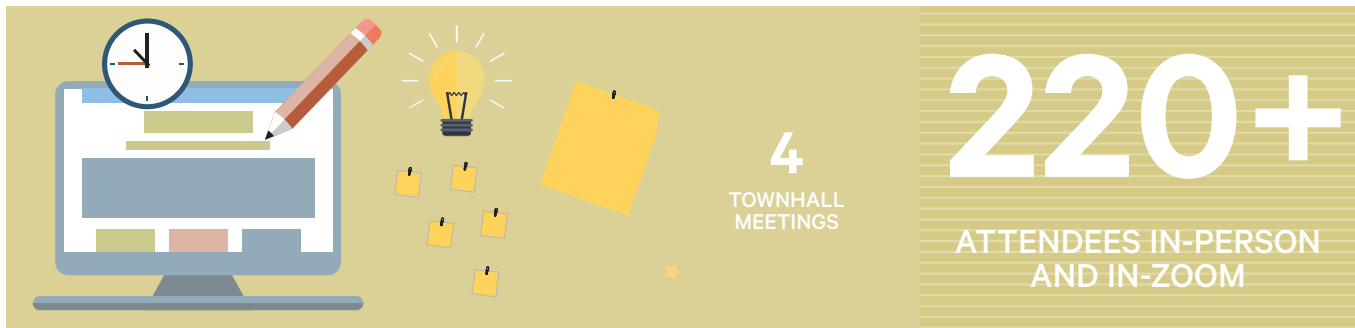
**7** MEETINGS WITH  
ON-CAMPUS FOOD  
GROWERS



**556**  
NEWSLETTER  
SUBSCRIBERS

**215**  
ONLINE MAPPING  
PINS INDICATING  
FAVOURITE  
PLACES, AND  
TEACHING AND  
RESEARCH  
HOTSPOTS

**700+**  
RESPONDENTS REACHED  
THROUGH ON AND OFF  
CAMPUS POP-UPS IN 2019



Trent Lands and Nature Areas Engagement Activities



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## A CONNECTED AND ROBUST UNIVERSITY GREEN NETWORK

**Trent University will steward, develop, and preserve its lands in ways that support the long-term resilience of Trent, our local, national, and international communities – starting with its ongoing commitment to maintain 60 per cent of the campus land as Nature Areas and green spaces.**

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### A Systems-Based Approach

The University Green Network (UGN) is introduced in the TLNAP in **Part II** to support a holistic approach to caring for and management of the land. The UGN recognizes individual natural features and their linkages and roles within the local and regional landscapes. It strives to conserve biological diversity, maintain ecological functions (e.g. habitat and movement of wildlife), and sustain ecosystem services (e.g. pollination, clean water, mental, and physical wellbeing).

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### Combined Stewardship with Land Use Planning

As part of this big picture approach, the updated Nature Areas Stewardship Plan has been included in **Part III** of the Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan as a focused element that offers direction for activities and actions to assist in achieving the goals of stewarding Trent’s 11 Nature Areas.

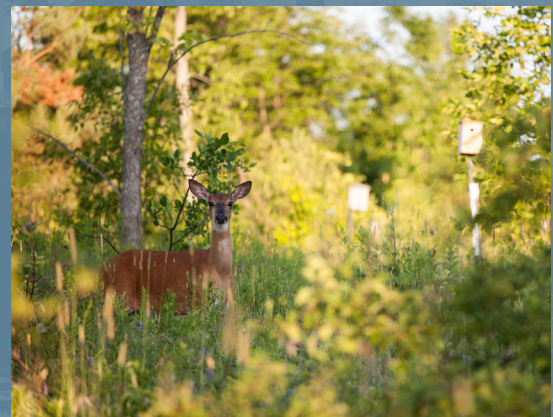
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### Net Benefit through Nature Inclusive Design

The Symons Campus is envisioned to embed environmental stewardship through nature-inclusive, low impact, and low carbon development. It also fosters the integration of new natural open spaces such as learning gardens, arboretums, pollinator gardens, living walls, green roofs, and so much more. These indoor and outdoor spaces can be used to demonstrate and test regenerative systems, showcasing Trent as a global leader. This approach reflects principles of regenerative design, and fosters a campus where students, the community, and diverse ecosystems can thrive.



Building nestled into existing forest and topography. Mill Valley Cabins, Feldman Architecture. Source: ArchDaily



The Trent Nature Areas are rich in biodiversity and ecological function.



Elevated boardwalk above ferns and grasses with full visibility from inside and outside of the building, and a microclimate for bird habitats. New York Times Building. Source: The Cultural Landscape Foundation

## ANISHINAABEG NIBWAAKAAWIN (WISDOM)

**Central to this Plan are several principles developed to incorporate Anishinaabeg Nibwaakaawin (wisdom) of Michi Saagiig First Nations, Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. Trent University, in collaboration with the Michi Saagiig and Indigenous Peoples, are committed to the following:**

### 1. Collaboration and Reconciliation

- We are committed to ongoing collaboration with the territorial rights holders, the Michi Saagiig First Nations.

### 2. Traditional and Cultural Protocols

- The Trent lands and Nature Areas are a place where Indigenous ceremony and cultural protocols are accessible and respected.
- We will begin our collaboration by acknowledging the land, water, and Mother Earth, and to seek the sanction and guidance of the Spirit World.
- Trent University is committed to learning from Indigenous peoples, including the inter-relationship between the land, the water, the concept of Spirit, and cultural understandings informed by Indigenous perspectives and worldview.

### 3. Traditional and Ceremonial Lands

- Trent University recognizes that the existing Traditional Area and Mnidoowag A’Kiing may not be adequate for certain ceremonial or cultural gatherings important for Indigenous students learning and sense of belonging, and to welcome Indigenous communities to the campus. Trent University is committed to working with the

Michi Saagiig, Trent Indigenous students, faculty, and staff, and willing Indigenous partners to explore locations and funding opportunities for additional Indigenous ceremonial, learning, and cultural spaces and facilities on Trent lands.

### 4. Indigenous Traditional Knowledge

- Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (ITK) is an important consideration in landuse planning and decision-making with regards to the Trent Lands Plan and Nature Areas Plan. ITK will be considered alongside western environmental science.

### 5. Commemoration and Placemaking

- We are committed to explore opportunities to advance the concept of Indigenous placemaking, which *facilitate the design and creation of unique, iconic spaces for learning, teaching, exchange, and cultural and spiritual expression* (definition from the Indigenous Placemaking Council).

### 6. Environmental Collaboration

- Trent University is committed to ongoing collaboration with the Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers Council and Consultation Liaisons table in developing ways to monitor and enhance the health of the natural environment, specifically wetlands, and other areas of environmental and cultural heritage.



Throughout the Plan, the Four Directions symbol indicates contributions from Indigenous voices and wisdom.

## PURSUING CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES

An innovative approach to development that highlights and prioritizes the natural environment will allow Trent University's rich natural heritage assets to be preserved, protected, and enhanced, and will allow for valuable and much needed campus and community infrastructure and amenities to be built.

Common themes to guide the evolution of the Symons Campus are listed below:

- 1. Protect, enhance, and restore the natural environment** at Trent to promote biodiversity and a healthy ecosystem. 
- 2. Opportunities to support teaching, learning, and research must be intertwined in all aspects of the campus.** Opportunities to support academic endeavour will be an integral component of projects and initiatives from the outset.
- 3. Advance reconciliation** with inclusion of new spaces for Indigenous teachings and ceremony, and placemaking that showcases Indigenous Traditional Knowledge including new spaces for a traditional teaching lodge, roundhouse, and medicine garden.
- 4. Integrate innovative building and infrastructure technologies** that contribute to an inclusive and thriving campus community and combat climate change.
- 5. Sustainable food and regenerative farming** are areas of emerging strength and present tremendous opportunity for Trent and our society. A secure farm hub is part of the TLNAP vision for the Symons Campus.

