

# Strategic Plan

## 2023-2026



Goal 1: To maintain, protect, and improve the quality and climate resilience of natural spaces and gardens in and surrounding Riverwood.	
Objectives	Strategies
A. To protect and restore the diverse ecosystems, natural features, and wildlife populations of Riverwood and the surrounding area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Continue to work with our community, partners and volunteers to sustain and strengthen core field conservation activities at Riverwood.</li> <li>ii. Identify integral natural features of Riverwood's ecosystems and develop strategies to protect them and build their climate resilience.</li> <li>iii. Develop relationships with Indigenous communities to identify options to improve site management practices.</li> <li>iv. Explore and develop opportunities to engage in conservation/restoration outside of Riverwood.</li> </ul>
B. To design and maintain diverse and engaging gardens, expressing a vision that connects Riverwood with the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Create and/or renovate gardens according to partner, member and public priorities and aspirations.</li> <li>ii. Sustain and improve climate resilience and diversity of the existing gardens in MacEwan Terrace and Chappell House Gardens.</li> <li>iii. Identify areas where the garden volunteer program requires reinforcement or growth and work to implement a sustainable volunteer strategy.</li> </ul>
C. To co-develop a Riverwood Trail Plan with our partners to support The Riverwood Conservancy's programming, The Credit Valley Trail System, and public enjoyment of Riverwood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Work with partners to design and refine wayfinding, safety and signage systems within an integrated Credit Valley Trail System.</li> <li>ii. Prioritize projects that improve, or create new places for participants and the public to safely connect with and enjoy nature.</li> </ul>

**Goal 2: To build connections to and knowledge of nature by delivering educational programming that is open and accessible to everyone.**

Objectives	Strategies
A. To spark wonder and delight by delivering high-quality outdoor education programming that engages children, youth, and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Deliver diverse, high-quality, accessible nature and gardening programming for children and families at Riverwood and beyond.</li> <li>ii. Deliver meaningful and relevant nature programs for students and school communities.</li> <li>iii. Evaluate education programs to assess quality and consistently refine and improve offerings based on evidence.</li> <li>iv. Support youth and student volunteer learning and capacity as effective program leaders, educators, stewards, and gardeners.</li> <li>v. Work with secondary and post-secondary students and researchers to advance shared conservation and research goals.</li> </ul>
B. To engage people in the community by supporting and delivering public and community-oriented educational programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Engage the public in nature and gardening programs at Riverwood and other natural spaces.</li> <li>ii. Develop and refine strategies to engage and educate casual visitors to Riverwood.</li> </ul>
C. To explore and implement innovative strategies that serve the outdoor education needs of people with disabilities and special needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Offer and refine specialized programming for people with disabilities and special needs in accessible spaces at Riverwood.</li> </ul>
D. To respond to the interests of diverse communities, especially Indigenous and newcomer communities, by responsively adapting program offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Work with Indigenous communities to support culturally sensitive, safe and accessible nature discovery or knowledge events and programs at Riverwood or elsewhere along the Credit River.</li> <li>ii. Work with diverse cultural, newcomer and racialized communities to offer culturally sensitive, safe and accessible nature discovery or knowledge events and/or programs.</li> </ul>
E. To refine and expand the utility of gardens and trails as supports for passive and active nature education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Re-visit how gardens and natural areas are planned as spaces that improve education opportunities or outcomes.</li> <li>ii. Work with City of Mississauga and Treaty partners to develop and install signage and other communications to more fully include and honour Indigenous languages and histories at Riverwood.</li> <li>iii. Develop signage, communications and knowledge resources that are relevant and accessible to more Mississauga language communities.</li> </ul>

**Goal 3: To strengthen health and wellbeing by connecting people with nature through recreational, social, and cultural activities.**

Objectives	Strategies
A. To ensure that Riverwood continues to be a place where people come for recreation and to enjoy and connect to nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Ensure that Riverwood continues to feature attractive trails and gardens for visitors to explore.</li> <li>ii. Welcome and engage Riverwood visitors through a Trail Ambassadors program.</li> <li>iii. Improve wayfinding and signage so that visitors have a sense of safety and security on the trails and in the gardens.</li> <li>iv. Work to ensure site usage does not exceed optimal capacity for human enjoyment and conservation goals by coordinating use of outdoor spaces, both internally and with partners.</li> </ul>
B. To engage people in volunteer roles that provide purpose, social connections, and physical activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Engage people as volunteers in a range of activities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardening</li> <li>• Conservation</li> <li>• Educational program support</li> <li>• Admin support</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. Explore new volunteer roles and recruitment strategies that align with current trends and organizational needs.</li> </ul>
C. To work with Indigenous communities to support their goals for wellbeing through programs and ceremonies at Riverwood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Support Indigenous partners to ensure Jingtamok, Full Moon ceremonies, and other programming can be delivered at Riverwood.</li> <li>ii. Seek and develop partnerships to offer land-based health and wellbeing programs relevant to Indigenous people.</li> </ul>
D. To deliver health and well-being programs for youth, seniors, newcomers, and people with disabilities and special needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Seek and develop partnerships to offer programs relevant to diverse or racialized communities in Mississauga.</li> <li>ii. Explore and cultivate partnerships to offer programs relevant to people with disabilities in Mississauga.</li> <li>iii. Develop and deliver outdoor retreat, wellness and mental health activities and events for youth and students.</li> <li>iv. Explore and document connections between mental health, wellbeing, and climate change.</li> <li>v. Continue collaborating with seniors' groups and service providers to engage their members or participants at Riverwood.</li> </ul>
E. To engage people in the arts through outdoor activities or performances at Riverwood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Continue Culture at Riverwood activities.</li> <li>ii. Explore opportunities with VAM to co-host outdoor community arts and culture events or performances.</li> </ul>

Goal 4: To commit to an inclusive and welcoming culture.	
Objectives	Strategies
A. To include more people of diverse ages, abilities, experiences, and identities in The Riverwood Conservancy's governance and operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Investigate and establish frameworks to include youth (young adults), seniors, Indigenous and other cultural communities in Conservancy governance.</li> <li>ii. Training or other capacity development activities for staff, Board, and volunteers or members to build inclusion of Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ+, and diverse cultures of Mississauga.</li> </ul>
B. To foster a strong sense of community amongst volunteers contributing to The Riverwood Conservancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Help volunteers find or build roles within TRC that meet their individual interests, needs and goals.</li> <li>ii. Integrate equity, diversity and inclusion lenses in design and implementation of all volunteer activities or roles.</li> </ul>
C. To maintain The Riverwood Conservancy as an accommodating, inclusive, and welcoming workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Prioritize staff well-being, growth and retention.</li> <li>ii. Practice equitable and transparent staff recruitment.</li> <li>iii. Provide opportunities for and encourage staff external engagement and professional development.</li> </ul>

**Goal 5: To build financial assets, planning, and processes for the resilience and sustainability of The Riverwood Conservancy.**

Objectives	Strategies
A. To retain and enhance core City grant agreements and funding relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Sustain and demonstrate strong value in contributing to the achievement of City objectives.</li> <li>ii. Foster clear communication, strong relationships and shared understandings with City stakeholders.</li> </ul>
B. To enhance and expand fee-for-service offerings and donations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Transition our programming and membership model to generate a higher proportion of revenue from fee for service activities aligned with our mission.</li> <li>ii. Build internal analytical capacity to better support decision-making around fee-for-service programming.</li> <li>iii. Ensure revenue-generating activities do not compromise affordability for participants or the ecological integrity of the site.</li> </ul>
C. To continue the development of an integrated revenue strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Engage a growing community of corporate and foundation partners, focusing on long-term relationship building and multi-year agreements.</li> <li>ii. Develop an integrated and coherent fundraising plan focused on individual donors.</li> <li>iii. Build and maintain partner relationships to fund public access and affordability of programs.</li> <li>iv. Plan for long-term financial resilience through purposeful planning and use of reserve funds.</li> <li>v. Remain attentive and responsive to changing external circumstances in our financial planning and revenue mix.</li> </ul>
D. To support our mission and revenue goals with a comprehensive communications and marketing program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Harness the influence of our Board, Ambassadors and volunteers as key communications assets.</li> <li>ii. Develop communication and marketing products that are engaging and audience-appropriate.</li> <li>iii. Employ digital tools that optimize community outreach.</li> <li>iv. Consider Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our communications and marketing efforts.</li> <li>v. Strengthen the connection between The Riverwood Conservancy and Riverwood Park visitors.</li> </ul>
E. To continue to build and refine governance and planning capacity and functions at The Riverwood Conservancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Refine and improve the Board's governance models, plans and structures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update and advance the goals outlined in key Governance documents.</li> <li>• Develop and refine a responsive and mission-driven ten- year concept plan that gets reviewed by and support from external stakeholders.</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. Build up the pool of Board candidates and the governance-related skills of Directors.</li> <li>iii. Conduct a membership model review and update to support effective governance.</li> </ul>