



# 4 LEGACY LANDSCAPE

**VISION STATEMENT**

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**THE LAND USE  
FRAMEWORK**

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**THE LEGACY PLAN**

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**PLAN ELEMENTS AND  
DIRECTIVES**

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## VISION STATEMENT

The synthesis of the community aspirations, values and ideas gathered through the public engagement process provided clear and consistent messages. That together with the key findings from the background inventory and analysis provided a solid basis for the development of an overall Vision adopted by City Council.

The Garden City Lands located in the City Centre is envisioned as an exceptional open space legacy for residents and visitors.

Visible and accessible from many directions, the Lands are an impressive gateway into Richmond's downtown and a place of transition and transformation from the rural to the urban.

Its rich, diverse and integrated natural and agricultural landscape provides a dynamic setting for learning and exploration.

It is inclusive with a range spaces, amenities and uses that encourage healthy lifestyles, social interaction and a strong sense of shared community pride

## 7 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To guide the future development of Garden City Lands in a manner consistent with the public input and the Vision statement, the following principles were established:

### **ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION**

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Working together with others to achieve a common vision is critical to creating a productive and sustainable legacy for the Lands. Success will be a result of the coordinated efforts and commitment to a vision by many stakeholders.

### **RESPECT AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE**

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Respect the agricultural designation and encourage viable and sustainable agricultural uses that benefit the community. Find creative and innovative ways to allow for a full range of other permitted uses on the Lands while ensuring agricultural viability. Applying *agro-ecology* sustainability principles will ensure the careful and thoughtful integration of ecology, wildlife, culture, economics, and society with agricultural production.

### **STRIVE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

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The conservation and restoration of the higher ecological value bog areas and the unique bog plants and wildlife represents a green legacy for future generations to enjoy and learn from. Managing the existing biodiversity of the site and enhancing the wetland ecology will increase the ecosystem or natural services that the Garden City Lands provide and position the City well for climate change resiliency. Green

infrastructure such as stormwater detention ponds can also add biodiversity to the site and provide recreational and aesthetic benefits. In addition to looking at the environmental values of the site itself, there is an opportunity to develop strong ecological connections with the surrounding areas.

### **PROMOTE COMMUNITY WELLNESS AND ACTIVE LIVING**

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Well designed and placed amenities and infrastructure will foster access to year round activities and provide people with access to enjoy the fresh air, open skies, views and the changing seasons. Innovative programs and creative interpretation features will encourage ongoing discovery and learning. The amenities and infrastructure will have a distinct design and character that respects and reflects the unique landscape and history of the lands. This will be a place of social interaction and community cohesiveness where new memories and traditions will be created.

### **MAXIMIZE CONNECTIVITY AND INTEGRATION**

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There will be seamless connection and integration with the surrounding urban, natural and rural landscapes through physical, visual and ecological links and networks. Recreation, ecological areas, and agriculture functions on the site will be integrated in a way that is respectful and beneficial. A culture of walking and cycling will be promoted. Access from the surrounding neighborhoods will be safe, comfortable, and clearly delineated.

### **ALLOW FOR DYNAMIC AND FLEXIBLE SPACES**

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Spaces will be dynamic and able to adapt- expand or contract- depending upon seasons, community interests and needs over the years, new innovative programs and cultural opportunities. The Lands will allow for a range of experiences - quiet spots for serenity and contemplation to areas that encourage vibrancy and excitement through community celebrations, performances, inspiring and engaging programs, and social interactions. Carefully and strategically placed permanent and/or temporary art/landscape installations will add another layer of interest to the Lands and help create a distinct character.

### **DEVELOP SCIENCE-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS**

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Natural processes are complex and evolve over time. The bog environment is very sensitive to changes in soil conditions and relies on a strictly maintained hydrology regime. The potential enhancement of the current seasonal wetland areas to permanent water features will need to be carefully considered. An integrated eco-systems approach will be applied to short term and long term enhancement projects. Changes to the land will require ongoing monitoring and research. The lifecycle of physical infrastructure will also be considered in planning, design and construction of amenities.

## LAND USE FRAMEWORK

In 2007, City Council endorsed three major themes in thinking about potential uses and amenities for Garden City Lands – Urban Agriculture, Community Wellness and Enabling Healthy Lifestyles, and Environmental Sustainability. At that time only 65 acres of land were being considered for public open space. Since then, the City has acquired the whole 136.5 acre parcel and is working within the Agricultural Land Reserve designation.

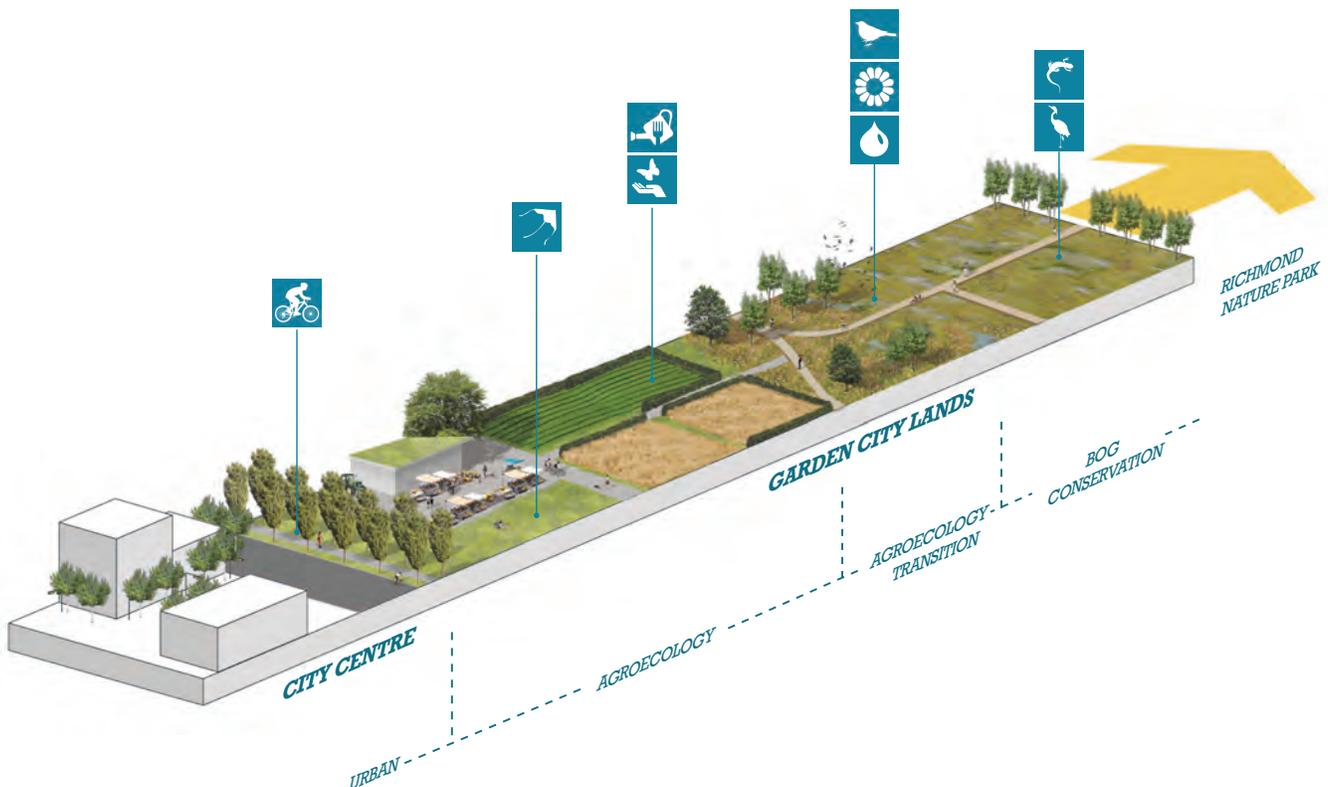
As part of the 2013 planning process, these themes were reviewed to determine if they were still relevant, how they would be applied, and if there was something missing.

The background technical review and the community input have shown that the land use themes are still relevant and, in addition, a fourth theme of Cultural Landscapes-Placemaking has been added that considers Garden City Lands location within the urban City Centre. The theme names have been slightly modified to create clarity for the Land Use Framework.

## LAND USE GRADATION

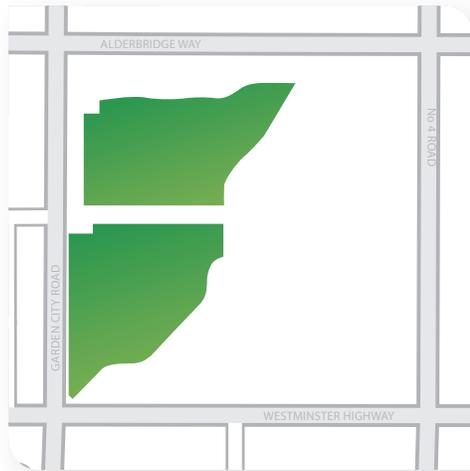
Situated on the eastern edge of the city centre, Garden City Lands is bordered by dense residential and commercial uses on three sides and naturalized lands to the east.

The Garden City Lands will blend those urban, rural, and natural land use typologies through a gradual and complementary gradation over the site.



# OVERALL LAND USE MAPPING

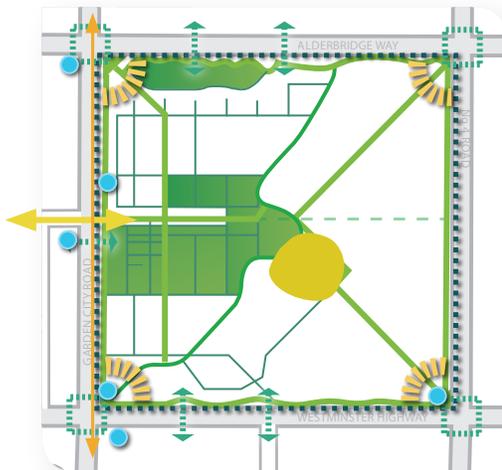
1 URBAN AGRICULTURE



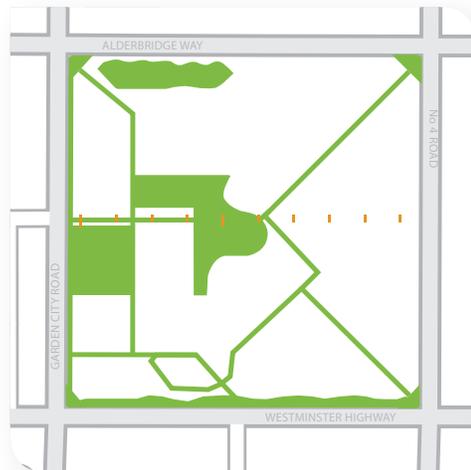
2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



3 COMMUNITY WELLNESS & ACTIVE LIVING



4 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE



**MULTI-FUNCTIONAL  
LANDSCAPE**





## 1. URBAN AGRICULTURE

### INTENT

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The intent is to demonstrate that agriculture can be a successfully integrated into the urban and ecological fabric of the City.

All of Garden City Lands is within the Agricultural Land Reserve and has the potential with active management to be farmed. However, through the process of the background research and listening to the community, it has been determined that there are many values inherent in the Lands as well as within the community.

The Legacy Landscape Plan proposes an integration and balance of uses that would allow for the cultivation of up to a maximum of 50 acres of land with a focus on smaller more intensely farmed plots.

### OUTCOME

A showcase for innovative and sustainable agricultural practices with community benefits within a public park setting.

## 2. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### INTENT

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The intent is to protect and enhance the significant natural resources of the Lands and showcase that ecological values can be creatively and successfully integrated with the other site program elements.

Garden City Lands is valued for its visible diversity of plant communities, wildlife habitat, the 'unseen' ecological functions and services that a bog environment provides, and its role as part of a significant Ecological Network Hub.

Nature conservation is an acceptable use within the Agricultural Land Reserve. The Legacy Landscape Plan proposes that approximately 70 acres of the site be dedicated as a natural environment with an emphasis on taking an ecological approach and integration with other proposed uses.

### OUTCOME

A highly valued, biologically diverse and resilient natural environment that reflects the inherent ecology of the Lands and is a vital contribution to the City's overall Ecological Network and community health.



### 3. COMMUNITY WELLNESS AND ACTIVE LIVING

#### INTENT

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The intent is to attract people to the Lands year round and encourage healthy and sustainable lifestyles and build a sense of community through shared experiences.

The Agricultural Land Reserve allows for limited community amenities and infrastructure. The Legacy Landscape proposes finding innovative solutions to provide amenities that stretch beyond the conventional allowed uses while still protecting and adding value to the ALR mandate.

While the whole site provides community benefit, approximately 15 acres are for flexible community use integrated with natural and agriculture features.

#### OUTCOME

An accessible, safe and appealing public open space that promotes healthy lifestyles and community cohesiveness through a unique richness of adaptable social, environmental, agricultural and recreational amenities and programs.

### 4. CULTURAL LANDSCAPE /PLACE-MAKING

#### INTENT

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The intent is to create a 'Great Place', an awe inspiring and evocative landscape that attracts residents and visitors and celebrates the existing rich uniqueness of the Lands.

In themselves, the Lands are attractive with the open sky and the large expanse of a green landscape. As the Lands begin to be developed for public access and use within its sensitive environment, there is an opportunity to provide a layer of interpretation, community vibrancy and heighten the aesthetic pleasure and delight in the site.

Place-making - adding character and meaning to a place- will occur throughout the site and be integrated as opportunities arise.

#### OUTCOME

A rich and vibrant place with a distinct identity that reflects and highlights the unique characteristics of the site and generates fond memories, community pride, and a deep appreciation of the agricultural and ecological values of the Lands.

## THE LEGACY LANDSCAPE PLAN

Throughout the public planning process, a sense of awe and intrigue was expressed as people became aware of the Lands, that it is owned by the City, and that it is intended for community use. The vision of a legacy landscape that future generations would be able to enjoy was often cited at the open houses.

The proposed Legacy Landscape Plan has been designed to respond to the existing knowledge of the site, the community input, the vision statement adopted by Council and the land use framework.

The plan features seven (7) Landscape Zones with over thirty-four (34) proposed Program Elements. These key zones include:

### The Bog

The existing raised remnant peat bog area and its critical plant species in the eastern half of the site will be protected as a natural area. Raised boardwalks, lookouts and interpretation areas will be designed and located in a manner that works with the ecological integrity of the site. Raised earth dikes with trails will be considered as a bog conservation strategy.

### The Mound

The existing raised mound along the north edge provides excellent views over the Lands. It will be a flexible space for neighbourhood and community uses with seating and picnicking, pathways, open grass meadow areas, fruit and woodlot trees. Dense planting of trees along Alderbridge Way will create a buffer and backdrop to the Lands. If required this flexible space could be farmed in the future.

### The Community Hub

This will be a multi-functional community gathering area located along Garden City Road at the terminus of Lansdowne Road. It will be the primary entrance into the Lands and contain special features that will also thematically connect it to Lansdowne Road, a future vibrant ceremonial street. It will be comprised of flexible gathering and festival spaces, stormwater features, play elements, community and demonstration gardens, and a cluster of buildings that will serve community, educational, and agricultural needs.

### The Fields

Agricultural fields are located predominately in the central and western part of the site and will allow for the cultivation of crops, horticultural plants, tree nursery, art crops and flex-fields. Flex-fields are intended to be flexible and adapt to community needs over time. All fields will be on a grid system and allow for a variety of scales of farming. Multi-use public paths will criss-cross the area. Crops, special plantings, hedgerows, drainage canals, and fences will provide interest to the site.

## The Sanctuary

This is located near the centre of the site, where traffic noise is diminished, providing a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of the surrounding urban context. This is also an ecologically important and sensitive area within the bog environment with a large patch of moss that relies on the high water tables of the bog. Boardwalks, resting areas and interpretation lookouts will be constructed around critical plant habitat.

## The Wetlands

A wetland area will be created along the south edge of the Lands, allowing for year round standing water to serve as wildlife habitat, an aesthetic recreational amenity and as potential storm water retention and filtering ponds. This area will be used to help regulate water levels to protect the bog environment and potentially be a water source for irrigation.

## The Edges

The edges of the Lands highlight the site as an entryway into the City Centre and provide a welcome to visitors. The Garden City Road edge will be designed as a significant greenway that is part of the regional and city cycling network. The existing No. 4 Road sidewalk will be reconfigured to allow for parking pullouts. All of the perimeter trails will provide for off-street walking and cycling and ensure safe connections to surrounding areas.

## CONSIDERATIONS

It should be noted that the concept plan is an illustrative sketch of how the vision, the land use framework and the program elements could be implemented on the Lands. The exact layout of fields; location and size of a community hub; driveways and cross-walks; the protected edge of the bog and watercourses will only be determined once detailed hydrology and critical habitat research is completed in the next phase.

The Plan proposes some uses that will require Agricultural Land Commission approval. The goal is to create a multi-functional and mutually beneficial landscape that celebrates many users and uses on the site within the intent of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

## A LONG TERM PERSPECTIVE

As the City moves forward with implementing the Legacy Landscape Plan, there are four key things to be considered:

**It is a long term vision** – Garden City Lands is unique in its size, City Centre location and site features. The Lands will be for future generations to enjoy and to actively participate in how it unfolds and is programmed over the years.

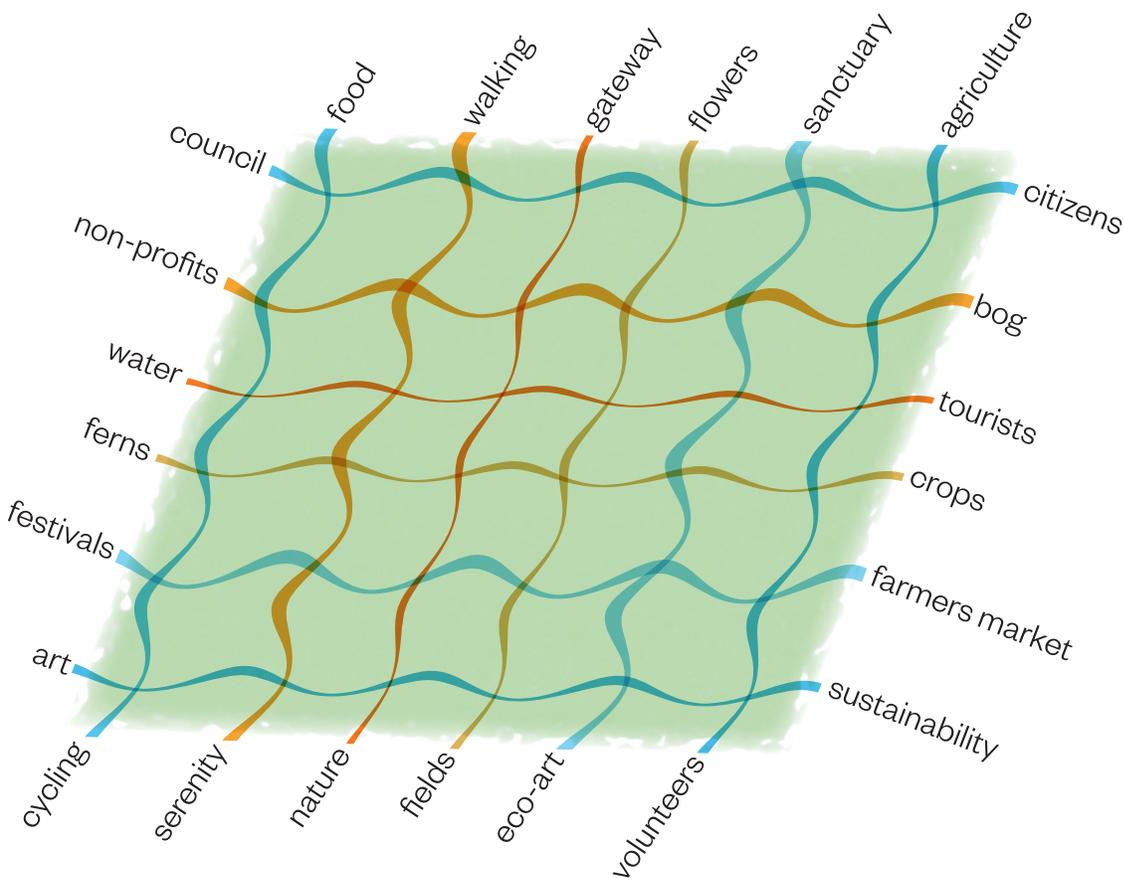
**It has to be adaptable and flexible** – A long term perspective that keeps true to the Vision and Guiding Principles, allows for a plan to be flexible and adapt to changes. For instance, “What are best practices of the future? What will our community needs be? What will agriculture look like in the future? How will climate change impact our environment?”

**It will require an ongoing relationship with Agricultural Land Commission** – An overall Concept Plan for Garden City Lands will help the ALC understand the rationale and relationship between different site elements that may ‘push the envelope’ while respecting the ALR. Finding the right balance of amenities and programs that best serves the community will require ongoing discussion.

**Tread lightly and develop slowly.** Nature is a complex system. A Concept Plan will provide a framework for development of the Lands by identifying the different land use areas. However, understanding the hydrology regime is critical and requires constant monitoring.

## A LIVING TAPESTRY

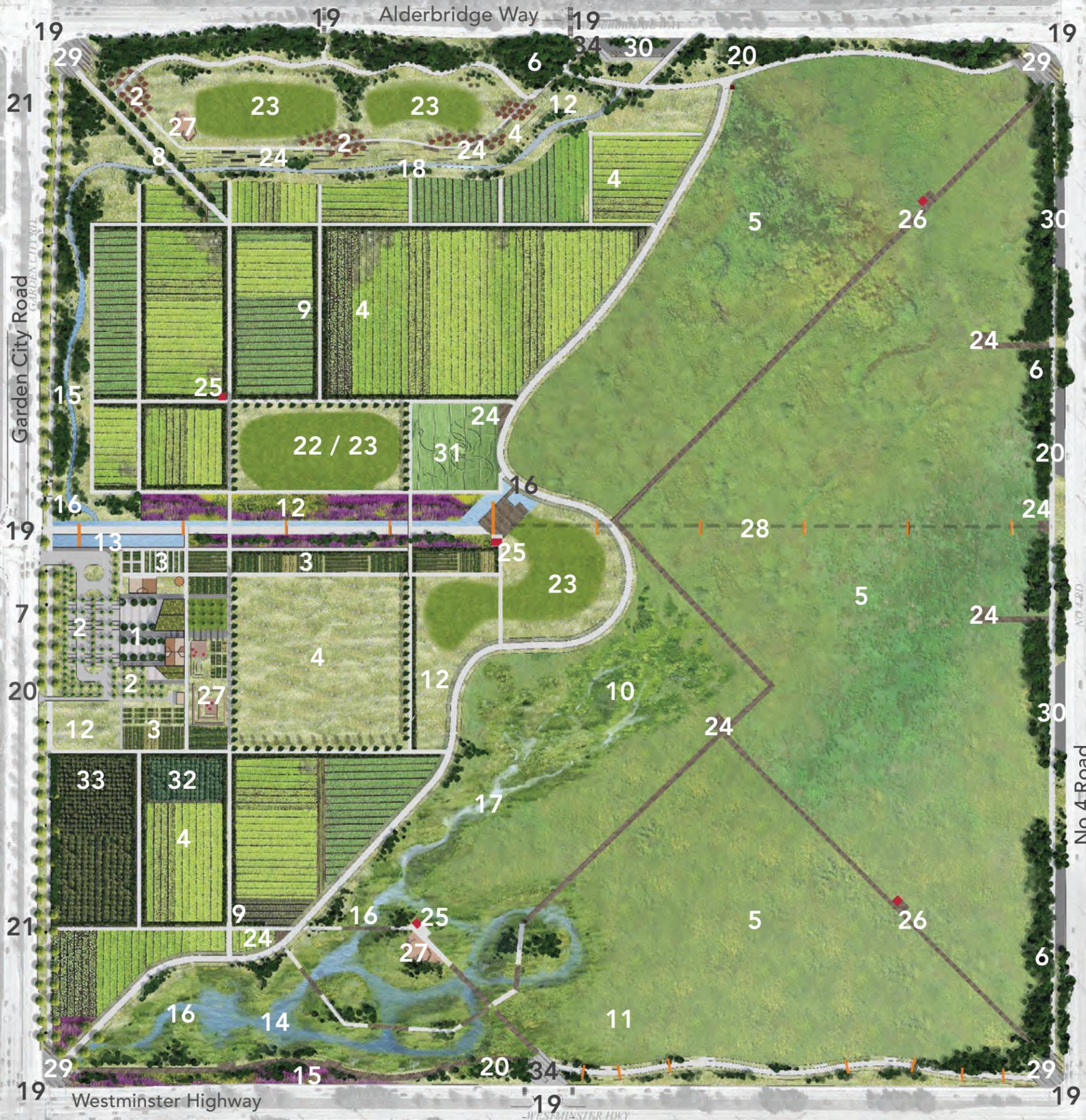
There are many things to consider and many influences on how the Garden City Lands Legacy Landscape Plan will unfold in the future. To use the metaphor of a living tapestry suggests that all these influences are like threads that will weave together to create something spectacular. It will be a living and changing tapestry as new threads- people, ideas, nature- are woven into the landscape over time.



## LANDSCAPE ZONES

- The Bog
- The Mound
- The Fields
- The Sanctuary
- The Wetland
- The Community Hub & Farm Centre
- The Edges





## LEGEND

1. Multi-functional Buildings and Parking
2. Orchard
3. Community and Demonstration Gardens
4. Agricultural Fields
5. Bog Conservation Area
6. Successional Growth at Disturbed Edges
7. Street Trees
8. Entry Allee
9. Hedgerows and Waterways
10. Sphagnum Moss Sanctuary
11. Enhanced Fern Forest
12. Pollinator Meadows
13. Garden City Lands Main Entrance and Lansdowne Terminus Water Feature
14. Expanded Wetland
15. Existing Storm Water Channel
16. Water Retention & Control Point
17. Bog Watercourse
18. Filtration Channel
19. Crosswalk
20. Perimeter Trail
21. Garden City Shared Use Greenway
22. Event Field
23. Flex Field
24. Viewing Platform
25. Viewing Towers
26. Communication Tower Sculptures
27. Informal play
28. Historic Rifle Range Markers & Potential Future Path
29. Gateway Plaza with Interpretative Art
30. Perimeter Parking
31. Art Field
32. Arts and Craft Fibre Production
33. Tree Nursery
34. Entry Plaza



VIEWING PLATFORM LOOKING WEST



PERIMETER TRAIL ALONG WESTMINSTER HIGHWAY

