

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **The Meadoway - creating an active greenspace connection between downtown Toronto and Rouge National Urban Park**

***16 Kilometres of hydro corridor to be transformed into one of  
Canada's largest urban linear parks***

**APRIL 11, 2018 (SCARBOROUGH)** —Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, and the City of Toronto jointly announced today a ground-breaking city-building initiative to transform 16 kilometres of under-utilized land into one of Canada's largest urban linear parks. The Meadoway will create stronger communities through nature and build a new vision for urban greenspaces.

Stretching from the Don River Ravine in downtown Toronto to Rouge National Urban Park, The Meadoway will become a vibrant expanse of urban greenspace and meadowlands as it develops over the next seven years. It will connect four ravines, 15 parks, 34 neighbourhoods, over 200 hectares (500 acres) and more than 1,000 diverse species of flora and fauna. The Meadoway will connect schools, businesses, hospitals and underused parks and trails across Scarborough. Visitors and locals alike will be able to explore nature, grow their own food, go for a bike ride, birdwatch, or volunteer with their friends. The possibilities will continue to evolve and take shape through input and collaboration with community members.

"The Meadoway is the kind of community building project we're thrilled to be a part of," said John MacKenzie, CEO, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. "By taking an under-utilized infrastructure corridor and revitalizing it with plantings and new connections to the rest of the region, including Rouge National Urban Park, we are creating benefits for our natural world and the communities around The Meadoway. It truly is an innovative and remarkable conservation initiative."

With a proposed total budget of \$85 million, nearly 40% of that budget has been pledged to date. The W. Garfield Weston Foundation has pledged up to \$25 million in support for the project as it evolves over the coming months, with a firm commitment of \$10 million today.

"As Canada's cities continue to grow, we need to develop smarter ways to bring nature back into our neighbourhoods and our lives," said Tamara Rebanks, Chair of the Conservation Committee, The W. Garfield Weston Foundation. "The Meadoway will be a catalyst for building a new kind of city park for Canada."

The City of Toronto has committed \$6.3 million in its Capital Budget and Plan for infrastructure investments that will help to realize the shared vision for The Meadoway by supporting the trail and cycling infrastructure, and will continue its responsibilities for ongoing operations and maintenance in the corridor.

"The Meadoway will create a transformative public space in the heart of Scarborough that will connect our communities and draw visitors from across the City and beyond," said Mayor John Tory. "It is another example of

what can be accomplished when we work with public, private and philanthropic partners to introduce innovative new public spaces for our residents to enjoy and which contribute to the ongoing vibrancy of our City.”

The Meadowway will provide necessary east-west connections to the well-established north-south ravine systems in Toronto, while connecting greenspaces across the east end of the GTA. The east-west connections are necessary to re-establish a connected natural system that is vital to the future of sustainable city building in the Toronto region.

With a focus on inclusivity, residents from surrounding neighbourhoods are invited to make The Meadowway their own. The Living City Foundation, which builds support for the work of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, will be launching an engagement program enabling people in the community to direct and oversee their activities in The Meadowway. Everyone is invited to learn more about the next steps for implementing The Meadowway by visiting [www.themeadowway.ca](http://www.themeadowway.ca) and signing up on the site to receive email updates and learn about upcoming community participation opportunities.

#### **NOTE: FOR EDITORS**

#### **About Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and The Living City Foundation**

With more than 60 years of experience, TRCA is one of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario. Working with municipalities and other partners to manage the watersheds of the Toronto region and its Lake Ontario waterfront, it helps people understand, enjoy and look after the natural environment. TRCA’s vision is for The Living City®, where human settlement can flourish forever as part of nature’s beauty and diversity.

The Living City Foundation is a champion for greener, cleaner, healthier cities. It helps fund and build support for the work of Canada’s largest conservation authority – TRCA. Through the generosity of donors, The Living City Foundation invests in vital TRCA projects and programs that protect our environment and make our communities thrive.

#### **About The W. Garfield Weston Foundation**

For three generations, The W. Garfield Weston Foundation has pursued its mission to enhance and enrich the lives of Canadians. With a focus on medical research, the environment, and education, the Foundation aims to catalyze inquiry and innovation to bring about long-term change. As the Foundation marks its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it continues to collaborate with a broad range of Canadian charities to further world-class research, explore new ideas, and create tangible benefits for the communities in which it works.

In 2013, the Foundation launched the Weston Family Parks Challenge with a \$5 million contribution to urban parks initiatives in the Toronto region. The purpose of this three-year program was to enhance Toronto’s greenspaces, involve communities in the revitalization of natural areas, and encourage private-public partnerships for the long-term sustainability of Toronto’s parks. The Meadowway was one project that sprung from the Weston Family Parks Challenge.

#### **For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:**

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