

# Trail Maintenance and Development

Chris Reckhard, Presenting for EMBA

June 9, 2025







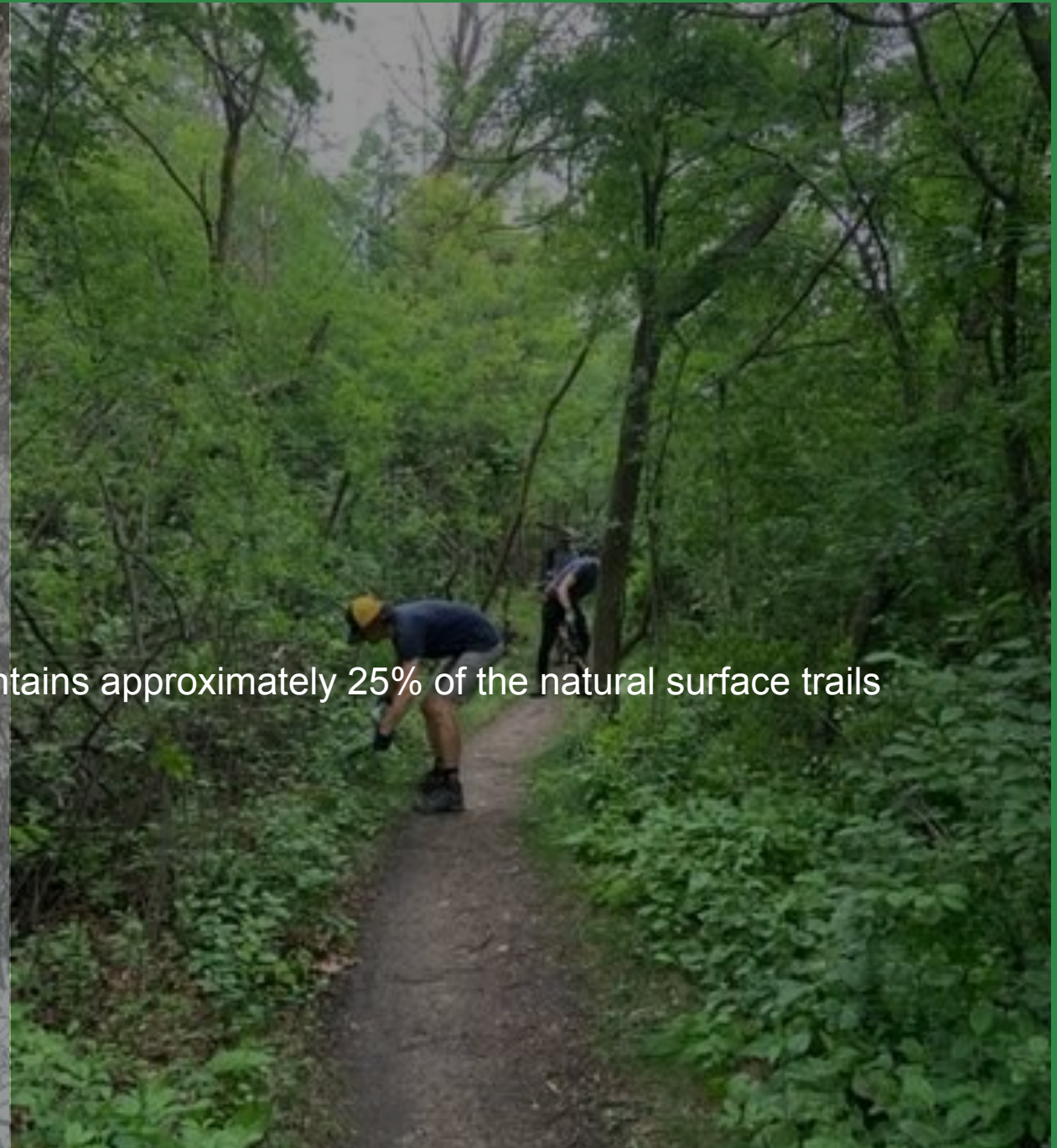
# EMBA

Volunteer run non-profit organization

Working under an agreement with the city EMBA maintains approximately 25% of the natural surface trails in the river valley for all users.

Since 2016

- >6000 volunteer hours
- 250 trail days
- 250 dead fall removed





# Trail System Maintenance and Development



**Adoption of existing trails**



**Rerouting existing trails to be more sustainable**



**Constructing new trails to improve connectivity**

Focus on areas where users are already starting goat trails.



### Why is it important to limit trail density?

Recreation trails can cause negative ecological impacts to ecosystems, plants, and wildlife, including soil compaction, erosion, wildlife disturbance (due to noise and motion), pollution, and introduction of non-native invasive plant species. Corridors such as trails and roads also cause habitat fragmentation, which may impact some plant and animal species. Limiting the number of trails within an area, or reducing trail density, as well as avoiding environmentally sensitive areas can mitigate some of these impacts.

# Ribbon of Green

Formalizing the existing trail system under the RoG is very restricted

The RoG is heavily focused on protection, limiting access, and reducing trail density.

EG- Management system (page 57)

c) If current or projected human use of trails, facilities, and amenity nodes is greater than anticipated, consider:

- ✦ Altering the site (closing trails/ moving facilities)
- ✦ Re-defining the use for less impact
- ✦ Implementing protection measures
- ✦ Adding educational and informational signage

VALUATION



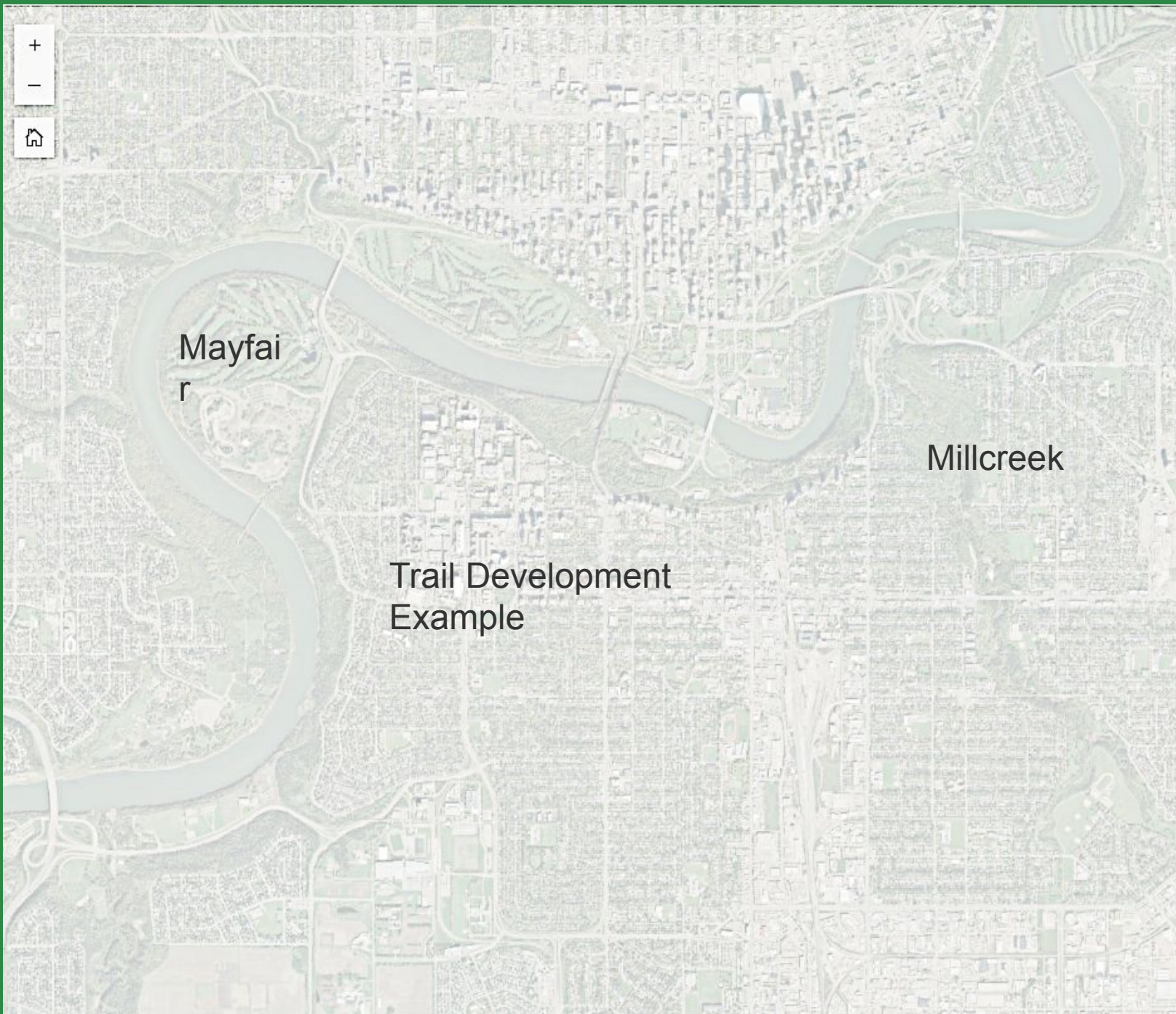
# Impact of RoG on Trail Adoption and Development

---

THE NEXT FEW SLIDES SHOW THE IMPACT THE RIBBON OF GREEN HAS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TRAIL NETWORK.





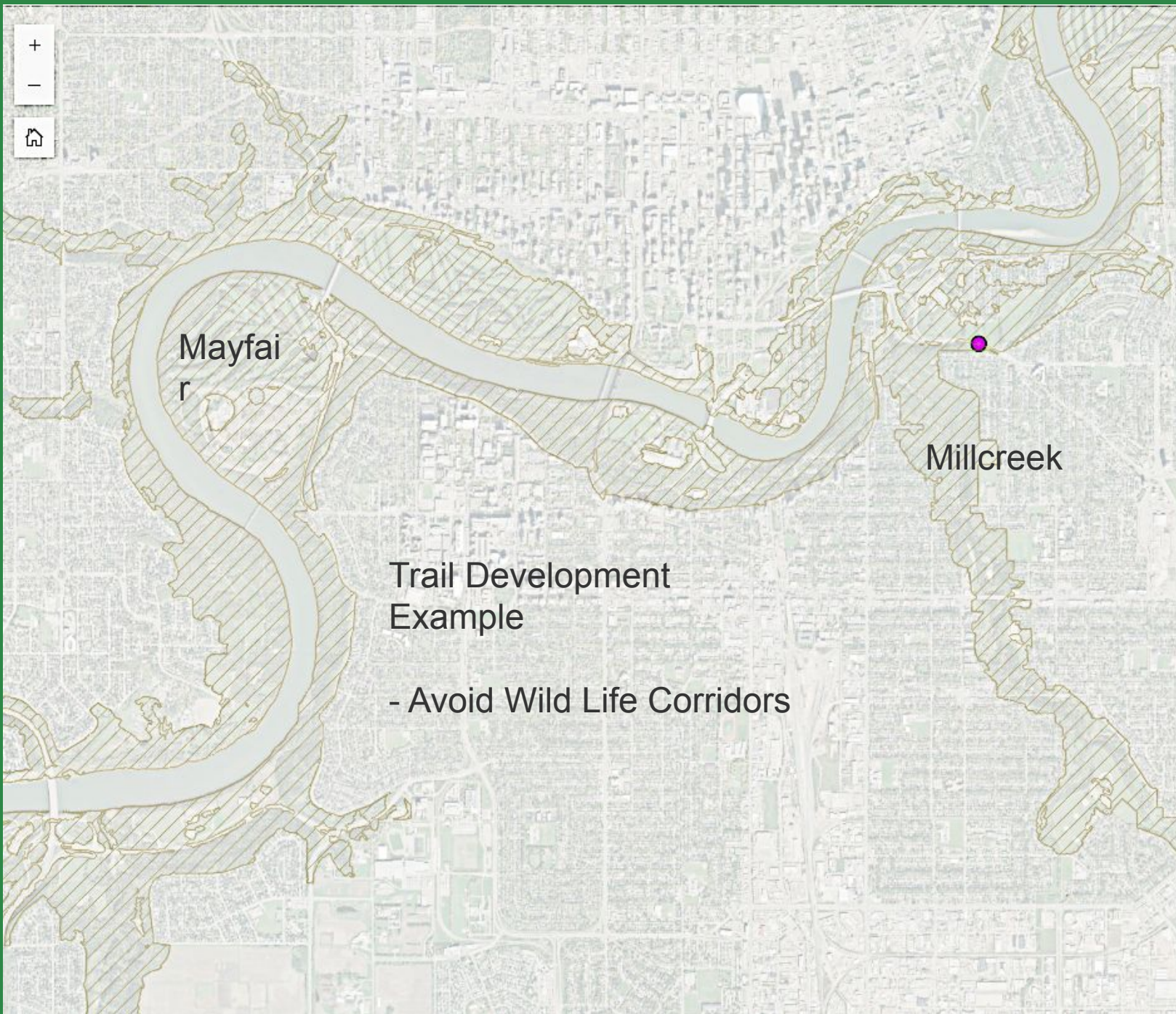


Mayfair

Millcreek

Trail Development  
Example





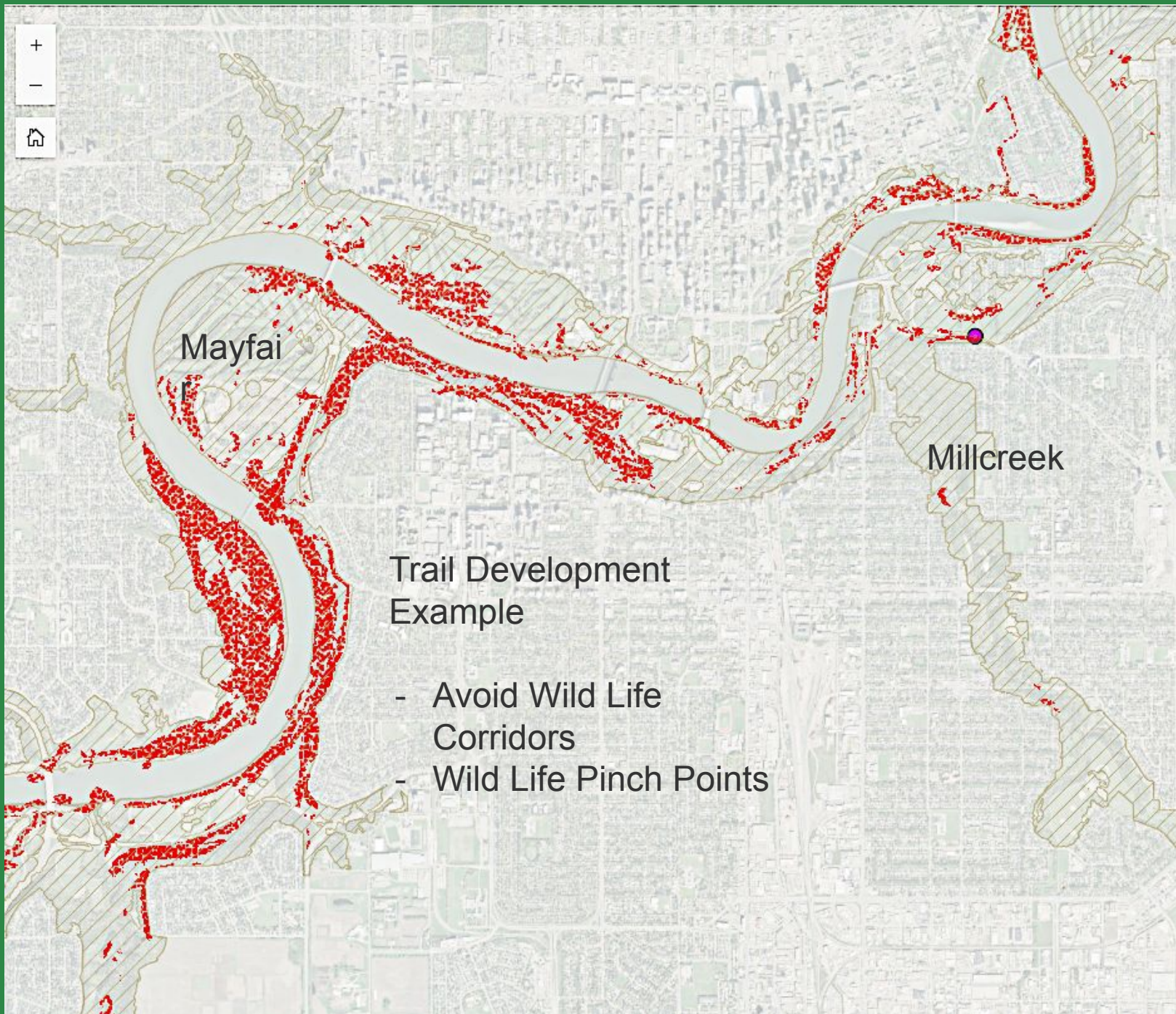
Mayfair

Millcreek

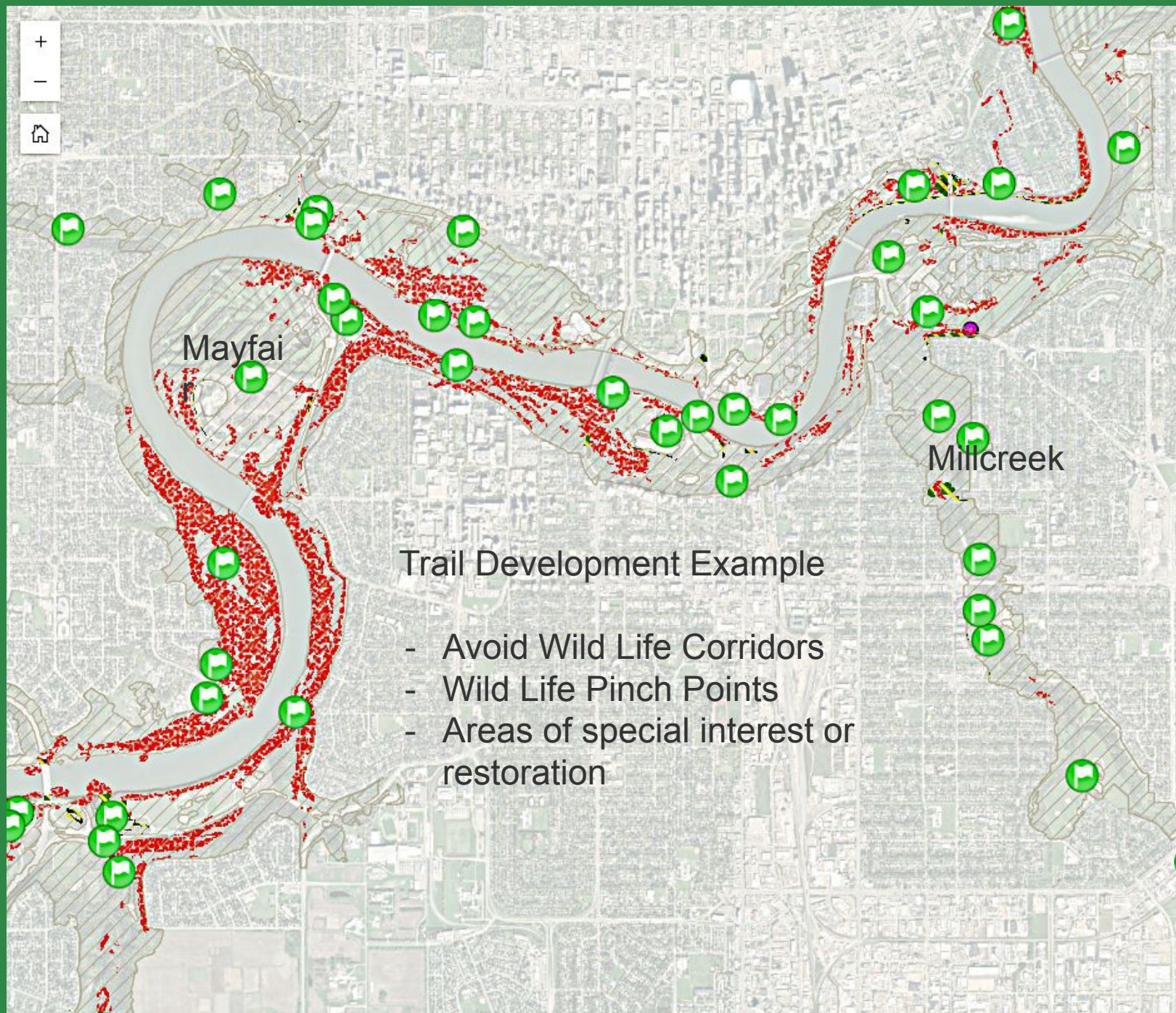
Trail Development  
Example

- Avoid Wild Life Corridors

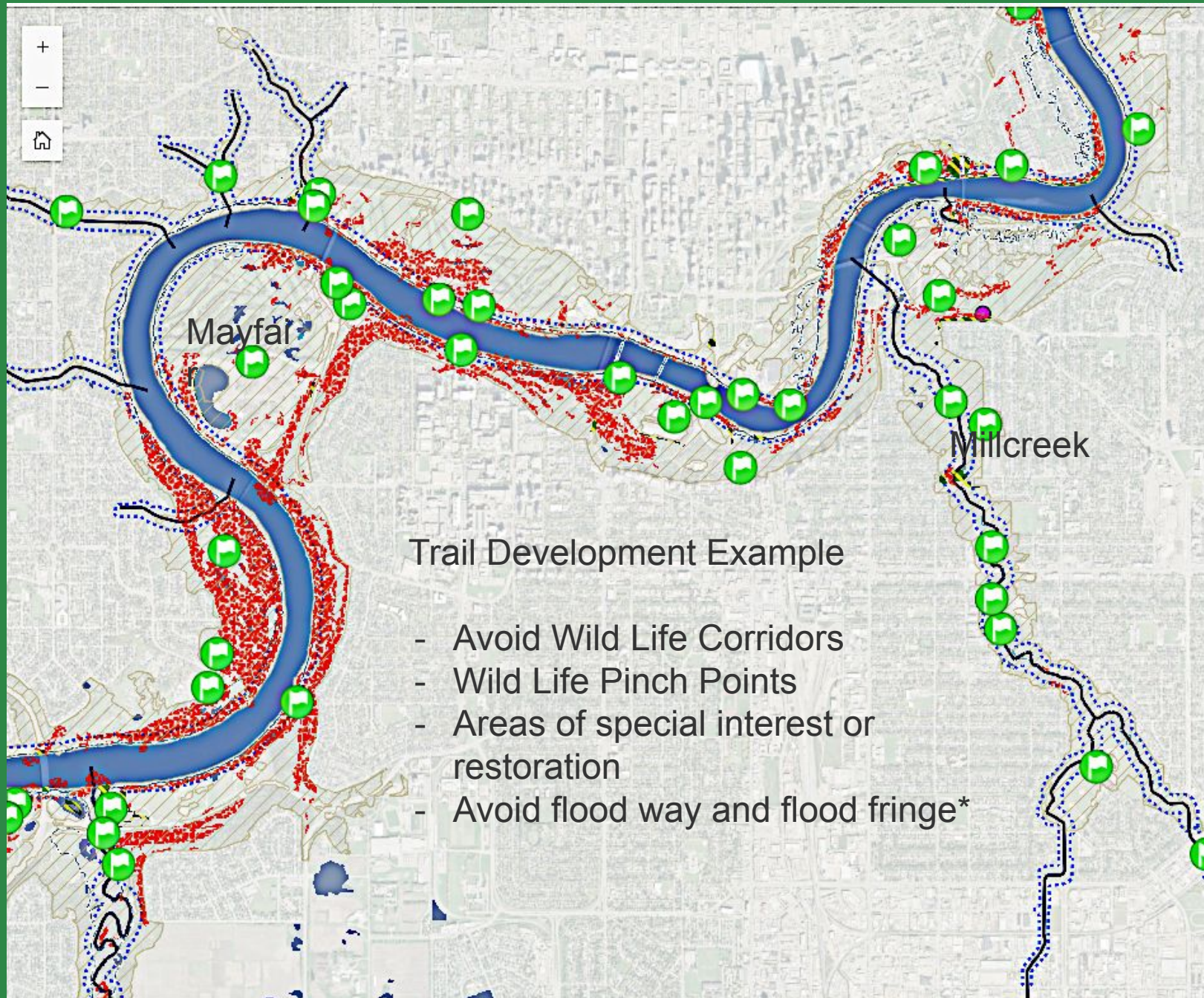




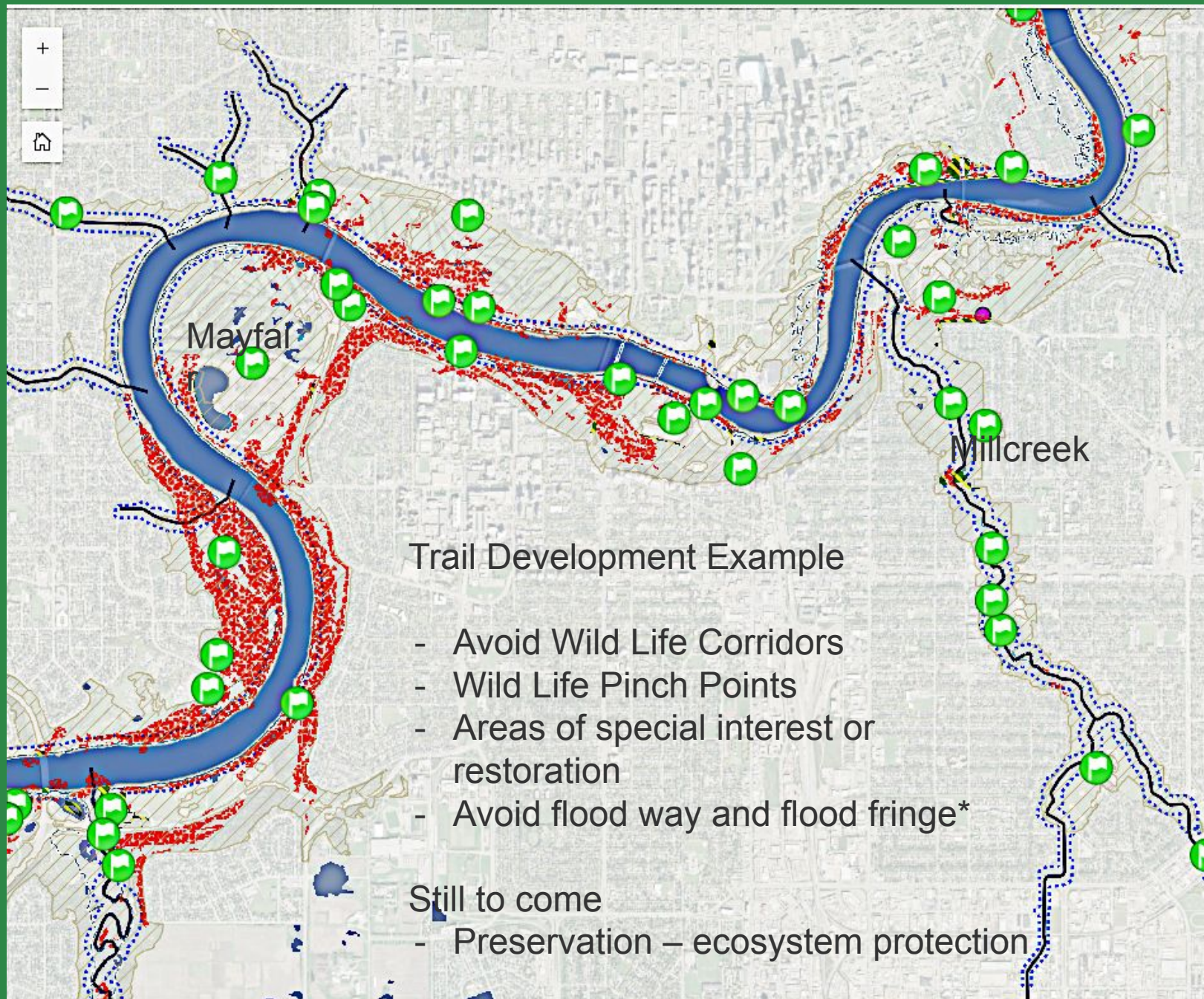






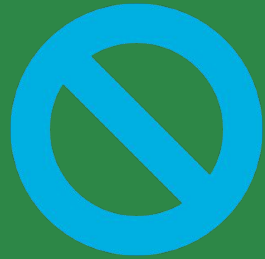








# Defining a Trail Network



## **With the current documented limitations:**

All new trail applications/reroutes over the last 4 years have been rejected.

70% of our trail adoption requests over the last 4 years have been rejected.



**Recall that 95% of these trails exist and are being used already.**



A map of Edmonton, Alberta, showing the city's layout with major roads like Highway 16, 16A, 2, 14, and 100. The city name 'Edmonton' is centered. Overlaid on the map are numerous colored lines representing trails: a dense network of red lines in the south-central area, blue lines following the river valley, and purple lines in the north and west. The map also shows some green spaces and water bodies.

## Trail events in the River Valley for 2025

# Next Trails to be Adopted

>15 events scheduled for 2025 that use the natural surface trail system.

3000 participants

- 170km of trail used (some duplication).
- Some are races, some are charity events, all use the trails.
- EMBA currently maintains about 50% of these trails.

**•NOTE THAT THE ROG CURRENTLY PROHIBITS EVENTS THAT RESTRICT ACCESS TO TRAILS SO SOME OF THESE EVENTS MAY BE IMPACTED**



# Conclusion

Most trail users strongly support protection and conservation BUT they do want to continue using the natural surface trails that exist today.



The current draft of the RoG is focused on limiting/reducing the trail system to protect the ecosystems.



# Our hope. Our ask.



**Our hope is that the Ribbon of Green will lean into a more balanced approach that favors access and recreation**



**Let us maintain more trails starting with the trails used for organized events.**