



green CORRIDOR

INDIAN ROAD
GREEN SPACE PROPOSAL



www.GRENCORRIDOR.ca

The Green Corridor is a groundbreaking initiative for generating a green redevelopment of the international bridge corridor linking Canada to the United States. As a gateway to the City of Windsor, the corridor presents opportunities to involve local communities in transforming their environment. The initiative harnesses the capacity of interdisciplinary and multi-institutional collaboration and includes a team of environmentalists, science and engineering researchers, artists, politicians, city planners, educators, and community residents. The Green Corridor is a pro-active commitment of all community partners and stakeholders toward celebrating a 'showcase' of sustainable urban design as an international gateway.

In the Spring of 2007 the Ambassador Bridge Company donated funds to the University of Windsor to allow the Green Corridor to conceptualize opportunities as a 'Vision Study' for the green development of the Ambassador Bridge properties adjacent to the current customs booth expansion. Our exploration and research was pervasive resulting in a 1/200 scale model illustrating the 'Vision' with associated display panels illustrating a template of green space opportunities shadowing the Ambassador Bridge.

"A community's identity and civic pride is rooted in the physical and cultural links to its past."

- City of Windsor Heritage Planning

"Managing land use activities for a healthy, and sustainable environment is integral to improving the quality of life within a community."

- City of Windsor Environmental Planning

GREEN SPACE STUDY AREA





GREEN CORRIDOR

AMBASSADOR BRIDGE PLAZA GREEN SPACE

“Improving upon this streetscape, and thus **improving the legibility** of the **study area as a place**, is one of the greatest **opportunities** that exist for the study area today.” *

The community that surrounds the Ambassador Bridge has been an important part of Windsor’s heritage for generations. The numerous historical buildings, streets, neighbourhoods and parks are currently known to be vital to the cultural preservation of the area’s English, French, African American and Aboriginal heritage and should therefore be emphasized through a variety of initiatives. The opportunity to highlight this historical significance and cultural heritage of the community is realized through the Green Corridor’s Ambassador Bridge Plaza Green Space Proposal.

Green initiatives that improve the aesthetics, the quality of life and the environment itself will also act as improvements to the community as a whole, preserving existing sites and ameliorating the sense of place within the community. Through a number of specific projects and overall green practices, the Green Corridor’s Ambassador Bridge Plaza Green Space Proposal works towards a model of sustainable design and historical reverence.

As a gateway to the community, the proposed green space and green initiatives will point to the rich history of the area and re-introduce this extraordinary community to the City of Windsor and beyond. While building gateways to the city, this initiative also benefits the immediate community and residents. Educational opportunities, outdoor recreation and activity, public artwork and deferential environmental projects will all enrich the community’s collective life and maintain the neighbourhood’s cultural vitality for generations to come.

The projects illustrated make a collective call to action to support and initiate a sustainable and culturally sensitive green space. The Wetlands Stormwater Remediation filters water from the Ambassador Bridge and the Eco Parking Lot, cleaning stormwater and creating a healthier environment. The Eco Parking Lot offers a new aesthetic and environmental stance on the traditional asphalt parking lot, paved with permeable concrete allowing for water to naturally drain, and surrounded with native plantings.

Urban forests frame the green space, giving the community a new ecological space to enjoy, while also helping to clean the surrounding environment. Public Artwork gives the community a strong sense of place and specific works such as David Acheson’s “First Drop” and Oliver Kellhammer’s “Means of Production: An Eastern Iteration” bring the community together in new and novel ways. Community Enhancements and Green Façades reshape existing community infrastructure and create a refreshed look for Windsor, for local residents and international travelers.

The Green Corridor’s Ambassador Bridge Plaza Green Space Proposal will offer a variety of benefits to all stakeholders in the area. Historical, environmental, aesthetic, economic, and security issues will all be addressed and resolved through the initiatives outlined and illustrated in the model.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS & GREEN FAÇADES

“Visual detractors are those elements that detract from the **overall visual character of a place**. Often they tend to be of a different quality or aesthetic than the surrounding elements, and tend to clutter or detract from the more **pleasing elements in a landscape.**” *



Community enhancements will be made through a variety of green treatments, all of which will make a positive impact towards the preservation of historically significant sites. Green Walls or Green Façades will add to heritage sites' beauty and regard in an environmentally sensitive manner, ensuring sustainability and preservation for future generations within the community.

While currently surrounded by concrete walls, the Assumption Cemetery will benefit from the addition of vegetation and foliage, becoming a striking addition to the site. Vertical green façades will provide a new and respectful sense of place for the cemetery, while also offering visual and noise attenuation from the traffic crossing the Ambassador Bridge. The cemetery, which belongs to Windsor's

oldest Catholic church, Assumption Church, established in 1767, will continue to act as a historical centre point of the community and will be enhanced by the addition of beautiful green walls.

Native planting and vegetation will clean the surrounding environment and visually restore the area, reinforcing this heritage site's importance within the community. As the gravestones of this cemetery document the names of many of the original settlers of this area, growing green façades will re-establish the cemetery as an important historical location to the city of Windsor.

The community and surrounding area will benefit from the added green space, as the walls grow into a re-imagined reverent locale. Living walls will make a significant positive impact on the

local neighbourhoods and city as a whole, helping the environment while respecting the historical, religious and community significance of the Assumption Cemetery.

Greening the walls lining Huron Church and the Customs Plaza will give Windsor a refreshed aesthetic for international travelers as well as local residents. Environmentally, the green façades will reduce the particulate matter in the air and improve overall air quality. Through water remediation techniques, the planting and greening can be irrigated without the need for any further draw from the water system. Any surfaces treated with a green façade will extend benefits into the community and city as a whole.



WETLAND STORMWATER TREATMENT

“Parks and open spaces provide much needed **areas of refuge** within our urban centres. They are the spaces in which nature becomes accessible for urban dwellers, **an island of green within a sea of hard spaces.**” *

Wetlands within an urban space act in a variety of capacities to improve the quality of life within a community. Through a naturalized process of water filtration, stormwater run-off and the Detroit River can be cleansed, making for a cleaner and healthier environment and ecosystem. Stormwater from the Ambassador Bridge, as well as the proposed Canadian Customs and University of Windsor parking lot, will be pumped through the wetlands to purify the water of its contaminants.

Educational opportunities are abundant with the addition of wetlands to the green space. John L. Forster Secondary School is the only secondary school in the Community, enjoying a rich cultural diversity and a close proximity to the proposed wetlands. The opportunity for outdoors science lessons exist and could be held alongside the wetlands working in real-time to remediate stormwater, while an indoor educational facility and control centre for the wetlands exists on the West Side of Indian Road. The possibilities



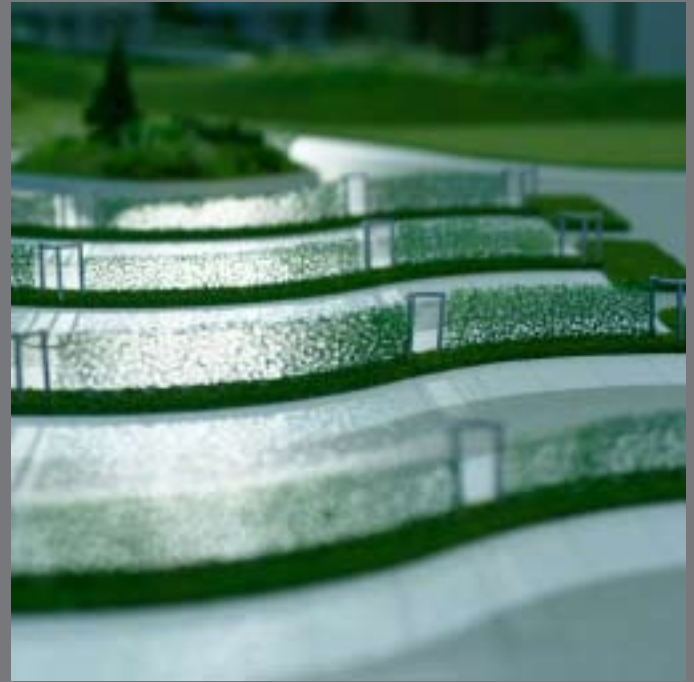
for learning potentials outside of the classroom can be realized and offer a chance for local students to explore and understand their community.

The history of the Huron Aboriginals is an integral part of the community and will be acknowledged within the educational centre, showing the evolution of the Detroit River and surrounding historical communities. The educational prospects of the wetlands stormwater remediation also extend to the University of Windsor and specifically the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research (GLIER), through which water quality and environmental impact studies can take place.

As an educational opportunity and biodiversity-enhancing prospect, the wetlands will also provide an innovative environment within the urban community. The wetlands will operate in a sustainable practice, drawing energy from solar panels that could be mounted on Customs booths to pump water from the various sources, such as the Ambassador Bridge and Eco Parking Lot, through the wetland system. Cleaning the water with sustainable methods will be the primary goal of the wetlands project, while also offering enormous potential for a healthier environment, an educational centre and an innovative historical site.

ECO PARKING LOT

“The materials, surfaces and textures used within a landscape often provide a **strong connective or disjointed element** to it. They can serve to link a streetscape, or to clutter it if there are too many variations within it.” *



As an often over-looked potential for aesthetic treatment and environmental technologies, the Eco Parking Lot will provide a refreshing and innovative take on the traditional asphalt lots. Native planting, green walls, permeable concrete, and stormwater remediation holding tanks work to create a functional and efficient parking lot for Canadian Customs and University of Windsor students.

Trees and vegetation within the parking lot will aid in reducing vehicle temperatures significantly, while also presenting an extended green area. Paving the parking lot with permeable concrete allows for water to drain into underground reserves, while maintaining the strengths and durability of traditional concrete. Water run-off from the parking lot will then be fed into the wetlands, decreasing energy and irrigation costs.

The aesthetics of the Eco Parking Lot are apparent from within the surrounding neighbourhood as well as from the Ambassador Bridge, giving border crossing commuters a chance to see an innovative and welcoming view of Windsor. Berms and earthworks will surround the Eco Parking Lot, acting as a sound barrier for the surrounding green area and community homes, while also enhancing the current landscape. The innovative parking lot layout increases efficiency for finding a parking spot, thereby reducing emissions, simultaneously allowing for more parking spaces than a traditional lot of the same size could provide.

Alternative transportation methods and car pool commuters will be treated with preferred parking spaces, encouraging green travel. Bike paths will offer a direct and exciting route to and from the University of Windsor

main campus, St. Denis Centre and LeBel campus, allowing students to avoid the busy intersection of Huron Church and College Avenue.

The Eco Parking Lot will utilize environmental technologies and green design practices to create a hardscape that is practical and innovative. The surrounding community will benefit from the additional planting, stormwater remediation technology and designated student parking as opposed to along neighbourhood streets. As another aesthetic marker for the Community and city of Windsor, the Eco Parking Lot will utilize current dormant space to provide a welcomed service for its users and neighbours.



PUBLIC ARTWORK

“Streetscape opportunities are not limited to boulevard tree planting but can include providing consistent lighting, signage, furnishings, boulevard treatments, paving improvements such as pedestrian walkways and vehicular crossings. Additional improvements can include banners, **ornamental plantings, interpretive panels and public art.**” *

As a gateway, a landmark, whether functional or aesthetic, a public artwork helps to create a strong sense of place and enhances community members’ lives. Connections with the community heritage and the existing Riverfront Sculpture Garden will be achieved with the realization of public artworks. The history of the community will be evoked through public art for immediate community members, Windsor residents or tourists.

Public artwork will frame the community, aesthetically and communally. Additions to the green space that document or reference the land’s history, elements of the area’s heritage and encourage community visitation, will strengthen the neighbourhood in a variety of instances. Through the open nature of public art, residents will maintain a link to one another and their place within the city. The community and the City of Windsor will benefit from increasing cultural features within its streets and neighbourhoods. Public art will reinforce the community’s historical importance, while also allowing new community-wide connections to be made.

Projects such as David Acheson’s “First Drop” and Oliver Kellhammer’s “Means of Production - Eastern Iteration” will highlight the region’s history and help to ensure a cultural benefit for future generations. “First Drop” is an interactive, self-sustainable and socially responsive, expanding sculptural entity. It is designed to foster the reality of connective, relational existence through the cohesive nature of water. “Means of Production” is a series of neighbourhood scale botanical interventions into damaged urban landscapes, which provide urban greening, raw materials and relational social spaces in marginalized areas.

Through public art, the community can improve its existing quality of life, ensure a culturally enhanced standard of living for its children and make a significant and enriching addition to its important history.



NATIVE PLANTING & URBAN FORESTS

“Mature street trees in the proposed heritage conservation district study area are an essential element of the visual character of the area and are an **integral part of the neighbourhood’s heritage** integrity. In addition to the consistency of the mature and canopied tree lined streets, trees are also essential in **providing a consistent feel to the neighbourhood** by screening and softening the views of incompatible architectural additions to the neighbourhood such as multi-storey residential buildings and townhouse developments.” *

Native Plantings offer a wide range of benefits to the local eco system and community. Plants that are local and native to the area are better adapted for the local climate conditions, indigenous pests and also require less irrigation than non-native plants.

Reclaiming green space within the urban centre will be a vital addition to the community, allowing for a cleaner and healthier environment and a revitalized community area. The historical context of native plants can also be expressed and highlighted, creating a link of native plants to the cultural heritage. The variety of species that are native to the area will compliment existing trees and re-establish other species that have not been in the area for hundreds of years.

Irrigation and preservation of new plantings and urban forests can be achieved through the wetlands and stormwater remediation process. Through the remediation of water from the Eco Parking Lot, Ambassador Bridge and current water reserves in the Canadian Customs Plaza, the green area will be able to make an aesthetic and environmental impact without having to rely on or draw more resources from the existing city water system.

Urban forests help to improve the air quality and overall environmental health of the surrounding community. In addition to improvements in health, having a naturalized space within the neighbourhood to enjoy throughout the seasons enhances quality of life.

Existing mature trees will be preserved, remaining as historical references to the neighbourhood and its residents from decades past. New plantings will ensure a healthy forest for future generations and a new chapter in the community’s natural heritage.

The visual impact of large areas of trees within neighbourhoods can invigorate a sense of community pride and make a positive environmental impact at the same time. Air quality and the local ecological conditions will improve, encouraging the ecosystem to flourish once again.

OVERVIEW IMAGES



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3

- 1 - Wetlands Stormwater Remediation
- 2 - Eco Parking Lot (looking North)
- 3 - Green Gateway Opportunity
- 4 - Bike Paths & Berms (looking South)



4

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GREEN CORRIDOR

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Little River Enhancement Group
Canadian Auto Workers:
Local 444 & Local 200 Environmental Committees
Art Gallery of Windsor
Enwin Utilities
The Ambassador Bridge Company

