

Facts at a Glance: Introduction to Landscape Development in the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway Corridor

During the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study, the community was consulted on what they wanted to see included in the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway's (the Parkway) green space. The community selected a Carolinian Canada theme with a focus on Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savannah. The Carolinian life zone is Canada's most diverse and most threatened ecosystem. The international importance of the Parkway together with its urban location and unique ecological context call for strong design principles. The following *Facts at a Glance* provide an overview of landscape development in the Parkway corridor.

Design Principles

The Landscape Plan for the Parkway is based on five key design principles: unified, green, connection, integration, and gateway.

- Unified: The open spaces associated with the Parkway are considered as a unified whole. These spaces are planned to function in an integrated manner and to present a unified aesthetic and visual environment for both drivers and community users.
- Green: The vision for the Parkway is to create a green corridor that supports new viable, natural communities and links existing natural areas.
- Connection: The tunnels provide an opportunity to create connections between communities on either side of the Parkway and along its length.
- Integration: The Parkway travels through three municipalities – Tecumseh, LaSalle and Windsor, Ontario. The Parkway open spaces should integrate with the urban design, parks and recreation plans for these three municipalities as well as local and regional natural heritage systems.
- Gateway: The Parkway is designed as a gateway to Canada, Ontario and Windsor-Essex.

Green Space

The new Highway 401 and Highway 3 are set within the Parkway's restored open space lands made up of more than 300 acres (120 hectares) of green space with landscaped areas, ecological protection and restoration areas, and 20 kilometres of multi-use trails.

- The green space will:
 - o demonstrate ecological integrity
 - o celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of the region
 - o promote stewardship and a sense of nature
 - o re-establish physical and cultural community connections
 - o provide a sustainable network of natural landscapes, trails and amenity areas.

Plant Materials

A variety of native plant materials will be incorporated in the green space serving to protect and expand adjacent natural areas through the reinstatement of Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savannah.

- Native Carolinian trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers that are characteristic of the Windsor-Essex Region along with hardy, native species suited to local soil/moisture regimes will be used throughout the Parkway.
- All prairies and grassland areas will be seeded with a suitable mix of native species.
- The need for screening and the need for visual interest were considered in the development of planting plans.
- Salt-tolerant and drought-resistant species will be used where possible.
- As part of the Landscape Plan the approximate quantities of plant materials includes:
 - o 24,000 native trees and plants
 - o 35,000 shrubs
 - o 39,450 ground cover grasses
 - o 13 different varieties of species within the seed mix.

Tallgrass Prairie

A Tallgrass Prairie cannot be created in a day.

- It takes time for the trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grass to develop and grow and may take up to twenty years to see maturity.
- Typical of public parks and residential landscapes, trees and shrubs in the Parkway lands will be installed as nursery size plants and will mature over time.
- It is known that prairie plants germinate quite slowly and have a very deep root system to help ensure their longevity.

Gateways

There are three locations that have been identified as Gateways within the Parkway. These gateway areas will reflect the natural and cultural history of the area, the transportation link between Canada and the United States, and the strategic location and international importance of the corridor.

- Three central themes have informed the design of the Gateways.
 - o Place of Arrival - The Parkway must exhibit a sense of arrival to Canada. It needs to be bold and commanding, and give a heightened sense of place to those arriving, and departing from Canada.
 - o Place of Settlement - It is important for the Parkway landscapes to stress that this important piece of infrastructure is part of an existing community which has a robust history. This project is not to compete with this history but to reinforce it, celebrate it, and evolve it.
 - o Place of Flow - In addition to a place of natural and cultural significance it is also vital to understand the importance of the Parkway to the flow of people and trade in North America. The landscape should acknowledge the importance of flow as a mechanism of this newly created piece of infrastructure.
- Similar to the roadside landscapes, plantings for the Gateways will consist of deciduous trees, coniferous trees, deciduous shrubs, coniferous shrubs and seed mixes containing grasses and forbs.
- The gateway landscapes serve as location for incorporating small scale public art and cultural heritage elements.

Screening Landscapes

Screening landscapes have many roles in the Landscape Plan including both acoustic attenuation and visual screening and are context sensitive. They also enhance the trail and driving experience and support the ecological restoration efforts on the adjacent lands.

- The screening landscapes are designed with seasonal interest and complement other urban design features through colour and form.
- They comprise native plant materials, compatible with the Carolinian palette of vegetation species, with emphasis on visually pleasing, tall, and robust native species.
- Plantings for the screening landscape will consist of deciduous trees, coniferous trees, deciduous shrubs and seed mixes containing grasses and forbs.

Roadside Landscapes

The roadside landscapes are experienced by people travelling the Parkway by car and reflect highway design and Ministry of Transportation specifications.

- The roadway landscapes will make a contribution to the overall ecology of the corridor to the extent possible by using native Carolinian species, selected to be tolerant of urban conditions such as drought, salt and heat.
- The grasslands are augmented with woody shrubs and trees in the interchanges and locations where roadside grading is 3:1 or less.
- Plantings for the roadside landscape will consist of deciduous trees, coniferous trees, deciduous shrubs, coniferous shrubs, and seed mixes containing grasses and forbs.

Stormwater Management Landscapes

Stormwater management landscapes manage and treat stormwater run-off. Although there will be a need for some maintenance, these landscapes are generally rich in habitat and make significant contributions to wildlife.

- In selected locations the trail system promotes a safe interface with the stormwater landscape by providing overlooks and rest areas allowing users to obtain the benefits of a recreational trail in close proximity to a varied aquatic habitat.
- Plantings in the stormwater management landscapes will include deciduous trees, deciduous shrubs, native groundcover plugs, aquatic plant plugs, and seed mixes containing grasses and forbs.

Ecological Landscapes

Through the ecological landscape, a like-for-like approach is being taken to replace rare vegetation impacted by the project.

- There are seven target vegetation typologies (vegetation groups) that comprise the ecological landscape:
 - o Tallgrass Prairie
 - o Tallgrass Oak Savannah
 - o Oak Tallgrass Woodland
 - o Oak Hickory Tallgrass Woodland
 - o Oak Hickory Forest
 - o Pin Oak Swamp
 - o Riparian Corridors.

Invasive Species

Invasive species management practices will be part of the ongoing maintenance of the newly created Parkway green space including newly restored habitats and dedicated species at risk areas.

- While management strategies will be prescribed on a site-by-site basis, the following practices may be used to accomplish effective management:
 - o targeted application of herbicides
 - o the use of weed torches
 - o mechanical removal
 - o prescribed burns.

If you have any concerns regarding the Parkway, please contact or visit the Public Liaison Office at 1-877-937-5929, 2187 Huron Church Road Suite 340, or hgp-plo@wemg.ca.

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Facts at a Glance: Urban Design Elements and Noise Barriers

The Environmental Assessment Report for the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study required aesthetic features of the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway (the Parkway) be visible to drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and adjacent communities. This will occur through design in the form of structures like noise barriers, retaining walls, tunnel top barrier walls and bridge barrier walls, and trail structures and amenities. The Carolinian Canada theme is integrated into the design elements of the Parkway and aesthetic treatments consistent with this theme have been applied to the structures identified above. The following *Facts at a Glance* provide an overview of the urban design elements related to the noise barriers.

The locations and heights of the noise barriers being constructed for the Parkway were identified during the DRIC study and documented in the approved Environmental Assessment Report.

- The significant length and height of noise walls throughout the Parkway make these walls a prominent feature.
- The design considers the perspectives of drivers on the freeway and on service roads and residential communities adjacent to the noise walls. The design also takes into account species at risk protection.
- Noise barriers will be constructed in three forms:
 - o noise walls
 - o earth berms
 - o a combination of walls and berms.

The design considers the perspectives of drivers on the freeway and on service roads and residential communities adjacent to the noise walls.

Driving Experience: Creating a rhythmic and unique driving experience is central to the design of the Parkway. Visual interest in the noise walls is created by using a combination of solid and textured panels building from the bottom upwards to evoke a grassland pattern.

Residential Experience: A combination of textured panels, colour and vegetation will be effectively used to reduce the visual impact of noise walls from the residential perspective. The colour palette includes earth tone hues. Where space permits, vegetation will be planted to further screen the noise barriers. Plant species will be selected based on screening characteristics, seasonal interest and compatibility with the surrounding ecological landscapes.



Fractured Fin Pattern



Natural Stone Pattern

The highway facing and community facing sides of the permanent noise walls will be the same colour, however each side will feature a different pattern.

- To assist in the walls blending into the landscape, a complementary “yellow-brown” colour scheme is being used.
- The highway facing side of the wall features grassland patterning that resembles fields of prairie grasslands. This will work well with the Oak Savannah landscape where these walls will be situated.
- The top panels of the highway facing side of the wall will use a flat finish representative of the sky.
- On the community facing side of the wall the look of the wall is enhanced by using panels that feature a natural stone pattern representative of building material for newer residential and commercial development adjacent to the Parkway corridor.
- Where space permits on the community side, screening landscapes – a combination of deciduous and coniferous trees and shrubs – will be planted to enhance the overall look of the wall installations.



Noise Wall Colour

The design also addresses species at risk protection needs.

- Noise walls are part of an overall fencing strategy required under an *Endangered Species Act* permit to protect Eastern Foxsnake by excluding them from the highway corridor.
- Eastern Foxsnakes are able to climb rough surfaces and as a result, in locations where snake fence barrier is required the bottom panels on the outside facing of noise wall will have a smooth surface.



Highway Face



Community Face

For the Parkway, earth berms will be used to provide noise attenuation and will have landscaping on them.

- Earth berms are mounds of earth raised to a specific height to serve a purpose.
- Earth berms will feature naturalized plantings of trees, shrubs and grasses which will integrate the berms into the surrounding ecological landscapes and increase their aesthetic appearance.
- Earth berms will be varying heights and will reduce the visual impact for the community.
- In some areas, a noise wall-earth berm combination will be used where there is sufficient area to do so in an effort to have the corridor visually interesting.

If you have any concerns regarding construction of the Parkway, please contact or visit the Public Liaison Office at 1-877-937-5929, 2187 Huron Church Road Suite 340, or hgp-plo@wemg.ca.

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Facts at a Glance: Multi-Use Trail System

The Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway (the Parkway) includes a 20 kilometre multi-use trail system. The trail network provides a continuous multi-use pathway, with graded-separated trail bridges and tunnels allowing pedestrians and cyclists to travel end-to-end the length of the Parkway without encountering vehicles. The multi-use trail system runs from Malden Road to County Road 9 (Howard Avenue Diversion). The following *Facts at a Glance* provide an overview of the Parkway's multi-use trail system.

Pedestrian Tunnels

Two pedestrian tunnels are incorporated into the Parkway multi-use trail system to help maintain a continuous barrier free pathway.

- Pedestrian tunnels are located at Geraedts Drive and Howard Avenue.
- A simple, repeating black oak leaf pattern reflecting the Carolinian theme will be used on the pedestrian tunnel parapet walls.
- Icons will be extruded from the flat surface of the wall and will be painted a Chicago-bronze colour the same as the maple leaves at the Howard Avenue Grade Separation.
- Lighting will be provided within the pedestrian tunnel.
- An emergency call station will be located at each pedestrian tunnel.

Trail System and Amenities

The Parkway includes a primary and secondary trail system. The secondary trails use at-grade crossings at signalized intersections and connect to the primary multi-use trails facilitating community access to the trails.

- Trailheads are located at Malden Road, Howard Avenue and County Road 9 (Howard Avenue Diversion) and include a shade structure, a bench, waste and recycling receptacle and wayfinding signage.
- Rest areas are provided throughout the trail system and are located not more than two kilometres apart. The rest areas are furnished with decorative paving, benches, waste and recycling receptacles, trail map signboard, and an emergency call station. The Labelle, Geraedts and Hearthwood tunnel tops will have shade structures and interpretive signs.
- Urban rest areas are located on tunnel tops along the primary multi-use trail and are furnished with decorative stone pavers.
- Lay-bys are areas for rest and are located along the trail system and have a granular surface, limestone blocks for seating and interpretive signs. They are designed to be rustic and incorporate the natural surroundings.



Trail Lighting

Lighting is provided along the primary multi-use trail, at trailheads, street crossings, entrances and exits for trail bridges and rest areas.

- The lighting design will feature contemporary LED fixtures with a 5 metre pole height placed approximately 30 metres apart.
- Lighting will be full cut-off luminaires to be dark sky compliant to minimize light pollution and reduce potential for spill-over of light onto private property.
- Lighting is provided along secondary trails where connections are made to community trails.



Trail lighting pole colour

Emergency Call Stations

An emergency call system has been provided for call stations located at tunnel top rest areas, trail tunnels and in areas where there is limited egress or where users may feel vulnerable.

- The Parkway will feature more than 15 emergency call stations.
- Emergency call stations will be placed in close proximity to locations where there is open water including stormwater management ponds and municipal drains.

Signage

Wayfinding signs will be installed at one kilometre intervals and trail junctions along the primary multi-use trail to direct users to trail bridges, municipal roads, rest areas and nearby municipal parks and facilities.

- Interpretive signs will be located at select tunnel top rest areas and some lay-bys along the trail where there are features of interest.
- Signage will include natural and cultural heritage themes about the Parkway, prairie restoration, settlement in Windsor-Essex, stormwater management, species at risk, and First Nations history and teachings.
- Signboards with trail maps and information about the Parkway will be located at all rest areas.



Spring Garden Tunnel Top Gateway

The Spring Garden tunnel top (T-1) will have the western most land bridge with the closest proximity to the Detroit River. It is a naturalized pedestrian space with the trail and a rest area as its main feature.

- During consultation, Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN) identified the historic account of the 1669 Dollier and Galinee journey through the region. This account is well documented, recounting the journey through the Great Lakes and along the Detroit River. The rest area on the land bridge offers an opportunity to interpret the 'Homage to Safe Passage' – symbolic marker to recognize safe crossing from Lake Erie to Lake St. Clair.
- Teresa Altman, an accomplished First Nations artist, was consulted regarding installation of integrated small scale public art that would become the focal point along the trail on the Spring Garden Tunnel. A boulder was salvaged from the site during the earthworks to be integrated as part of the 'homage'.
- Elements of the historic account based on the Journey of Dollier and Galinee 1669 – 1670 include:
 - o account of Jesuit missionary travel along the Great Lakes
 - o during passage from Lake Erie to Lake Michigan
 - o encounter with sacred marker - stone idol.

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Facts at a Glance: Aesthetics of Pedestrian Bridges

The Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway (the Parkway) multi-use trail system is linked with seven pedestrian trail bridges and two pedestrian tunnels that allow users to travel the length of the corridor without encountering a vehicle. The following *Facts at a Glance* provide an overview of the pedestrian trail bridges.

Design

Based on the project philosophy and supported by comments received from the public, the design of infrastructure features within the Parkway, including trail bridges, will be kept simple and unobtrusive.

- Structurally, the bridges are made of a steel truss and concrete abutment system that can commonly be found throughout Ontario. The steel truss system will be coated with a select colour palette.
- Trail bridges will vary in length dependent upon location and are designed to meet current accessibility and safety standards.



Themes

Three themes – colour, teaching and symbol – have been interpreted and then applied to the seven pedestrian bridges for cultural significance.

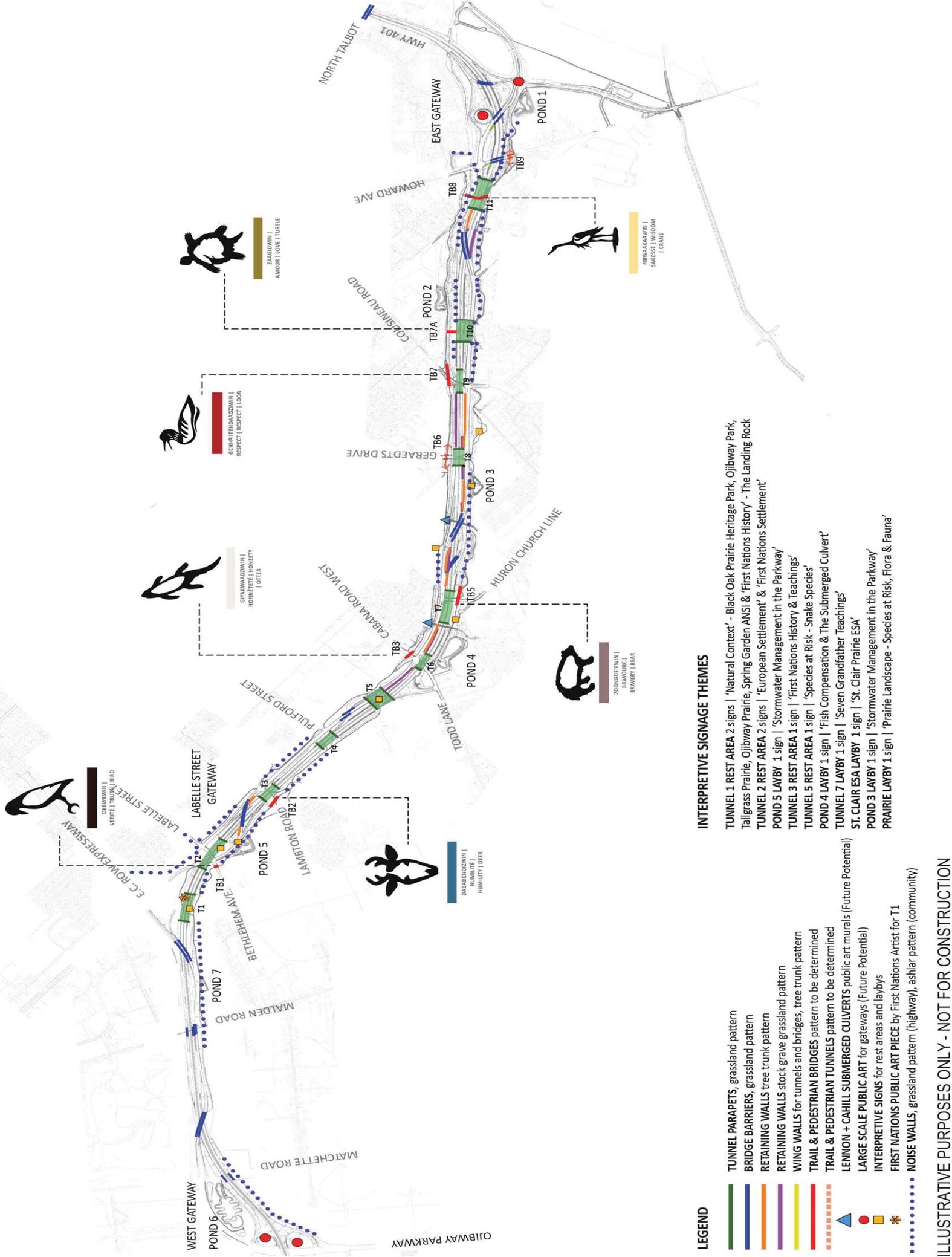
- For the bridges, the inspiration for the themes came threefold from the significant colours, teachings, and clans of the local Anishinaabe First Nations (Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi people) as interpreted by community members from Walpole Island First Nation.
- The seven colours for the bridges come from the four colours of the Medicine Wheel and the three colours that represent life on earth.
- The 'Seven Grandfather Teachings' are universal values to help guide us in our day-to-day living, including our interactions with the natural environment.
- The animal symbols are artistic representations of the original seven clans of the Anishinaabe people.
- Each colour, teaching and symbol are linked together. See the map on the reverse for locations and details.
- Trail side markers will introduce the themes at the approaches to the bridges.

Seven Grandfather Teachings

Through consultation, the “Seven Grandfather Teachings” were identified as a concept that was both significant to First Nations and also reflected positive aspirations for all cultures.

- The Seven Grandfather Teachings are:

| | |
|---|---|
| o Wisdom: knowledge, prudence, intelligence | o Love: to know love is to know peace |
| o Respect: honour all creation | o Bravery: fearless heart |
| o Honesty: be honest in word and action | o Humility: equal to others, not better |
| o Truth: do not deceive yourself or others. | |



LEGEND

- TUNNEL PARAPETS, grassland pattern
- BRIDGE BARRIERS, grassland pattern
- RETAINING WALLS tree trunk pattern
- RETAINING WALLS stock grave grassland pattern
- WING WALLS for tunnels and bridges, tree trunk pattern
- TRAIL & PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES pattern to be determined
- TRAIL & PEDESTRIAN TUNNELS pattern to be determined
- LENNON + CAHILL SUBMERGED CULVERTS public art murals (Future Potential)
- LARGE SCALE PUBLIC ART for gateways (Future Potential)
- INTERPRETIVE SIGNS for rest areas and laybys
- FIRST NATIONS PUBLIC ART PIECE by First Nations Artist for T1
- NOISE WALLS, grassland pattern (highway), ashlar pattern (community)

INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE THEMES

- TUNNEL 1 REST AREA 2 signs | 'Natural Context' - Black Oak Prairie Heritage Park, Ojibway Park, Tallgrass Prairie, Ojibway Prairie, Spring Garden ANSI & 'First Nations History' - The Landing Rock
- TUNNEL 2 REST AREA 2 signs | 'European Settlement' & 'First Nations Settlement'
- POND 5 LAYBY 1 sign | 'Stormwater Management in the Parkway'
- TUNNEL 3 REST AREA 1 sign | 'First Nations History & Teachings'
- TUNNEL 5 REST AREA 1 sign | 'Species at Risk - Snake Species'
- POND 4 LAYBY 1 sign | 'Fish Compensation & The Submerged Culvert'
- TUNNEL 7 LAYBY 1 sign | 'Seven Grandfather Teachings'
- ST. CLAIR ESA LAYBY 1 sign | 'St. Clair Prairie ESA'
- POND 3 LAYBY 1 sign | 'Stormwater Management in the Parkway'
- PRAIRIE LAYBY 1 sign | 'Prairie Landscape - Species at Risk, Flora & Fauna'

ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY - NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

What We Have Heard

The public has an important role to play during the design and construction of the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway (the Parkway). The Windsor Essex Mobility Group's (WEMG) Public Liaison Office (PLO) met with the community to seek feedback on various plans and aspects of the Parkway and to discuss questions, concerns and topics of interest. In addition to the PLO's daily interactions with the community, over 3,600 people have attended our last seven PIOHs, numerous neighbourhood meetings, and landscape workshop.

We listened to you and here's our feedback...

Landscape

| We heard... | We say... |
|---|--|
| The Carolinian landscape theme is supported along with the use of local species. | This theme reflects ecological sensitivity with a contemporary approach. It supports protection and expansion of adjacent natural areas with a focus on Tallgrass Prairie, Oak Savannah and native species celebrating the natural and cultural heritage of the Windsor-Essex County region. |
| Plant species should include a combination of large trees and shrubs. Invasive species should be avoided. | Plant materials are made up of native Carolinian trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers. One approach to controlling invasive species is by conducting prescribed burns in key areas. |
| Some of you prefer coniferous trees to deciduous trees to provide better screening. | Where possible, these requests have been accommodated. |
| Power Distribution Assembly Units (PDA) should be aesthetically pleasing and/or screened. | The PDAs have been relocated away from the community where possible and will be screened by landscape planting to further reduce their visual impact. |
| Regular landscape maintenance during construction and along the final Parkway is a priority. | Maintenance crews work throughout the corridor and maintain a regular schedule for upkeep. WEMG is committed to maintaining the Parkway, including the landscaping for 30 years. |
| Natural habitats and ecological lands affected should be protected and compensated. | Habitat restoration and enhancement will be implemented to create new and higher quality habitat for endangered species. A 3:1 compensation ratio has been established to compensate for Parkway impacts to the Provincially Significant Wetland. |

Trails

| We heard... | We say... |
|--|--|
| Some of you prefer the pedestrian bridges over pedestrian tunnels to minimize security concerns. | There will be seven pedestrian bridges to maintain trail connectivity throughout the corridor. At Geraedts Drive and Howard Avenue, pedestrian tunnels will reduce visual impact and maintain trail connectivity. Both tunnels are designed to promote user safety with incorporation of emergency call stations and lighting. |

Trail connections to local municipal trails should be included.

The following additional trail connections have been confirmed:
Connection to Fourth Street
Labelle Street to Bellewood Park
Pulford Street to South Windsor Arena
Connection to Beals Street
Connection to Marguriet Park
Connection to Rodzik Park
Extension to Cousineau Circle
Connection to Surrey Drive
Connection to Broadway Street
Connection to Chelsea Drive
Connection to Windsor Crossing
Connection to long-term care facility adjacent to St. Clair College
Connection to Chrysler Greenway through carpool lot
Connection through Howard Avenue cul-de-sac
Connection to Havens Drive
Spring Garden Tunnel (T-1) and Huron Church Road adjacent to E.C. Row
Connection to St. Clair Avenue

Four sidewalks have also been extended or enhanced to further improve municipal connections.

You support the inclusion of rest areas along the trail system and have also suggested the addition of parking lots and shade structures.

Rest areas and shade structures have been included along the trail system. A carpool lot is included in the design of the Howard Avenue Diversion. The carpool lot will accommodate approximately 45 parked vehicles and its use will be free of charge. The shade structure formerly located at the Oldcastle entrance will be relocated to this lot.

Screening of homes is needed to maintain privacy from the trail system.

Some minor adjustments have been made to enhance privacy where possible.

Public art is supported along the trails and should use local artist contributions.

Small-scale public art will become a focal point along trails and on top of the Spring Garden Tunnel. Teresa Altman, an accomplished First Nations artist, has been consulted regarding small-scale art for pedestrian trail bridges. Platforms for future public art have been included at gateway tunnel tops. Nature is timeless and the Parkway green space will provide living art whose tableau changes from season to season.

Fencing and Noise Barriers

We heard...

We say...

Final locations, sizing, and timelines of installation of noise barriers should be presented.

Noise barriers are required in areas that have been identified by the noise assessment conducted during the Detroit River International Crossing study. Installation timelines vary depending on construction staging. Residents will be notified in advance of work in their area.

You would like noise barriers installed as soon as possible to help mitigate against current traffic and construction noise.

Advanced noise barriers and temporary berms have been installed where possible to mitigate against current construction and traffic noise.

An open concept should be maintained by using berms and screening.

Berms are used under certain circumstances for noise mitigation where space permits to build them to a height necessary to provide effective noise reduction.

Some of you have requested that the chain link fence be reconsidered and have raised privacy and maintenance concerns.

A 1.8 metre (6 ft.) chain link fence is required to be installed along the corridor adjacent to private property for safety and security purposes. Landscape planting will be provided on the Parkway side of the fence. Residents backing onto this fencing will have the option to remove their private fence and connect to the property boundary fence.

Stormwater Management

| We heard... | We say... |
|--|--|
| Pump stations should be aesthetically pleasing and associated noise should be mitigated. | The pump stations are generally underground and adjacent to roads. The emergency generator associated with each pump station is in a fully sound-proofed, aesthetically appropriate brick-faced building. |
| Retention ponds should be safe for the community. | Although retention ponds are not fenced, they are shallow sloped close to the edges for safety. They will also have appropriate warning signs and safety buoys. |
| Some of you want access to retention ponds and want gates to be included in any fencing. | Only private property and Highway 401 will be fenced. Naturalized wetland areas will continue to be accessible where it is located in public lands. Gates will not be included. |
| You do not want the drainage system to increase mosquitoes in your area due to stagnant water. | Mosquito control has been taken into consideration during the design of the naturalized stormwater management facilities. Mitigation measures include deep pooling that promotes an ecosystem to support mosquito predators, limited trees in stormwater perimeter, and specific vegetation selection. |

Your input has influenced many facets of the Parkway, including:

- installation and maintenance of four additional signalized intersections
- addition of 17 trail connections and enhancement to four sidewalks, improving access to municipal trails and facilities
- inclusion of six shade structures along the multi-use trail system
- addition of two street lights on Homestead Lane
- inclusion of trailhead at Howard Avenue carpool lot
- upgrades to utility design and installation
- LED lighting incorporated into each tunnel and along the multi-use trail system
- enhancement to the pedestrian bridge design
- addition of screening and landscaped berms along the project
- review of PDA and pump station locations to reduce visibility
- review of landscape treatment adjacent to specific communities
- review of noise barrier locations
- incorporation of First Nations thematic
- advancement of landscaping and noise barrier installation where feasible
- enhancement to signage and increased emergency call station locations
- inclusion of an ecopassage, maximizing opportunities to re-establish the area's ecological connectivity
- protection and enhancement of habitat that supports numerous plant and animal species at risk
- improvements to construction mitigation measures and maintenance processes.

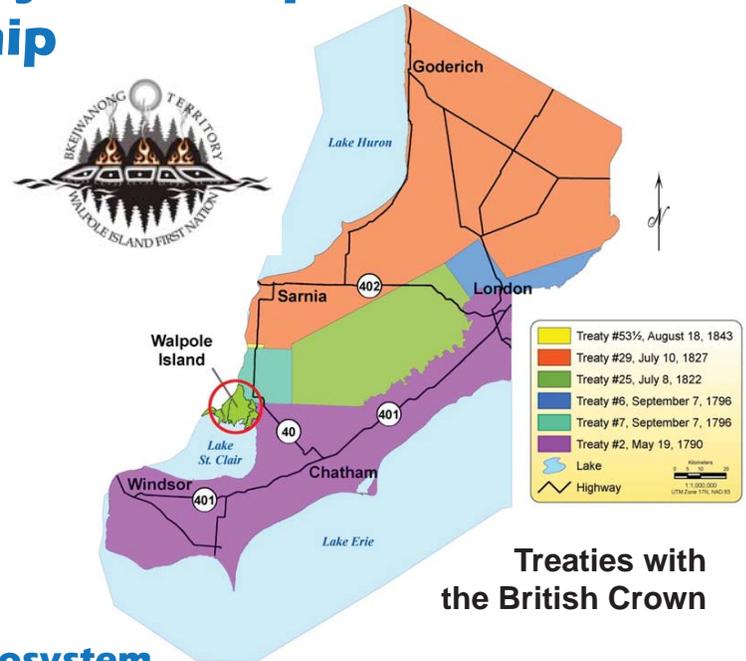
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Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway and Walpole Island First Nation: A Valued Friendship

Relationship building between Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN) and the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) began in 2004 with the early planning stages for the Detroit River International Crossing study. Effective consultation has led to a dedicated partnership with a shared vision. Walpole Island First Nation is historically, ecologically and culturally connected to Windsor and Essex County.

Walpole Island and the surrounding region is called Bkejwanong ("Where the Waters Divide"). The Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway (the Parkway) is located in the traditional territory of Walpole Island First Nation.



Ecological Connections – A Shared Ecosystem

The Parkway and Walpole Island both feature a Tallgrass Prairie ecosystem that is one of the rarest and most endangered ecosystems in the world.



Photo courtesy of the Walpole Island Heritage Centre

- Walpole Island and the Ojibway Prairie Complex in Windsor are home to the largest remnants of this Tallgrass Prairie in Ontario.
- A number of the plant and animal species at risk being protected on the Parkway under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA, 2007)* permits are also present on Walpole Island.

WIFN, which has been recognized internationally for sustainability initiatives and ecological stewardship, encouraged the Parkway team to consider the protection of the entire shared ecosystem, not just individual species.

- This ecosystem perspective transformed MTO's environmental approach for the Parkway. A relationship was forged based on WIFN's interest and specialized knowledge of the ecosystem. MTO began to look into ways to further support and engage WIFN.
- MTO engaged WIFN not just as observers, but as active members and contributors to the project. WIFN community members played an important role in archaeology and natural heritage investigations.

Showcasing Danshab Enterprise

Danshab Enterprise, a Walpole Island First Nation based business, created an ecological division to build on skills developed during the first species at risk transplanting effort for the Parkway in 2010. Having grown up living within and learning about Tallgrass Prairie ecosystems, the traditional and cultural knowledge and exemplary transplanting skills that the staff brought to the project has enhanced the ecological restoration efforts associated with the Parkway.



Cultural Connections – A Shared Vision

Among many Aboriginal people, 'the land' is understood to encompass not only the earth, but also lakes, rivers, streams and seas; the air, sky, sun, moon, planets and stars; and the full range of living and non-living entities that inhabit nature. In this all-encompassing view, the land is the source and sustainer of life. In return, people must act as stewards and caretakers of the earth. (Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Report., Vol. 2, 196, pp.117-118)

WIFN's philosophies, values and practices of interacting respectfully with the natural world and not separating themselves from it has directly contributed to the continued existence of the natural areas and many wildlife species, both common and rare, found on Walpole Island. (Species at Risk on the Walpole Island First Nation., pp.13)



Photo courtesy of the Walpole Island Heritage Center

The cultural philosophy of the First Nation is reflected in the Seven Grandfather Teachings. These universal principles of Wisdom, Love, Bravery, Honesty, Humility, Truth, and Respect together create a balance of the spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental being.

WIFN's cultural philosophy has not only contributed to the Parkway's ecosystem perspective and species at risk restoration efforts, but it has also played a key role in shaping some of the aesthetic elements of the Parkway Landscape Plan.

Through the Parkway's Landscape Plan, the project team also strives to celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of the Windsor-Essex region, re-establish physical, social and cultural connections, and promote a sense of nature and stewardship.

Please visit www.hgparkway.ca to learn more about the Parkway. Updates are posted on Twitter (www.twitter.com/hgparkway) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/hgparkway) and photos and videos are posted on Flickr (www.flickr.com/hgparkway) and YouTube (www.youtube.com/hgparkway).