

Landscaping Philosophy

Building Ecological Integrity

The Landscape and Trail Master Plan for the Windsor-Essex Parkway provides an opportunity to showcase how large-scale infrastructure and public uses can co-exist with local plant and animal habitat. With sensitive design, natural succession, and long-term commitments to management and monitoring, the Parkway's green space will have a native Carolinian landscape that is characteristic of the Windsor-Essex eco-region.

Promoting Stewardship and Sense of Nature

The Parkway's natural and landscaped green space contributes to the local park system. As an integrated system of ecologically based lands, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists will be able to visually and, in some locations, physically connect to the natural landscapes. The public will be able to explore the Parkway through a defined trail system, encouraging active transportation, promoting environmental awareness and influencing an appreciation for nature.

Re-establishing Social and Cultural Connections

The Parkway's landscape is designed to connect and bring together the communities of Windsor, LaSalle, and Tecumseh while providing significant buffer areas between the roadway and neighbourhoods. A multi-use trail system provides continuous, barrier-free access across the Parkway and between neighbourhoods using the tunnel tops and pedestrian trail bridges and tunnels.

Ecological Restoration

The ecological framework that was established during the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study has been embraced, expanded, and enhanced including the exploration of the community-selected '*Carolinian Canada*' theme with a focus on Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savannah. Carolinian Canada is a region in Ontario found south of an imaginary line which runs approximately from Grand Bend to Toronto. The Carolinian life zone is actually the northernmost edge of the deciduous forest region in eastern North America and is named after the Carolina states (source: carolinian.org).



An example of Tallgrass Prairie

In accordance with permits granted under the *Endangered Species Act*, 2007, habitat restoration, creation and enhancement is being implemented in the green space to create new and higher quality habitat for species at risk. Tunnels such as the Oakwood Tunnel (T-5) will reduce existing barriers for wildlife and, just as the tunnel tops provide connections for residents, they will also enhance wildlife movement across the corridor. Twenty-three restoration sites have been selected for long-term ecological restoration. Due to ecological sensitivity, some restoration areas within the green space will remain inaccessible to the public after implementation. Measures are being put in place to ensure that all restoration areas will be protected for the long-term. We are committed to the protection of Windsor and Essex County's unique ecosystem for years to come.

Where can I learn more?

Are you interested in learning more about Tallgrass Prairie in Ontario? Visit www.tallgrassontario.org or take a walk through the Ojibway Prairie Complex at 5200 Matchette Road in Windsor. To view a map of the Landscape and Trail Master Plan, visit <http://www.weparkway.ca/pdfs/Landscape%20Master%20Plan.pdf> located on the project website.