It's been 30 years since the OAA embarked on the process of reconciling with the land. Where once there was sod, a forest now shelters the building and inhabitants, with towering poplars over 3 storeys high providing a shimmering golden screen.

You can hear their leaves trembling in the wind. As the trees have matured, selective removal has made room for slower growing species including eastern white pine, sugar maple and northern red oak, creating a forest in harmony with the Don Valley. The understorey is just as lively. The tenacious wild strawberries aren't just beautiful and edible, but help reduce the need for weeding.

Amongst the tall trees is a clearing aligned to the main pedestrian approach, providing dramatic framed views of the OAA headquarters as you make your way up Moatfield. It is a moment that honors both landscape and architecture and welcomes you into the site.

It's a rainy May morning at the OAA headquarters. While it has only been a couple years since planting was completed, the landscape is bursting with the colours of spring.

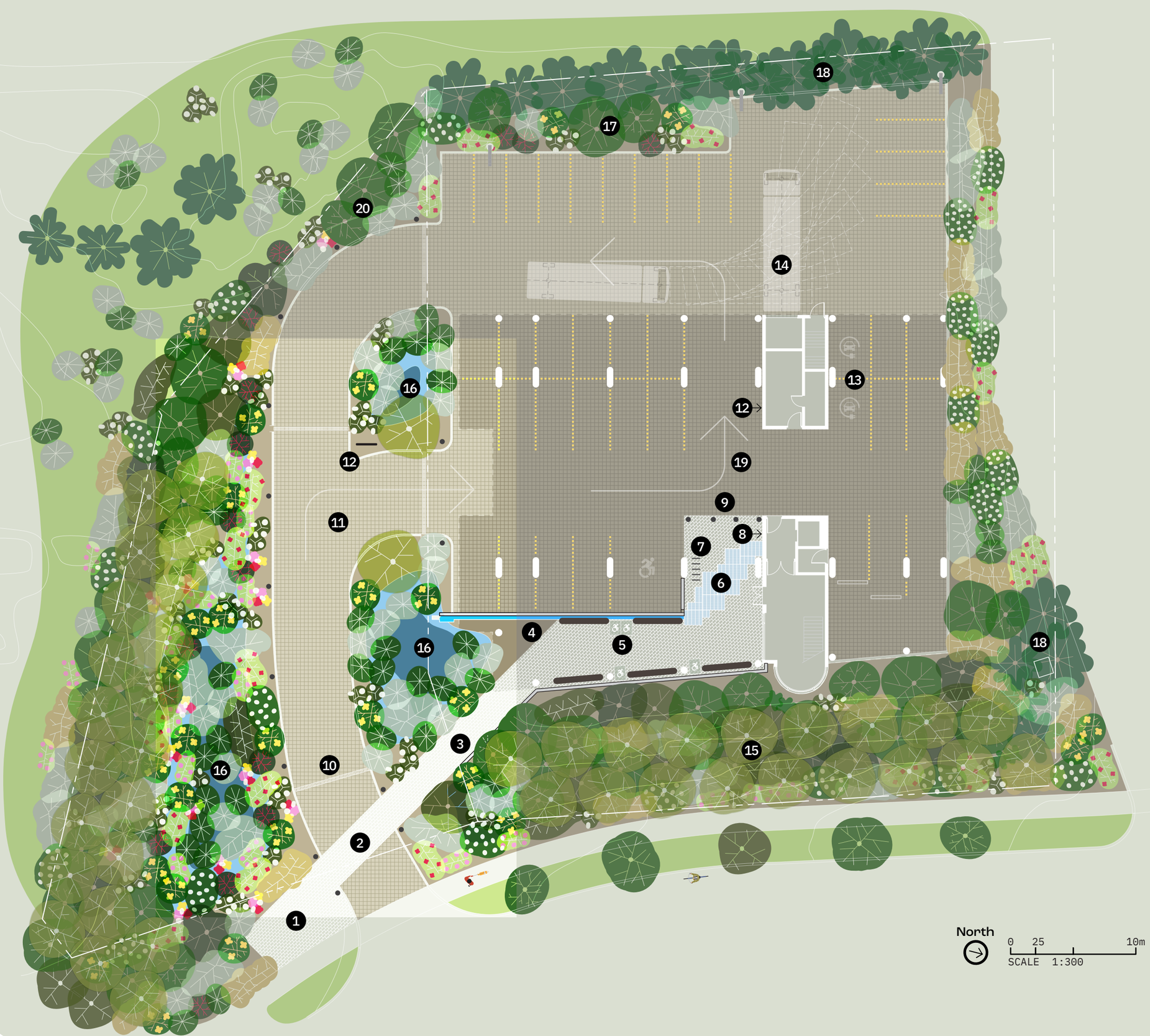
Towards Moatfield, the fast growing poplars have already matched the height of the first storey–it won't be long until their canopies are visible from the second floor. Underneath them, young serviceberries dazzle with their spectacle of white flowers, while the ground is covered with a carpet of violet harebells.

The colours continue across the pedestrian path where the rain gardens are home to numerous species that don't mind getting their feet wet. New leafs with delicate clusters of white flowers are overtaking the striking red stems of the dogwood and sweetgrass is emerging from its winter slumber.

Today's downpour has rewarded us with a special treat—a waterfall formed by redirected rainwater greets arriving visitors. It used to be quite the hassle to walk over to the OAA on rainy days, but this new feature makes it an experience worth looking forward to.

oaa landscape reconnect

ironwood

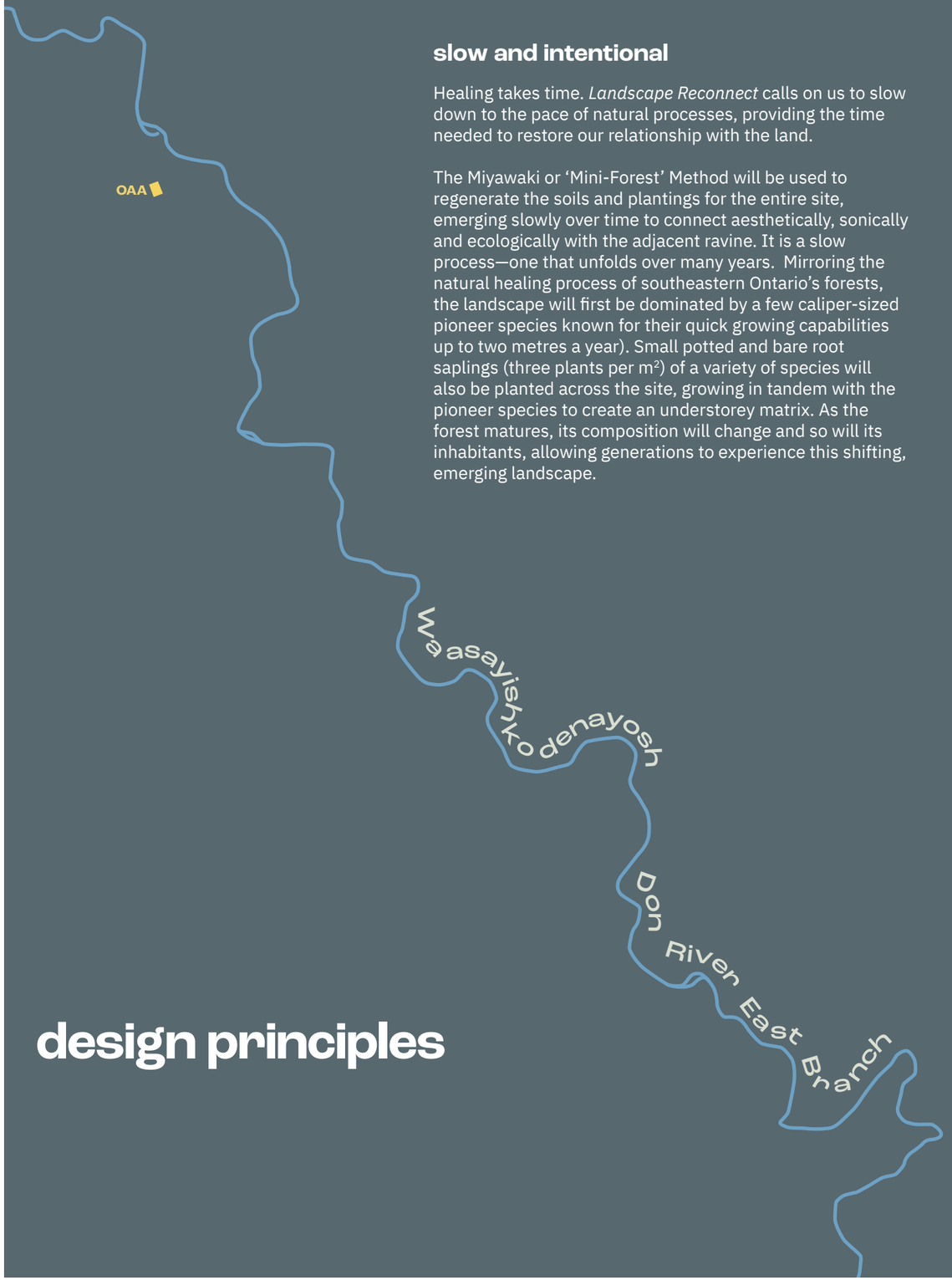


1. Accessible walkway made from repurposed pavers
2. Raised crosswalk
3. Didactic signage to describe planting and reforestation
4. Stainless steel water channel directing rainwater from roof into new rain garden
5. Seating area with glulam benches and clear space for accessibility
6. Artist designed ripple basin with grate to allow observation of waterflow
7. Bike parking
8. Multilingual welcome signage and poster rail affixed to exterior wall to better indicate entry
9. Stainless steel bollards with integrated lighting to indicate drop-off area for taxis and rideshares
10. Trench drains for surface rainwater and allowing flow from one rain garden to another.
11. Highly permeable gravel and geogrid driveway and parking lot
12. Clear wayfinding to direct vehicular traffic
13. EV charging stations with option to add more
14. Maneuvering space for Heavy Single Unit vehicle
15. 'Mini-forest' densely planted with native plants
16. Native plant rain garden for collecting, slowing and filtering stormwater runoff
17. New planting area from reconfigured parking lot
18. Existing conifers to remain
19. New, more intuitive vehicle circulation route avoids conflicts with parked delivery vehicles
20. The proposed design will not interfere with potential extension of the existing driveway in Parcel B

PARKING SPACE DIMENSIONS AND DRIVE AISLES MEET CITY OF TORONTO CHAPTER 200 REQUIREMENTS.

PARKING MARKERS CLIP INTO THE GEOGRID SURFACE AND CAN BE REPOSITIONED IN THE FUTURE TO CREATE MORE ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPOTS

ironwood



design principles

slow and intentional

Healing takes time. *Landscape Reconnect* calls on us to slow down to the pace of natural processes, providing the time needed to restore our relationship with the land.

The Miyawaki or 'Mini-Forest' Method will be used to regenerate the soils and plantings for the entire site, emerging slowly over time to connect aesthetically, sonically and ecologically with the adjacent ravine. It is a slow process—one that unfolds over many years. Mirroring the natural healing process of southeastern Ontario's forests, the landscape will first be dominated by a few caliper-sized pioneer species known for their quick growing capabilities up to two metres a year). Small potted and bare root saplings (three plants per m^2) of a variety of species will also be planted across the site, growing in tandem with the pioneer species to create an understorey matrix. As the forest matures, its composition will change and so will its inhabitants, allowing generations to experience this shifting, emerging landscape.

reconnecting with the local environment

Currently, the OAA Headquarters are both physically and philosophically disconnected from the landscape, hovering over it like a viewing platform. The existing ground plane caters to those arriving by car, quickly transitioning inside. *Landscape Reconnect* seeks to ground the Association in its larger environment; create a more welcoming experience for those arriving on foot, bicycle or mobility device; and provide comfortable dwelling spaces outside the building.

A new densely forested landscape provides a protective screen around the building, sheltering spaces from wind and traffic. Its palette of locally-sourced native plants reconnect with the habitat of the surrounding Don River Valley watershed, providing year-round interest, with a variety of foliage textures, seasonal colours, flowers, and fruit that make each day a unique experience. The rustling leaves of the tall poplars connect us to the changing winds. A grouping of them has been strategically situated along the south facade of the building to provide much needed shade to the second floor terrace and encourage its use. Water is celebrated through new surface-based stormwater management solutions which daylight this natural process, providing opportunities for joy and learning, while reducing our burden on city infrastructure.

Each layer of the landscape is meant to deepen our relationship with Nature, encouraging us to pause, linger, observe and learn.

welcome. bienvenue. aaniin.

Whether it is your first time visiting the OAA, or your daily routine, your arrival should be welcoming and intuitive. Empathy and kindness towards all users have guided a number of design decisions that improve the sequence of entry. Pathways have been gently sloped to maximize accessibility. Both visual and tactile indicators guide your way through the site, whether you're arriving by foot, car, bike, or mobility device. Prominent, clear wayfinding simplifies vehicle navigation, and sheltered benches encourage social interaction while providing a safe place to wait.

indigenous land

111 Moatfield is on land that has been home to people for 12,000 years, each of them taking the role of stewards. Nearby, the Moatfield Ossuary provides evidence of this continuous habitation, supported by the rivers, marshes and plants of the upper Don. But Indigeneity is not just something of this site's past, it is integral to its identity. And it is not enough to commemorate those who came before us—we must also acknowledge and celebrate the present and future Indigeneity of this Land.

We aim to heal the landscape and ecosystem back to health, acknowledging that we are a part of Nature and that we have a collective responsibility to all creatures and things. Our planting selection includes species, from sweetgrass to cedar, of deep importance to many Indigenous cultures. Our decisions are grounded in multi-generational thinking, understanding that the actions we take now should honour those who came before us and benefit those many generations ahead. We see a role for the OAA headquarters to contribute to the preservation and revitalization of Indigenous languages by incorporating site signage in Anishinaabemowin, the language of the Mississaugas of the Credit and Treaty holders of this land.

landscape for learning

Just ask the OAA Renew + Refresh renovation has transformed the building into a space for learning, the landscapes of 111 Moatfield provide an opportunity for further learning and development—not just for the public but for the Association's members.

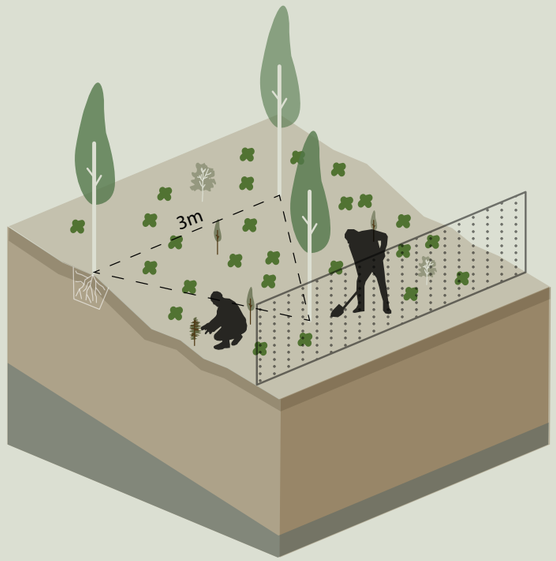
By daylighting stormwater systems and adopting a Nature-first approach, the OAA headquarters can become a complete case study for climate resilient landscape and architectural retrofit strategies. Didactic signage throughout the site can provide further learning opportunities, whether it is learning about the characteristics of local species selected for the landscape, their names in Anishinaabemowin, or their significance in Indigenous cultures. The new active outdoor and covered parking areas can host informal gatherings, professional events, and temporary exhibits, with the sheltered pillars under the building providing perfect space for public art installations that do not require continuous staffing.

What is a Miyawaki or Mini-Forest?

The Miyawaki afforestation method, developed by Japanese botanist Dr. Akira Miyawaki, is a tested technique for creating dense, fast-growing native forests. It focuses on planting a diverse mix of native species to replicate a natural forest ecosystem. Trees are planted very close together, promoting competition and faster growth. The soil is enriched with local organic matter to enhance fertility and support rapid development. Intensive maintenance is required for the first two to three years, after which the forest becomes self-sustaining. This approach increases biodiversity, improves ecosystem services, and contributes to carbon sequestration and climate resilience. The Miyawaki method can create mature, self-sustaining forests in just 20-30 years, significantly faster than conventional reforestation techniques. This technique is also being currently employed by the Toronto Region Conservation Authority to establish a tiny forest in Toronto's Pocket neighbourhood.

Site Preparation Begins (Spring 2025)

Remove all turf using a mechanical scraper and amend existing soils with compost and mulch.

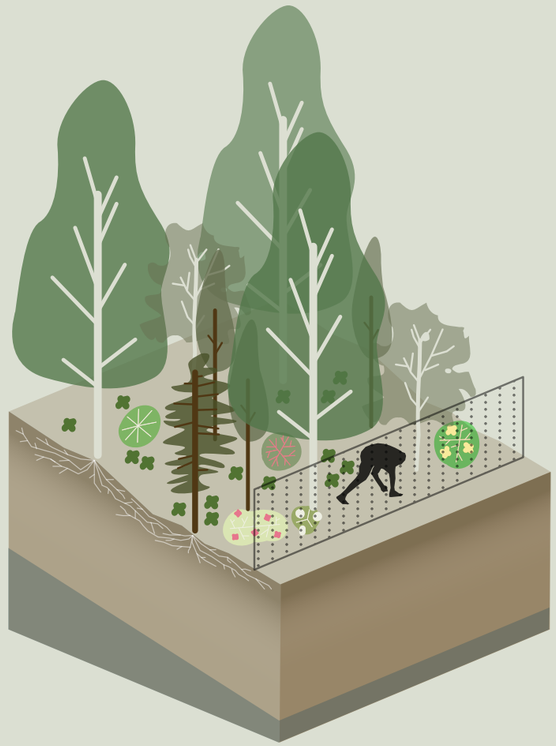


Installation of Plants & OAA Engagement (Early Summer 2025)

Establish an Annual Moatfield Bioblitz to engage the OAA and generate conservation data for the TRCA.

Plant a 3 m grid of 40 mm, 2 m tall, locally grown poplar (populus tremuloides). Within this grid, plant a Mini Forest* of approximately 30 locally grown native trees and shrubs, creating four structural layers: canopy, sub-canopy, arborescent trees, and shrubs.

Density: 3 plants/m². Add a groundcover matrix of native forbs, sedges, ferns, and grasses (maximum 4" pots or plugs).



Poplar Grid and Mini-Forest Matures (2-3 years)

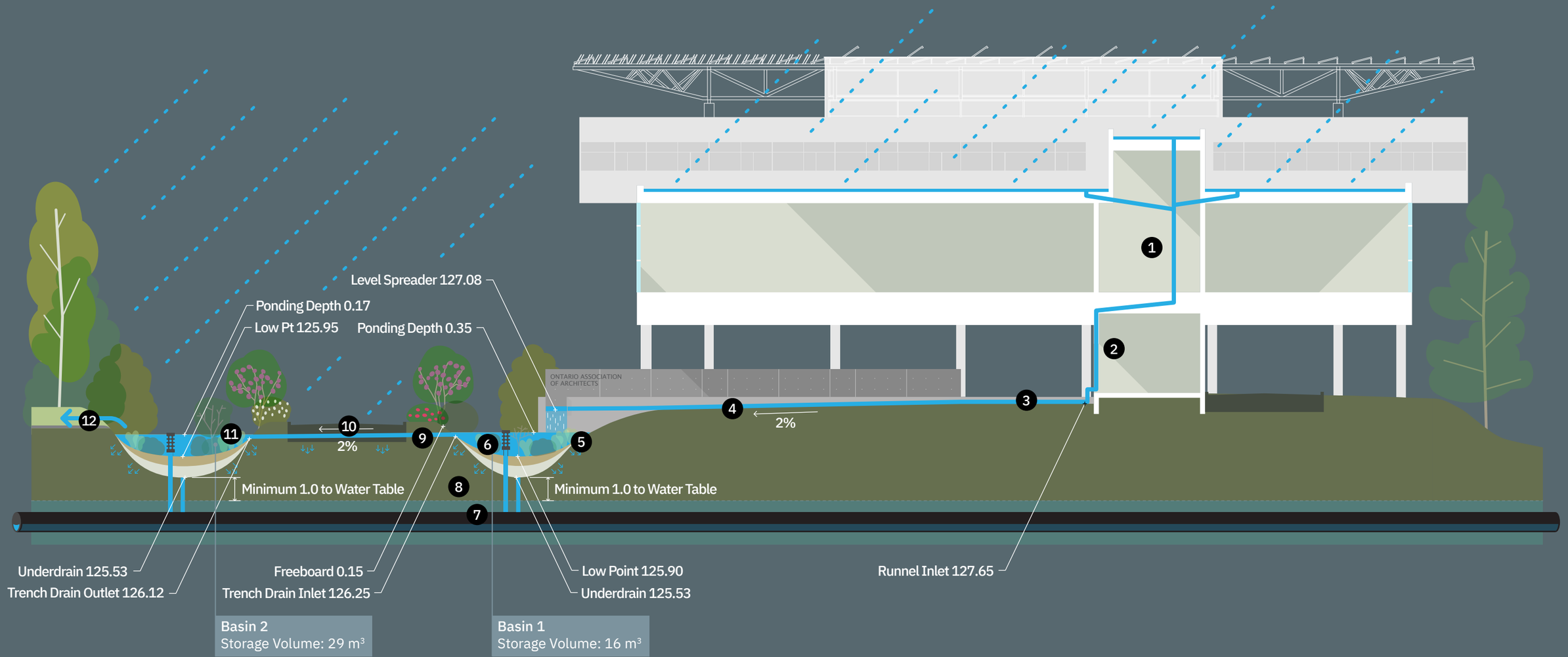
Poplars grow quickly, averaging two metres per year. Ensure early maintenance with watering and weeding to establish healthy roots. Annual mulching and leaf litter improve soil health. A deer fence protects saplings, allowing the dense understorey to develop. Competition and intertwined roots in the mini-forest encourage rapid growth.

Self-Sustaining Forest + Ongoing Engagement and Ecosystem Benefits Recorded (20 years)

Selectively remove aging Poplars to allow the forest to mature and the grid to dissolve. Maintain the mini forest and understorey to manage invasive species.

Continue the Annual Moatfield Bioblitz with the TRCA, engaging the OAA community and documenting results. Ongoing benefits include carbon sequestration, cooling, oxygen generation, soil erosion reduction, water filtration, habitat creation, and connection to the Don River ravine ecology.

1. Existing roof drain infrastructure remains
2. The existing roof drain stack is disconnected from the storm sewer and redirected to stormwater management facilities on site
3. Open ripple basin with flow disrupters to slow flow; an artist-designed stainless steel grate allows obeservation
4. An open stainless steel runnel with integrated art elements runs parallel to the existing concrete wall, designed for a 100-year release rate of ~90 L/s
5. A level spreader spills rainwater into the first planted rain garden, emphasizing water flow
6. Stainless steel Hickenbottom drains with a engineered orifices limit outflows to pre-development rates; they are raised to store 5 mm storms
7. Underdrains with engineered orifices will drain 5 mm storms within 2 days, allowing infiltration and evapotranspiration
8. Rain garden bottoms are permeable sand on a scarified interface to increase infiltration; the sand also filters solids
9. Trench drains convey overflow to another, larger rain garden, providing capacity for 100-year events; they also capture any runoff from driving surfaces that hasn't infiltrated
10. Driving surfaces are highly permeable gravel within a recycled plastic geogrid
11. Thirsty native plants that can tolerate wet feet contribute significantly to evapotranspiration
12. An engineered spillway allows the system to drain during emergencies



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