



GOLDEN REPAIR

TEAM TAMARACK

OAA HEADQUARTERS
LANDSCAPE DESIGN COMPETITION
111 Moatfield Drive, Toronto

CONCEPT STATEMENT

When considering the relationship between the OAA Headquarters building and the surrounding landscape, it is apparent that there are several shattered systems that need repair. Beyond repair alone, *regeneration and renewal* need to be considered as well. As a continuation of the OAA's Renew+Refresh initiative, this proposal seeks to extend the original vision into the landscape. The Japanese have a concept, translated as "Golden Repair" (*kintsugi*), that treats the breakage of a piece of pottery as part of the history of the object, rather than something that needs to be hidden, resulting in something more beautiful than before. In the same way, this proposal seeks to not only repair the broken relationship between the building and the land, but to enhance, regenerate and renew.

To that end, one of the primary interventions proposed for the site is to

represent the Golden Repair concept by means of a continuous gold banding that runs throughout the site. The banding begins at the main entrance and continues along the ground before travelling up the building columns, stretching along the ceiling, before plunging back to the land to terminate at the geothermal system. This banding is meant to stitch together, or to mend, the distance between the building, the land, and the soil, and to serve as a permanent reminder of the importance of these relationships.



OBJECTIVES

This concept extends beyond merely the golden banding, and can be summarized under the following objectives:

Arrival Experience

Users enter the site through a threshold that welcomes them with a reflective brass signage wall that includes interpretive signage and public art. Additionally, the entrance feature includes both an accessible pedestrian connection and steps, providing a gathering place near the entrance with a water feature enhancing the proposed walkways leading to the building's main entrance doors.

The Building's Relationship to Site Context

Beyond the gold banding that stitches the building and the land together, a native bosque planting scheme has been proposed. This is meant to nestle the building within the trees, create a reflective dialog with the windows, and to draw connections to the building columns beyond. This feature will assist with passive solar, and enhance the user's experience from inside the building as well.

Don River Watershed Connection

To draw connections to the adjacent site ecology, the entire planting palette has been compiled from plants originally found in the Don River Watershed. A bioswale has been proposed, which includes a planting design that references the evolution of the Don River watercourse alignment which further extends the Golden Repair concept into the planting layout.

Furthermore, a cantilevered, open-grid, deck has also been proposed along the Moatfield frontage which creates an opportunity for users to look directly across the road toward the Don River.

Relationship with Indigenous Peoples

Recognizing the history and previous users of the site is important, but this proposal does not merely want to treat this recognition in a memorial way, but seeks to employ current wisdom in the relationship to the land. To this end, the design includes land recognition and art components, along with a "Food Forest" concept that draws the user into a participatory experience to further integrate the user to the land and social relationships.

Stormwater Approach

To treat the stormwater on site, several components have been proposed. Along the southern side of the driveway, there is a flush grade connection to allow surface water from the parking to enter a bioswale and dry pond. The water that is captured in the parking lot catch basins, and from the roof, is proposed to be directed to a cistern that can be reused for on-site irrigation, as well as pumped to a water feature. This water feature is designed to allow for overflow in a storm event, which will overflow into the native planting area.

Public Education

Several educational opportunities are proposed within the site, including interpretive signage, art installations, and the food forest. Beyond these items, flexible amenity spaces have been proposed to allow for special events and outreach opportunities to be hosted at the OAA Headquarters.

Site Circulation & Parking

The parking layout and pedestrian circulation has been redesigned to improve functionality and wayfinding, as well as user experience. One of these changes is turning the parking closest to the entrance into three parallel spaces that can be used as lay-by or drop-off areas during off-peak hours. This provides a larger pedestrian area near the drop-off, and facilitates better pedestrian circulation. The rear parking area has also been revised to provide increased truck turning areas, but more importantly introducing trees and reinforced planting into the parking lot. This sustainable improvement will increase shade cover, reduce stormwater run-off, and result in a plaza-type experience.

The cantilevered deck proposed along the Moatfield frontage will allow for pedestrian circulation around the front of the building. This addition connects both sides of the building entrance block and opens up additional amenity space, as well as sheltered bicycle parking.

SUMMARY

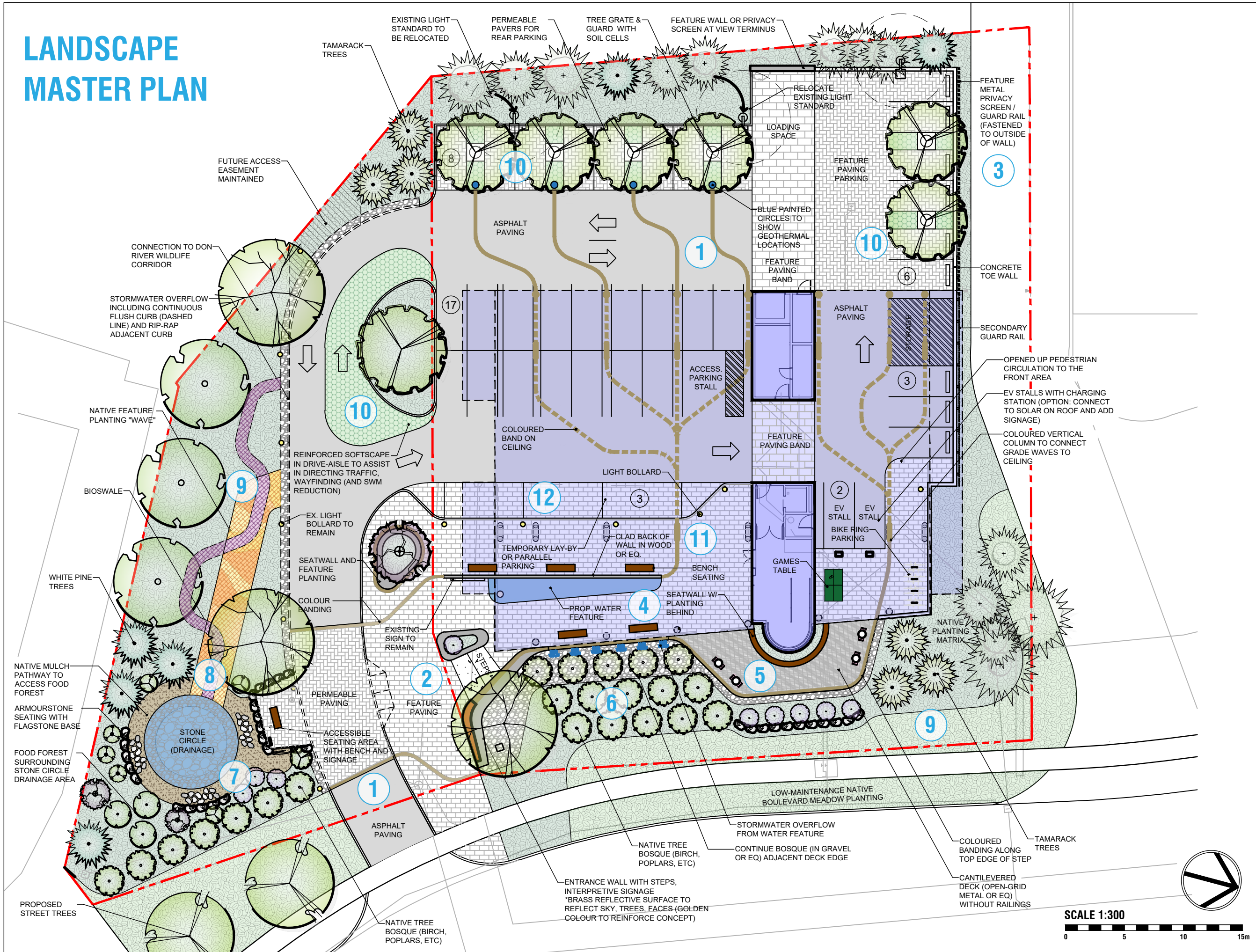
"As we come to terms with our former relationship with the landscape, Golden Repair doesn't try to hide past mistakes. Instead, changes are highlighted to show how we should not only mend our faults but leave the landscape renewed and better than it was before."

LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN

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DESIGN INTERVENTIONS

- 1 Golden Banding
- 2 Entrance Feature
- 3 Privacy Screen / Art Installation
- 4 Water Feature
- 5 Cantilevered Deck
- 6 Bosque Tree Planting
- 7 Food Forest
- 8 Bioswale / Dry Pond
- 9 Planting Approach / Planting Banding
- 10 Sustainable Parking
- 11 Lay-by Parking & Entrance
- 12 Lighting & Security Enhancements





PERSPECTIVE ONE



PERSPECTIVE TWO



PERSPECTIVE THREE



PERSPECTIVE FOUR

1 GOLDEN BANDING

A gold-coloured banding installation has been proposed throughout the site. The intention here is three-fold. First, the gold colour reflects the concept of “Golden Repair” by installing a golden seam to repair broken fragments between the land, building, and ecological site context. To achieve this, the gold banding has been designed to run along the surface paving, up the building columns, and then along the ceiling before terminating at the geothermal locations at the rear of the site. This banding is meant to “stitch together” the vertical planes to connect the building to the land, and to the subgrade below. Second, the gold colour mimics the colour of the clay soil, in an attempt to draw the users' attention to the subsurface native soils. Third, the organic meandering lines also speak to the winding and indirect water course of the Don Valley.



2 ENTRANCE FEATURE

In order to enhance the entrance experience to the site, an entrance feature has been proposed. This feature will act as a threshold to pass through as you approach the building and will include inclined concrete feature wall with opportunities for public art, interpretative signage, and land acknowledgment. This feature is meant to tell the story of the history of the land and its previous users. As an entrance experience, this area will also serve as a gathering place and the steps and planters will provide additional opportunities for seating.

3 PRIVACY SCREEN & ART INSTALLATION

The current condition in the back of the site is quite exposed to the neighbours and this exposure creates a back-of-house atmosphere. In order to repair this area of the site, an interpretive privacy screen is proposed. This screen will serve as an art installation, will define the space for the OAA users, and provide an interpretive opportunity to the Bayview Glen school and adjacent land users. The screen will be made of perforated or cut metal, with a design by a local artist.

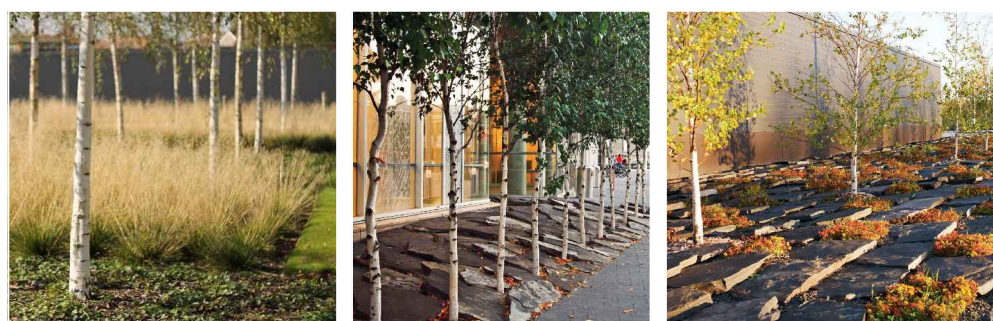


4 WATER FEATURE

In order to not treat stormwater as a liability, but as an asset, a water feature has been proposed for this site. The intention is to capture the rainwater from the surface parking and the roof above, and to channel it towards a cistern. This cistern will then pump the water towards the linear water feature that runs along the existing signage wall, enhancing the entrance experience to the building through the sound of water and the calming visual. In a storm event, the water feature will have an overflow function that will allow it to be piped beneath the pavement and exit onto the flagstone bosque planting area to be treated before re-entering the stormwater system.

5 CANTILEVERED DECK

A new cantilevered deck has been proposed along the building frontage. This deck is meant to provide circulation around the front of the building, and to create additional amenity areas that look toward the Don River. Making the visual connection to the Don is important to remind the user of the ecological context of the site. This deck is to be cantilevered over the planting, and to be built from an open-grid, accessible, metal surfacing. This material has been chosen to further reduce hardscaping and create a “floating” experience of the plant material.



6 BOSQUE TREE PLANTING

At the main entrance to the site, a bosque tree planting feature has been proposed. This feature is meant to accomplish several things. First, surrounding the building with native poplar trees will place the building back into its ecological context and enhance the connection to the Don River system. Second, in nestling the building in the trees, the design will further repair the separation between the building and the land by creating a dialog between the trees and the reflections from the windows. Finally, the concept of the bosque draws upon the existing building columns, but since the user will experience the trees first, the goal is to “invert the narrative” where the columns ultimately appear to reference the trees.

7 RECIPROCAL FOOD FOREST

A reciprocal food forest has been proposed in the SE corner of the site, adjacent to the main entrance area. This area will have an accessible deck, with signage, and then a natural surface trail through the planting area. Each plant that is to be used as part of the food forest is to be labelled, similar to the experience of a botanical garden. The intention of this feature is to draw the users into the planting area, but also to make connections to indigenous planting concepts and current relationship to the land.

The reciprocal food forest has three primary functions: (1) To honour indigenous stewardship of the land; (2) remind us how we are all supported by the Earth; and (3) highlight one of the many ways in which traditional indigenous knowledge is key to a sustainable future.



8 BIOSWALE & DRY POND

To treat the stormwater on site, a bioswale has been proposed along the southern edge of the site. The curbing in this area will be flush, and the surface water will be able to flow directly from the parking areas to the bioswale. The planting along this feature will use plants native to the Don River ecosystem. This bioswale will terminate at a circular dry pond, with inspiration drawn from indigenous symbology.

9 PLANTING APPROACH

The planting palette proposed has been compiled with native plants originally found in the Don River ecosystem. The predominant plant mix will be meadow species, which have also been proposed to be extended into the boulevard to further connect the site to the Don River across Moatfield Drive. To make further connections to the history of the Don, there are two intersecting swathes of purple and yellow perennials proposed in the bioswale area. In this scheme, the purple flowers represent the original watercourse alignment of the Don River, and the yellow flowers are meant to show the repair to the straight, contrived, concrete channels of the 20th century. The golden colour, in particular, is meant to show the repair to the straight concrete channels and to connect conceptually to the “golden repair” motif.



10 SUSTAINABLE PARKING AREA

One of the challenges of this site was the amount of hardscape required for vehicular parking and circulation. In order to limit the use of hard surface areas and draw the site back to its original ecological context, several interventions have been proposed. First, trees have been introduced within the rear parking area in order to increased shade cover, and to extend the tree bosque concept into the rear of the site. These trees will be installed within the parking area itself and will have adequate soil through the use of subsurface soil cells. Secondly, permeable paving has been employed to reduce stormwater run-off, but also to create a plaza experience in the parking area. Finally, areas of reinforced native planting have been proposed in order to extend the plant material into the parking area itself, but still providing adequate vehicular circulation.

11 LAY-BY PARKING, EVENTS SPACE & POP-UP PARK

The layout of the parking has been revised so that the site will not only function better, but also can provide additional useable spaces. Adjacent to the building entrance, the parking has been changed from standard stalls to parallel stalls. This could allow for a temporary drop-off area, when the site is not being used to parking capacity, and would also future-proof the site if personal vehicles are not as prevalent in the future. Furthermore, the plaza-type parking experience in the rear of the site could be blocked off during off peak hours as a pop-up park or for special events. Storage has been provided adjacent to this area, in order to store furniture as needed.



12 LIGHTING & SITE SECURITY

Lighting has been proposed to be added in strategic locations in order to enhance the user experience at night, and also to create a safe environment. Additional bollard lights and accent lights have been proposed in the parking area, and the signage and seatwalls will also have LED strip lights as backlights and under glow.