

# RECONCILIENCE

We acknowledge that the Ontario Association of Architects Headquarters building is located in the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, as well as the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat.

In our proposed landscape design for this competition, we strived to honour the land that indigenous peoples have inhabited here for millennia. For this important opportunity to rethink and reimagine a landscape that will reflect the ambitions of OAA's *Renew + Refresh* initiative, it is also a crucial moment to reconcile our modern City's relationship with nature, climate change, and its indigenous heritage. We recognize that as part of our collective action to reconcile our place in the history and future of indigenous culture in our nation, by honouring and respecting the natural world as did the stewards of this land, we must also endeavour to make strides to secure a future that is sustainable and resilient. Therefore, it is the primary focus of our project that we place both Reconciliation and Resilience at the heart of our proposal - as we move towards "**Reconciliation**".

## Don River Valley

Located at the edge of the Don River Valley, we will use the river and its watershed as inspiration to create a landscape that will hearken the natural processes of the valley. Just as the river meanders naturally through the valley, our proposed design will evoke a pattern that is symbolic of water flowing through the landscape, carving out areas for paths and planting, highland and lowland, dry and wet. This pattern will also create one of the main features of our proposed design. As part of our stormwater management strategy, we have proposed a series of gabion walls that will collect and convey stormwater into two bioretention areas. These areas will retain every drop of rainwater that falls on the project site up to a 10-year storm event. While these retaining gabion walls will assist in a cut and fill balance as we change the topography of the site, they will also create landscape spaces for gathering, accessible path to the building entrance, and bioretention areas for rainwater capture.

## Arrival Re-made

The existing sloped path from the entry drive to the entry door of the building is an expansive arrival court of hardscape materials surrounded by manicured lawn. Our proposed design will dismantle this formal arrival court in the form of a more sustainable and natural environment. We proposed a sloped path that will enable universal access from the public sidewalk of Moatfield Drive to the entrance of the building. Without the need for handrails at less than 5% slope, the new accessible path will allow panoramic views of the Don Valley below while two landing areas will offer seating in the form of reclaimed wood benches. While the existing concrete wall along the eastern edge of building and much of the paving beneath the building will be removed and reused for the new path, shade tolerant planting will be introduced into this space as many of the building areas, adjacent and below, will give way to a more naturalized greenery. Once arrived at the OAA building entrance, stacked wood benches built around the concrete wall that divides the parking from the new landscape area will offer additional seating and natural materials to contrast the building.



## Introductory Description

Local pedestrian trail

### Wonscotonach - Don River

Burning bright light in Anishinaabe, likely referring to the practice of torch fishing salmon, historically done by the Mississaugas of the Credit during their seasonal settlement

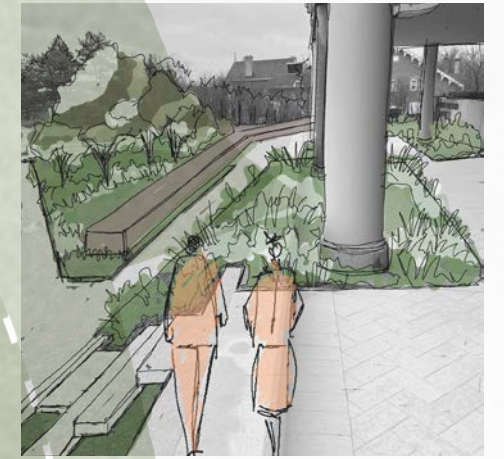
OAA HQ

Don Mills Rd

Bus stops

Sun Path

0.5 km diameter



## Planting Approach

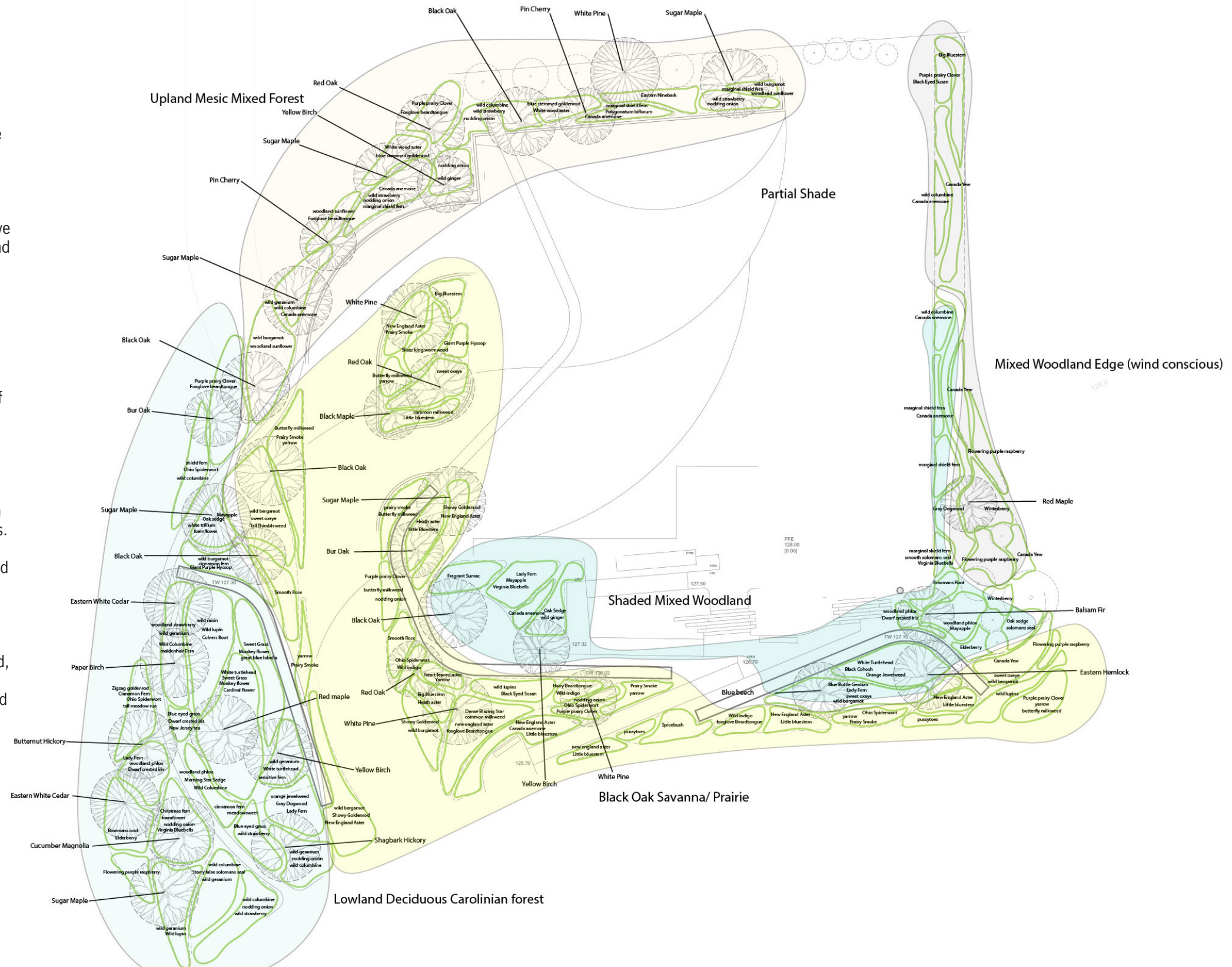
The planting design has been carefully considered and evokes the sense of nature and of the Don River Valley natural system. As part of the extension of the Carolinian Forest, we proposed to highlight the biodiversity of southern Ontario into categories of Upper Mesic Mixed Forest, Lowland Deciduous Carolinian Forest, and Black Oak Savanna / Prairie regions. Each of these groups represents species found in the Don Valley Watershed while serving the functions of site-specific needs such as lowland species that will tolerate extensive periods of rainwater retention, shade tolerant species near and beneath the building, and wind tolerant species to mitigate natural conditions.

## Sustainable Resilience

Our ambitious goals for a sustainable landscape apply to all aspects of the project as we target low-carbon-emission materials and design for end of service life of the project for a resilient future. From the construction perspective, we will endeavor to limit construction waste by reusing all existing landscape materials found on site. By changing the grades and sculpting the land, we will strike a cut and fill balance so that there will be minimal removal of any construction material waste and saving the environment by lower carbon emissions related construction activity. The existing asphalt parking lot will be repaved with permeable paving while the asphalt material will be reused and reclaimed as fill material in the lower portions of the gabion walls. The new sloped path will reuse the existing pavers at the entrance area. The existing entry area underneath the building will also see further paving material to be removed and reused while shade-tolerant plant material will be introduced with the existing low concrete retaining wall demolished, crushed, and reused for the gabion walls. While all existing lawn areas will be replaced with native groundcover, shrubs, and grasses, Pioneer and Successional tree species from Birches to Maples and Oaks have been proposed to enable a natural evolution of the forested landscape we envisioned.

## Building Enhancements

Design modifications have been made to enhance the user experience for those arriving by car. As a cost saving measure, some areas of the site have been purposefully left unchanged, such as the current entry driveway, while we expanded the planted islands along the south side of the building. By introducing a one lane entry only drive aisles to the southeast, planted islands expanded to enable more space for large shade trees to assist in providing shade to the south side of the building, thereby lowering the buildings energy consumption in cooling during the summer months. To mitigate the unsightly views and wind conditions to the north side of the building, a new green screen with vine planting will be introduced with similar welded wire screen material as the gabion walls.



# Landscape Interventions



In case of high precipitation, excess stormwater is routed towards the landscape into one of the planted retention areas on site.

This permeable parking lot is able to retain stormwater, reduce pooling, and minimize the need for salt up to 90% while using recycled plastics.

Green vertical elements at the north edge will create a natural screen and provide wind protection as well as visual appeal.

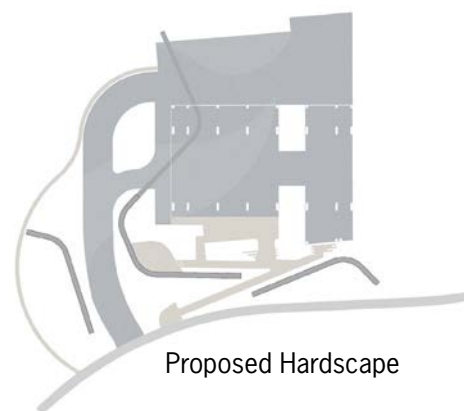
Removing the outer wall allows visitors to enjoy the landscape and views of the Don River across Moatfiled Dr.

The sloped pathway into the building's entrance educates visitors about native planting while improving their arrival experience.

East-west overall site cross-section  
Scale 1:200



Existing Hardscape



Proposed Hardscape



Proposed Planting Areas



Tree Preservation/  
Expanded Canopy



Proposed Softscape/  
Planting Areas



Stormwater Management/  
Grading Plan

# Site Plan



# Perspective Views



View from Moatfield Drive south-east of the site



Aerial view from the south-west



Aerial view from the north-west looking south-east



View from the sloped pedestrian walkway