

# LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

April 2023  
Final Report





# LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Responding to the direction of the 2019 Uptown Public Realm Strategy, the Laurel Greenway Master Plan outlines an exciting vision, concept and approach to develop the Laurel Greenway, a nearly two-kilometre long linear park running through Uptown Waterloo, from Waterloo Park to Weber Street. The space generally follows the existing Laurel Trail, incorporating existing open space and the path of Laurel Creek.

The Master Plan is built on an extensive engagement and outreach effort that began in 2022, and sought input from a variety of interest groups, regulatory bodies, and the public, among others. The outcomes of that work highlighted the importance of the Greenway and identified many challenges, opportunities and needs to consider in its development.

The overall concept focuses on creating a continuous Greenway experience and connecting a series of spaces that provide amenities, enhance natural features, and support the function of the entire area. To achieve this, the Master Plan identifies design approaches and elements that can be implemented to ensure the Greenway supports a wide variety of programming and also allows for a consistent identity to be established.

As a large and complex area of land use, the Laurel Greenway will need to consider planning policy as a strategy for implementation. The Plan explores this and looks at how existing and proposed planning tools can be used to achieve the vision over time. Implementation approaches are also provided that explore where, when and why improvements may happen during the development of the Greenway.

Ultimately, the Laurel Greenway Master Plan sets out an ambitious way forward for this critical piece of the City's public realm. In anticipation of the increased density planned for Uptown, the Greenway will become a destination that offers valuable parkland, but more importantly, provides a continuous, playful, and immersive public space for all to access and enjoy.







# 1.0 LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN PROJECT OVERVIEW



### 1.1 PROJECT INTENT

The Laurel Greenway Master Plan began with the intent to develop a vision, concept, and overall direction to guide the implementation of the Laurel Greenway, establishing it as a critical piece of Waterloo's Uptown public realm. In 2019, the Uptown Public Realm Strategy (UPRS) was completed and that document identified the Laurel Greenway as a priority initiative (along with Willis Way and the Civic Common).

When the project began in the summer of 2020, the goal was a feasibility study that included a re-visioning of Willis Way and exploring shade solutions for Waterloo Public Square; however, during the process, the project was re-scoped with the City to concentrate on the development of the Laurel Greenway as a master plan. This master plan will build on a conceptual framework to define key spaces and establish a holistic public space that enhances the experience along the entire Laurel Greenway, focusing on the trail, wayfinding, active transportation, connections, and public gathering spaces throughout.

Planning considerations are a vital piece to implementing the vision of the Laurel Greenway. In order to realize the vision, a planning framework is required to support and guide consistent implementation, ensuring that there is a strategy behind future planning decisions. The master plan includes planning recommendations and strategy to integrate a number of tools to establish the Greenway in planning policy.

The master plan outlines the vision for the Laurel Greenway and outlines a sequence to implementing the Greenway. The plan will direct Greenway development to align with identified needs, while leveraging existing and future opportunities for programming. This includes implementation phasing based on impacts on a short, medium and long term scale. Potential design concepts are explored and developed for key areas within the Greenway to serve as demonstration sites and Greenway catalysts.

## BUILDING ON THE UPTOWN PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY (2019)

### THE LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN RESPONDS TO THE DIRECTION OF THE 2019 UPTOWN PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY AND WILL:

- Refine the study boundary for the Laurel Greenway;
- Develop a vision and conceptual direction for the Laurel Greenway as a continuous public space;
- Build on the systems identified in the UPRS within the identified areas;
- Provide preliminary design direction for achieving the Greenway concept;
- Review planning considerations along the Greenway and identify strategies for policy implementation;
- Outline recommendations/considerations for implementation based on short-, medium- and long-term time horizons;
- Outline a path forward for future implementation of projects that make up the Greenway;
- Provide additional considerations and information as required.

### 1.2 NOTED LIMITATIONS

The following are limitations that were noted during the development of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan. These limitations may have had an impact on various stages of the project but, where possible, efforts were made to minimize their impact.

- This Master Plan was developed in its entirety during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, a majority of activities including engagement, consultation and review were completed remotely or virtually. It is of the opinion of the project team that every opportunity was provided for communication to remain unimpeded but it is acknowledged that the barriers of the pandemic, as well as personal choices, may have prevented some groups and individuals from participating in the process.
- This document represents a high-level concept and direction for realizing the Laurel Greenway. At the master plan level, it is acknowledged that additional detailed design will consider additional requirements needed for implementation of identified projects. Some of these may not have been anticipated at the time of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan creation.
- While efforts were made to account for all relevant concurrent projects and applications, there may be unknown or newly initiated projects, development proposals and planning legislation that could impact or influence the Greenway area and were not known during development of the Master Plan. As these arise, additional review may be required to coordinate projects through planning review.
- Project and implementation timelines proposed are intentional and informed but represent guidelines only, based on work completed during the development of the Master Plan. All project timelines and deliverables are subject to review based on final implementation goals as well as other City processes.



### 1.3 PROCESS

In the summer of 2020, the City of Waterloo engaged a landscape architectural consultant to lead the master planning of the Laurel Greenway, a nearly two kilometer section of trail and public realm that crosses directly through the uptown area.

The work of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan builds on the direction of the 2019 Uptown Public Realm Strategy (UPRS), which provided a vision for the future of public realm in Uptown Waterloo. As a key outcome, the UPRS prioritized three public realm initiatives for the Uptown area: the **Laurel Greenway**, the **Civic Common**, and **Willis Way**. Each of these are defined spaces within the Uptown area that have the potential to become transformative projects, maximizing impacts on the overall quality of the Uptown public realm. The three initiatives can provide opportunities to cohesively approach public space as Uptown continues to develop and grow. Further, the three spaces build on five systems noted in the UPRS: parks and open space, connectivity, urban form, heritage, and public art and culture.

The scope of the current project focuses on the Laurel Greenway specifically, however, connections to other spaces remain a critical piece. Willis Way, for example, is recognized within the project boundary for the master plan, but is being explored by the City of Waterloo as a separate project.

Since the project began in 2020, the process has included multiple rounds of public outreach and engagement, engagement with project partners and relevant agencies, consultation with various professionals, and ongoing coordination with the City of Waterloo.

#### THE PROCESS TIMELINE



### 1.4 OUTREACH + ENGAGEMENT

Outreach and engagement were critical pieces of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan process from the beginning of the project, and built on previous engagement that came from the UPRS. Input from individuals, organizations and groups (listed at right) informed design and planning decisions to support a more complete user experience and understanding of what is needed from the public realm.

Engagement required dialog with interested groups and individuals, formal consultation sessions, and engagement periods throughout the course of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan process. SHIFT Landscape Architecture, in coordination with the City of Waterloo, hosted all consultation sessions.

The project has, at the time of writing, taken place entirely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some in-person meetings were held with specific groups but PICs were hosted online through the Engage Waterloo platform, while other consultation was completed through requests for comment at various stages and video calls.

The following sections outline who was involved in the outreach and engagement process and highlights key outreach and engagement milestones throughout the project.

#### INTEREST GROUPS + PROJECT PARTNERS

GENERAL PUBLIC

REGION OF WATERLOO

GRAND RIVER TRANSIT

CITY OF WATERLOO STAFF  
(VARIOUS DIVISIONS)

UPTOWN VISION COMMITTEE

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION  
AUTHORITY

UPTOWN BIA



# OUTREACH + CONSULTATION MILESTONES

### PROJECT KICK-OFF

September 2020 (on-site)

Site walk and review with City staff.

### UPTOWN VISION COMMITTEE SITE WALK

October 2020 (on-site)

Project team met with City staff and members of the Uptown Vision Committee (UVC) to walk the study area and discuss key considerations of the project. Previous work by the UVC explored the Greenway and the group provided insight into considerations made to-date.

### ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION MEETING WITH REGION OF WATERLOO

December 2020 (virtual)

The project team met with Region of Waterloo active transportation staff to review design considerations at points where the Greenway crosses existing roadways. Outcomes included prioritizing intersections for improvements and reviewing work to-date.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE 1

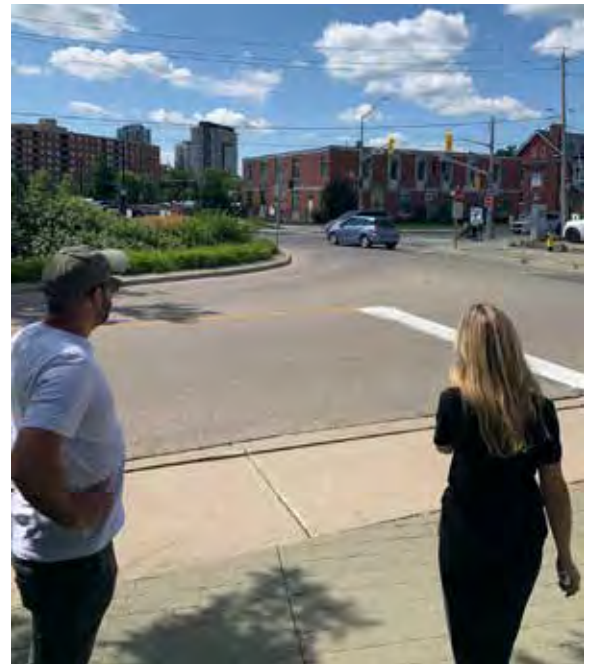
January 2021 (online)

In January 2021, the first public project engagement was launched on the Engage Waterloo online platform. This included background information and preliminary design considerations (problems and opportunities), mapping and other resources. Feedback surveys and posting boards were also included for participants to share their input. A narrated introductory video was also posted, explaining the scope and intent of the overall project.

The public provided valuable insight on the problems and opportunities of the Greenway that helped scope focus areas and informed subsequent stages of the project. The information collected was thoroughly reviewed and used to inform planning and design decisions to develop the Greenway concept.



Uptown Vision Committee site walk



Site review by the project team

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### CONSULTATION WITH CITY STAFF

April - October 2021

Ongoing consultation on the Greenway design approach, including internal reviews with City staff.

### REGION OF WATERLOO REVIEW

June - October 2021 (virtual)

Review of conceptual designs for priority crossings at Erb/Caroline and Weber Streets.

### GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY CONSULTATION

June 2021 (virtual)

The conceptual design approach was presented to GRCA staff for review and discussion. The direction was well supported with the acknowledgment that review and approval may be necessary on a project to project bases.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE 2

October - November 2021 (online)

The second round of public engagement took place from October 20 to November 30, 2021. The intent was to encourage feedback from the community on the overall design concept approach, noted considerations, and the proposed catalyst projects.

The online Engage Waterloo platform was used and included a virtual ideas board, survey, and mapping tools for participants to use. Outcomes suggested strong support of the concept direction.

Key feedback included:

- improving safety along the Greenway
- enhancing lighting;
- better wayfinding and signage;
- protect/increase natural spaces;
- improve overall connectivity; and,
- provide clear direction for improving crossings.

All feedback was used to refine programming and planning of the Greenway to create a final concept.



GRCA regulated areas around Laurel Creek



Social media post from PIC #2



# OUTCOMES OF PUBLIC OUTREACH + ENGAGEMENT

While the idea of the Laurel Greenway was previously endorsed as part of the 2019 Uptown Public Realm Strategy, outreach and engagement for the development of the master plan encouraged thoughtful input on how that idea could be realized and what form it would take.

At each stage of the project, input received was valuable in guiding the process and direction. This provided opportunities for changes based on critical feedback and allowed for a more well-rounded approach to the master plan.

What was clearly heard throughout the process was that **Laurel Greenway would become a valuable addition to Uptown Waterloo that needs to be established and integrated into the public realm**. The Laurel Greenway Master Plan is needed as a tool to **guide future development** and ensure that the Greenway can be firmly embedded in the uptown landscape as the city continues to grow and density increases.

Further, we heard that the **connection to the Laurel Creek** needs to be better recognized and space for nature should be carved out within the urban area, ensuring that the Greenway can truly be a green, **linear park**. The identity of the Greenway is also critical - people need **wayfinding and clear information to navigate** the paths and connected spaces.

Connectivity was also important and was frequently mentioned during engagement events. The Greenway, while a park space, must also **support movement and active transportation**, addressing the current challenges for cyclists, pedestrians, and other modes of movement along the Laurel Trail.

The importance of **Safety and security** was echoed repeatedly through the process as well. While encouraging use of the Greenway through the master plan, upgrades are needed to infrastructure and space to allow users to feel comfortable. The City also needs to recognize social issues that are apparent along the current Laurel Trail and look for holistic solutions, beyond the scope of the master plan.

Much of the input received is recognized throughout the master plan document, but specific results of public engagement are also detailed in Appendix #2.



LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

# 2.0 PLACING THE GREENWAY





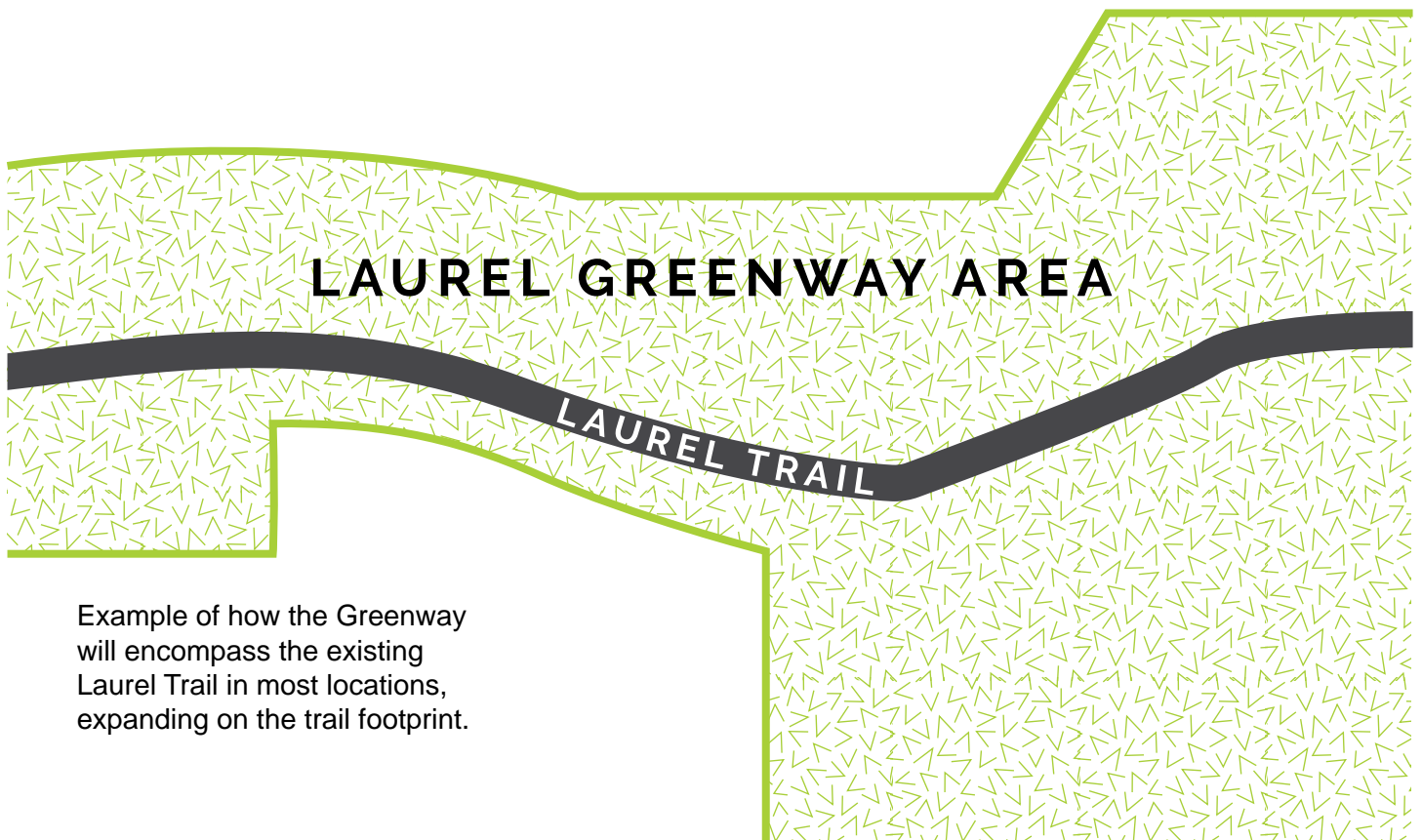


### 2.1 PLACING THE GREENWAY

#### THE LAUREL GREENWAY WILL BE A NEW IDENTITY FOR AN EXISTING PART OF UPTOWN.

Many are familiar with the existing Laurel Trail, a paved trail route that runs through Uptown Waterloo. The Laurel Greenway area is an expansion of this trail: a linear park that surrounds the trail along its length. In other words, the Laurel Trail will form the foundation of the future Greenway.

This master plan will organize and improve many existing spaces along the trail and add new connections within the landscape. The Greenway and trail wind through several areas with unique character and landscapes, and these are described in the following pages.



Example of how the Greenway will encompass the existing Laurel Trail in most locations, expanding on the trail footprint.

### 2.2 FINDING THE GREENWAY

The Laurel Greenway runs directly through the heart of Uptown Waterloo, with key physical connections to important features of the regional landscape. It is an urban context displaying a high ratio of developed lands to greenspace and natural areas.

A significant environmental aspect is the hydrology of the area, and the Greenway area encompasses a portion of the Laurel Creek. The creek begins to the west, upstream of the Laurel Creek Reservoir and outlets to the east into the Grand River. This establishes a physical connection between the Laurel Greenway and the Grand River - a major watercourse of southern Ontario.

The majority of the Laurel Greenway sits within the bounds of Uptown Waterloo. Uptown is a main destination in the city for work, shopping, dining, institutional uses, and other recreational activities, as well as a primary transportation hub. Located at the centre of Uptown are significant intersections at major arterial roads, including Erb, Caroline, King and Weber Streets. These main streets provide important vehicular connections to the neighbouring City of Kitchener as well as routes to Highway 401.

The location of the Laurel Greenway gives it the potential to support a number of local and regional services and populations, providing a destination for the City of Waterloo and beyond.





### 2.3 THE LAUREL GREENWAY LOCATION

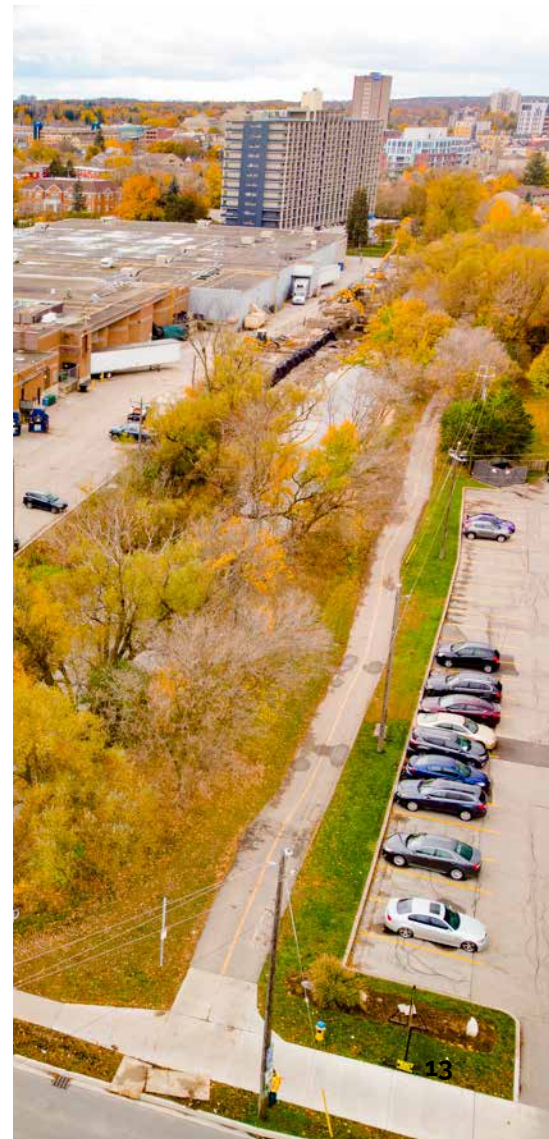
Running from Waterloo Park at Father David Bauer Drive to Weber Street, the future Laurel Greenway falls within a corridor that currently provides a recreation and active transportation link for residents and visitors to Waterloo. The Greenway encapsulates a culturally diverse landscape of ecological services, heritage value, and fragmented public space.

The Laurel Greenway area offers access to several modes of transportation and also encompasses a significant portion of the existing Laurel Trail. This trail currently serves as an active transportation corridor for walking, running, and cycling. Within the Greenway area, there are also connections

to two important trails: the Iron Horse Trail and the Spurline Trail - both of which connect to the greater Waterloo area and beyond.

The Waterloo Public Square ION station is also located within the Greenway area and supports light-rail access to and from Uptown.

The area of the future Laurel Greenway is a public realm corridor that connects a number of destinations, including Waterloo Park, the Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo Public Square, Uptown shops, Willis Way, City Hall, and the Cenotaph Park, among many others.





### 2.4 THE GREENWAY TODAY

In the early stages of the project, three distinct areas were identified that collectively make up the Greenway, all connected by the existing Laurel Trail.

Running from Waterloo Park in the west, through Uptown, to Weber Street in the east, the sections each have a distinct character.

To help identify the existing characteristics along the trail, each section was given a name. In the east is “the park”, “uptown” in the middle, and the “urban wild” section to the west.

In planning the overall Laurel Greenway, the existing sections helped inform the overall master plan and design concept approach.

#### SECTION 1: THE PARK

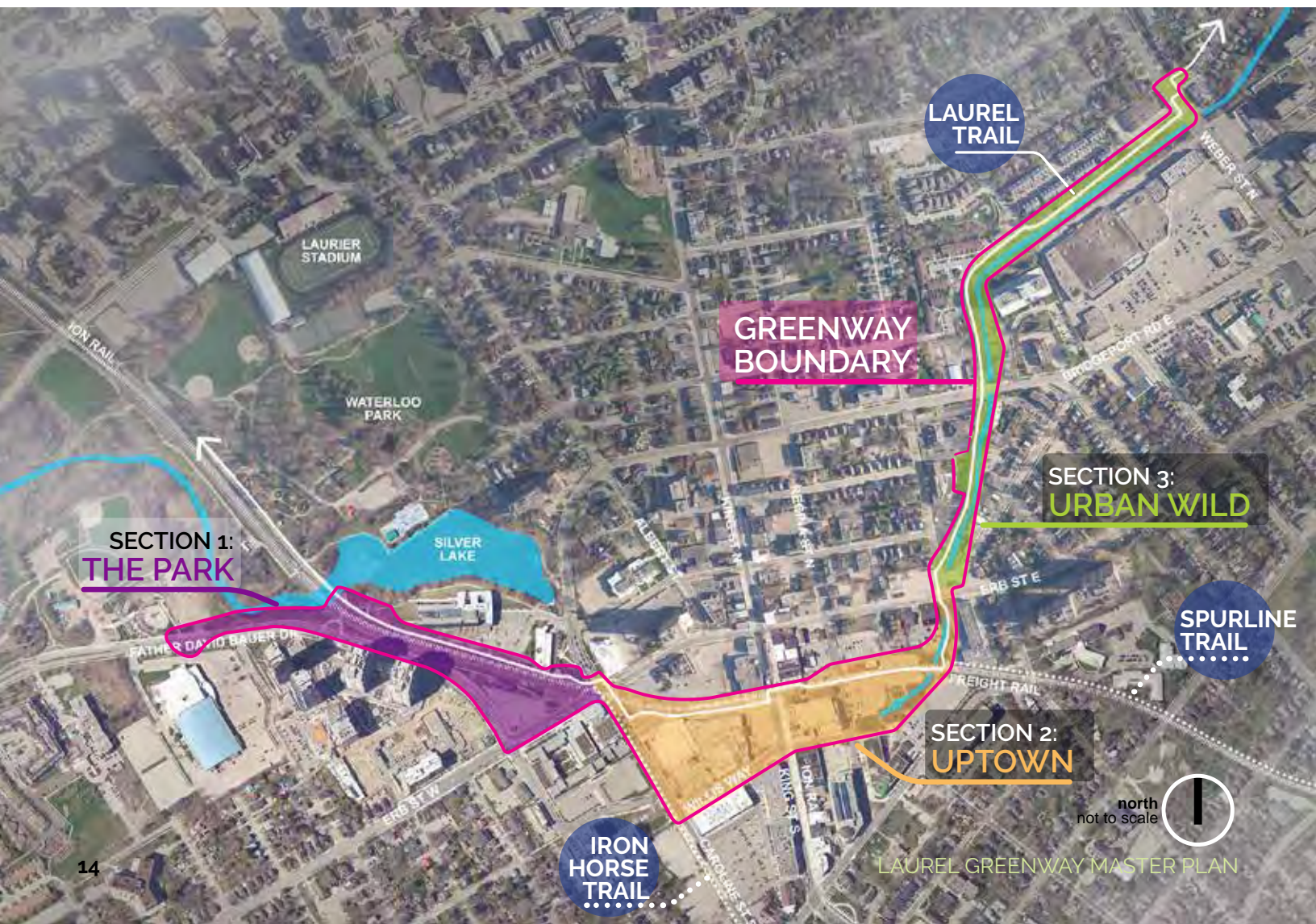
from Waterloo Park to the intersection of Erb Street and Caroline Street

#### SECTION 2: UPTOWN

from the intersection of Erb Street and Caroline Street to Erb Street East crossing

#### SECTION 3: URBAN WILD

from Erb St. E crossing to Weber St. N crossing

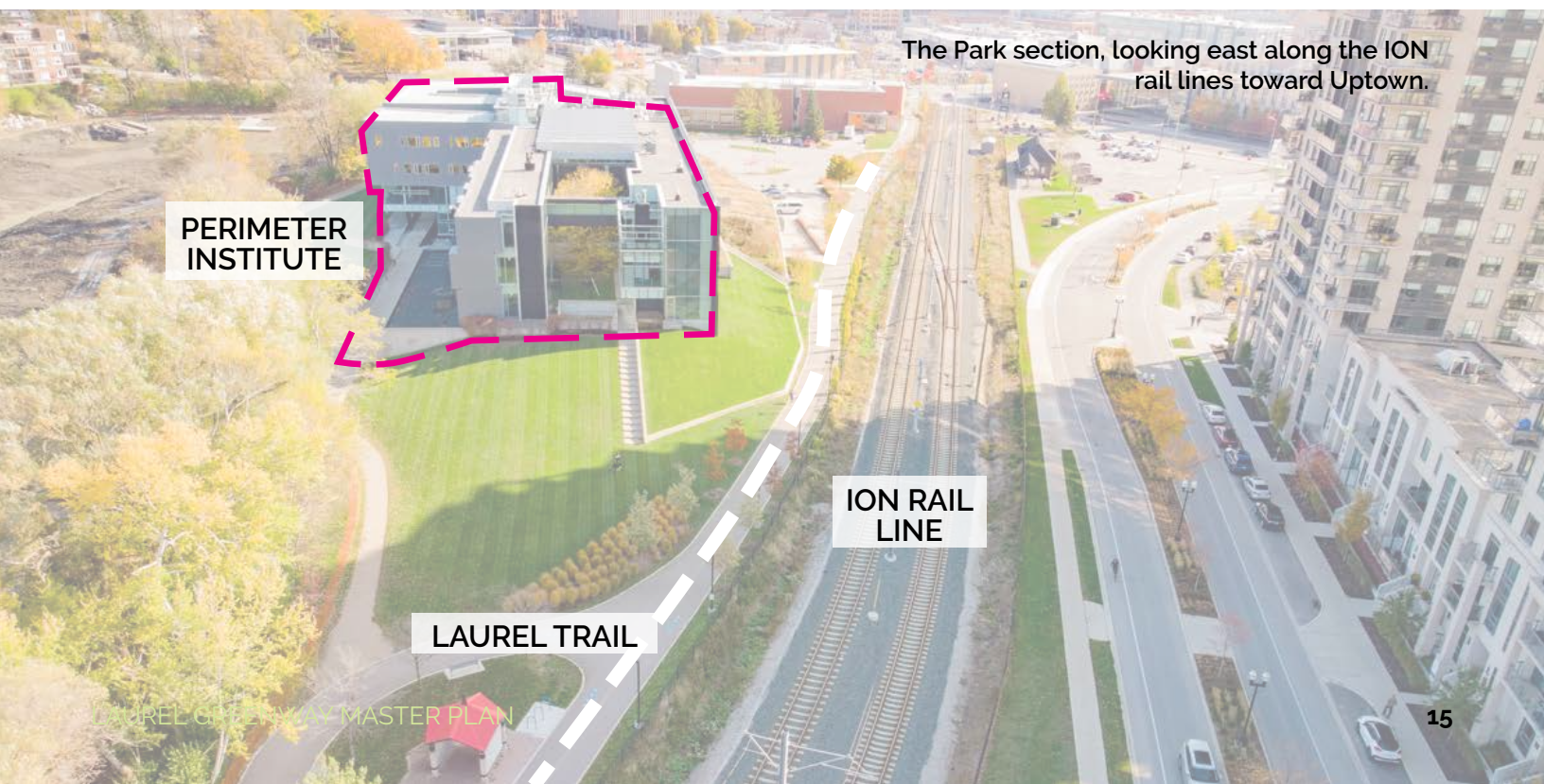




### SECTION 1: THE PARK

The Park section currently exists as a well-maintained landscape of greenspace, including southeast portions of Waterloo Park. It also includes significant architectural landmarks, including the Perimeter Institute and Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery.

Within this section, there are strong heritage connections to the Seagram Distillery, Erb Grist Mill, and the Laurel Creek. The intersection of Erb and Caroline also acts as a gateway into Uptown.



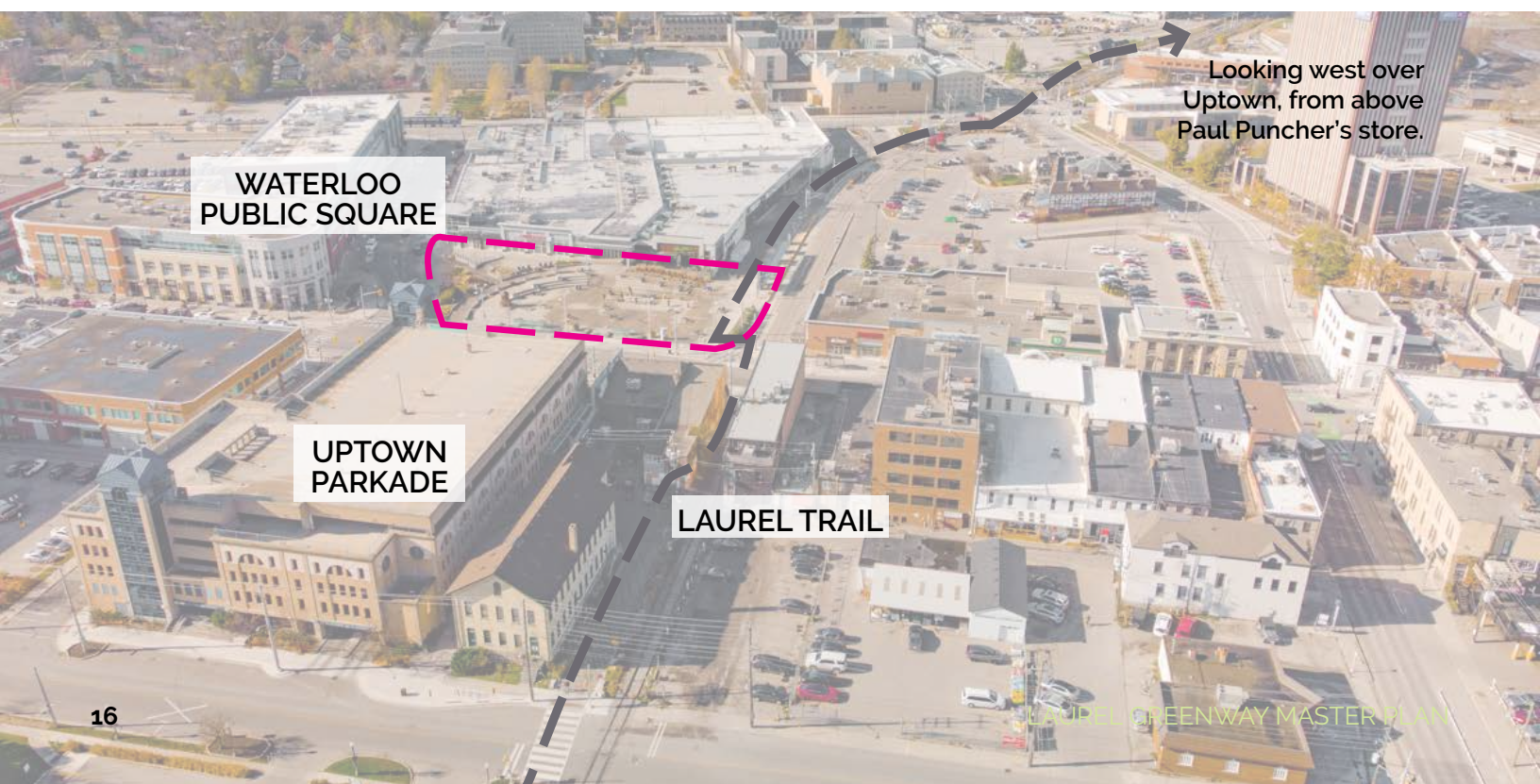
The Park section, looking east along the ION rail lines toward Uptown.



### SECTION 2: UPTOWN

The Uptown section is a very urban environment with few green spaces that includes a number of Uptown businesses and services, public spaces, and transportation infrastructure, including the Public Square ION station and Uptown Parkade.

Three significant public spaces fall within the Uptown section: Waterloo Public Square, Willis Way, and City Hall/Cenotaph public space.





### SECTION 3: THE URBAN WILD

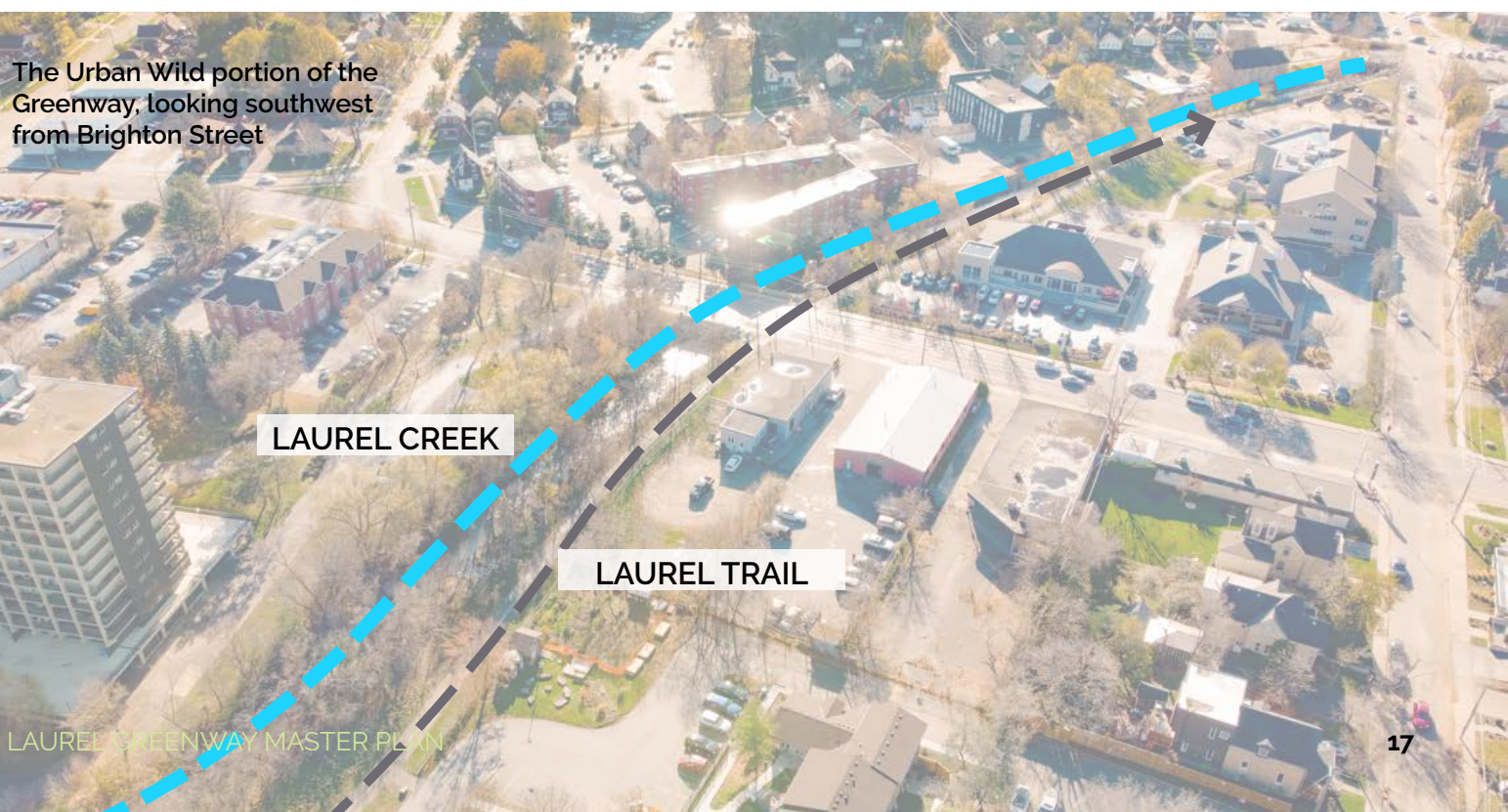
The Urban Wild section generally follows the portion of the Laurel Trail that runs along the exposed portion of Laurel Creek. The creek edge is lined with some mature native and non-native plants, and woodland vegetation that creates a 'wild' greenspace and habitat for wildlife.

Recently, the creek channel has also been re-engineered in this section, to protect against erosion.

This section is also embedded within a more residential neighbourhood but is connected to larger shopping areas on Bridgeport.



The Urban Wild portion of the Greenway, looking southwest from Brighton Street

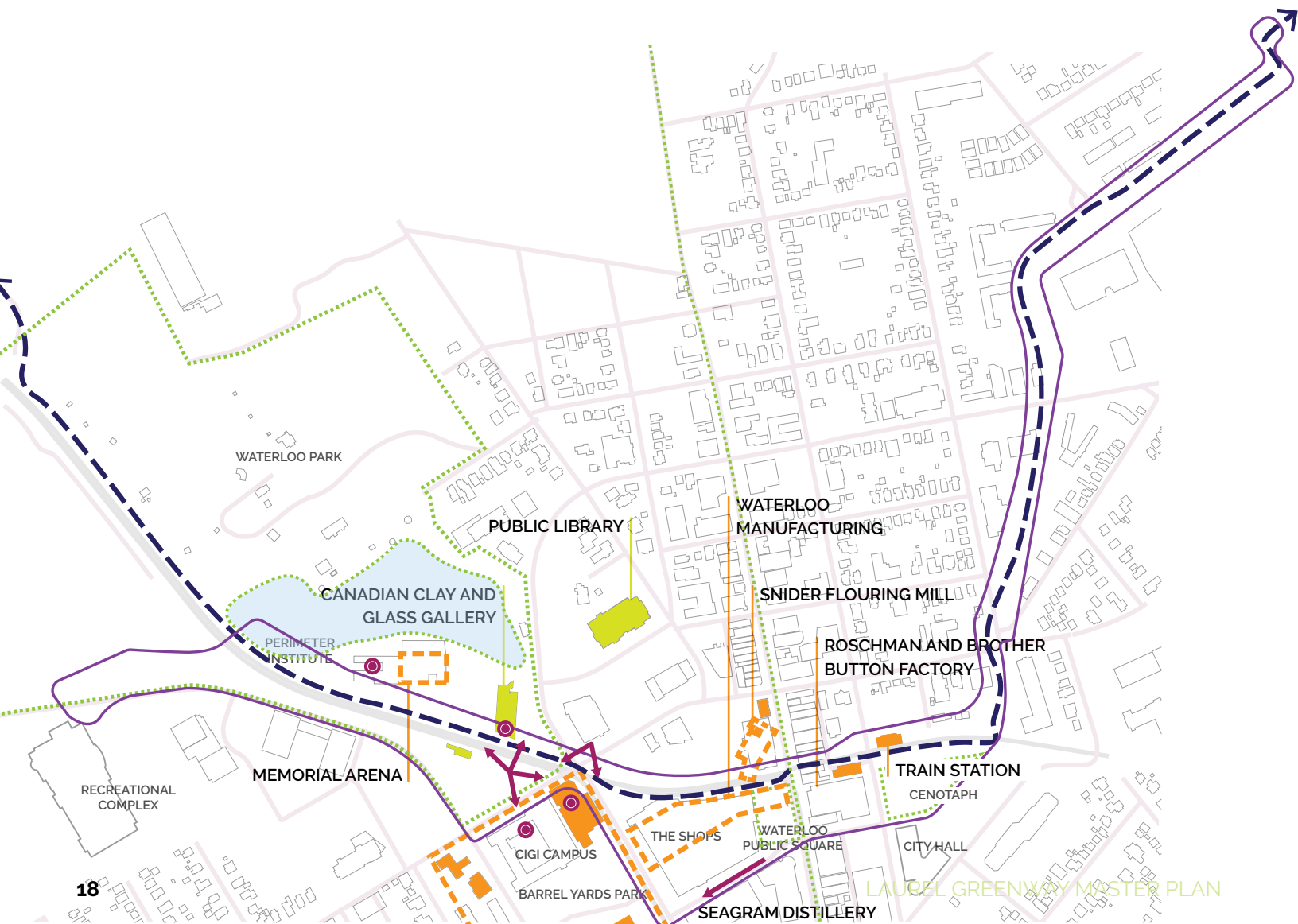


## 2.5 LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

### CULTURAL HERITAGE

Several historic industries used to populate the 'Park' and 'Uptown' sections of the future Greenway, including the Seagram Distillery, Snider Flouring Mill, Waterloo Manufacturing, and Roschman and Brother Button Factory, all having a significant impact in the economic establishment of the City of Waterloo. The Button Factory and some of the original Seagram Distillery buildings exist today, serving as repurposed residential, commercial and community use buildings, recognizing a piece of the area's history.














-  STUDY BOUNDARY
-  LAUREL TRAIL
-  CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT PARK, NATURAL AREA OR OTHER OPEN SPACE
-  LOCATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING
-  DESIGNATED HERITAGE BUILDING
-  EXISTING CULTURAL BUILDING
-  SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL VALUE
-  VIEW OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPE/ BUILDING

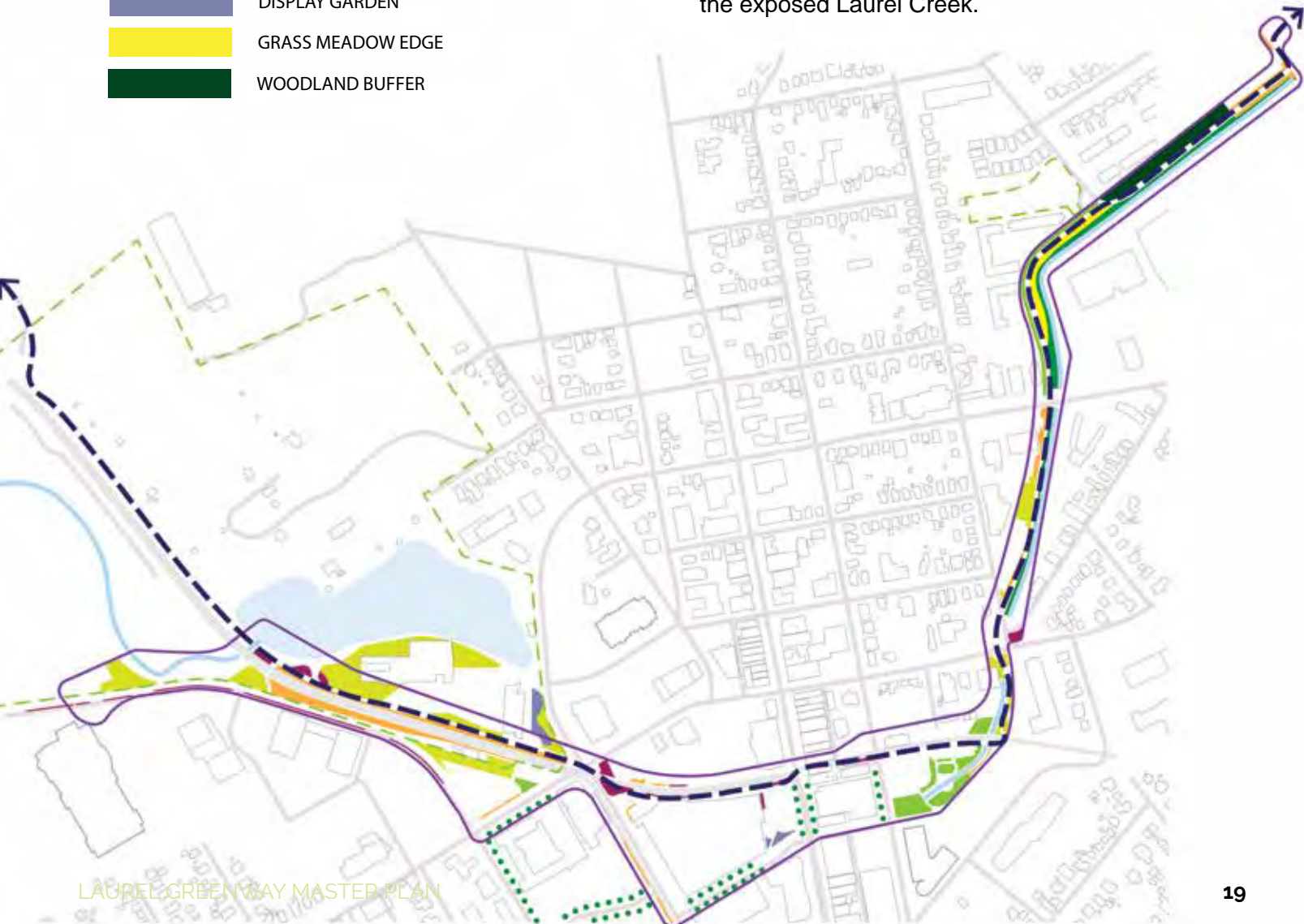




## VEGETATION CHARACTER

The character of the landscape changes from west to east along the Greenway area. In the west, the 'Park' section presents manicured green space with organized garden beds and open expanses of lawn. In this space there is little tree coverage. Within the Uptown area, paved surfaces take the place of vegetated areas, with minimal pockets of raised garden beds and street trees. Near the Cenotaph, scattered tree coverage is present within lawn space. The Greenway transitions into an 'Urban Wild' with naturalized creekside vegetation and woodland buffers bordering the eastern portion of the Laurel Trail. It is within this section that urban wildlife can be observed along the exposed Laurel Creek.

-  STUDY BOUNDARY
-  LAUREL TRAIL
-  EXPOSED CREEK
-  PARK SPACE
-  URBAN STREETScape
-  CREEKSIDE VEGETATION
-  OPEN TURF
-  TURF WITH SCATTERED TREES
-  TURF BUFFER STRIP
-  PLANTING BED
-  DISPLAY GARDEN
-  GRASS MEADOW EDGE
-  WOODLAND BUFFER





### 2.6 LAUREL CREEK + THE FLOODPLAIN

The Laurel Greenway Master Plan area generally follows the path of the Laurel Creek, a tributary of the Grand River. The creek's headwaters are in the townships of Woolwich and Wellesley, and the creek flows east until it reaches the Grand. Within the master plan area, the creek has been significantly impacted by historic development. In its current condition, sections of the creek are buried below ground in a large culvert, contained within an open-air concrete channel, and straightened within a naturalized channel - all within a two-kilometre stretch.

Historically, the Laurel Creek has allowed people to thrive for thousands of years, from pre-contact through colonization. It has provided food and resources, powered industry, and allowed the City of Waterloo to develop where it is today. Despite this past importance, over time, the creek has become neglected, especially through the Uptown core, with development restricting the creek to a drainage channel.

While it has been contained within a developed landscape, the creek supports some local ecology and also serves as the outlet for stormwater. The creek is impacted by flood events and much of the area around the creek, and the entirety of the Laurel Greenway, sits within a natural hazard special policy area (as identified in the Zoning Bylaw), encompassing the floodway and flood fringe of the Laurel Creek (refer to plan, next page).



Laurel Creek concrete channel



Major flooding in Uptown Waterloo, c. 1950



Laurel Creek channel north of Erb Street E

### FLOODPLAIN ZONES

Much of the Laurel Greenway falls within a regulatory floodplain area administered by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA); this is the floodplain of Laurel Creek.

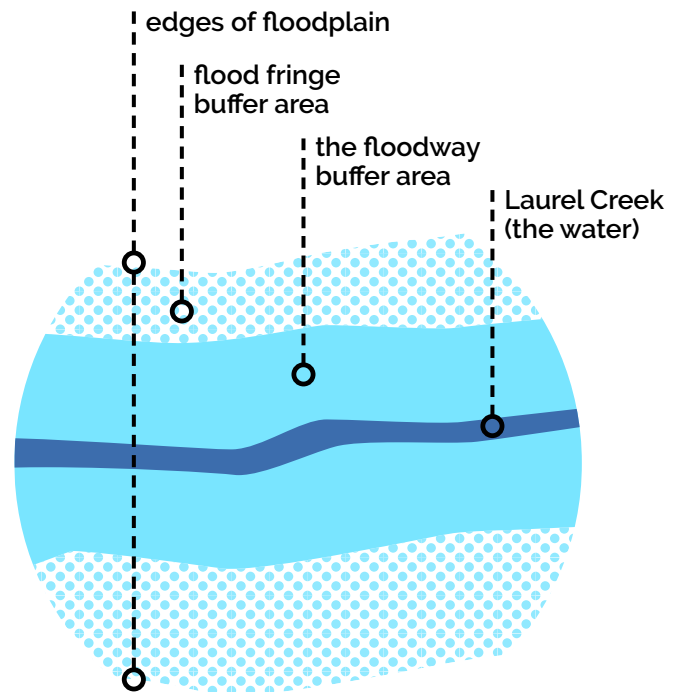
Land use planning regulations are prescribed in the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law where the landscape surrounding the creek is considered a flood hazard Special Policy Area, with specific requirements and restrictions on development or land use.

The Laurel Creek Flood Hazard Special Policy Area includes two zones: the **floodway** and the **flood fringe**. Waterloo's Official Plan defines these zones and the arrangement is shown at right.

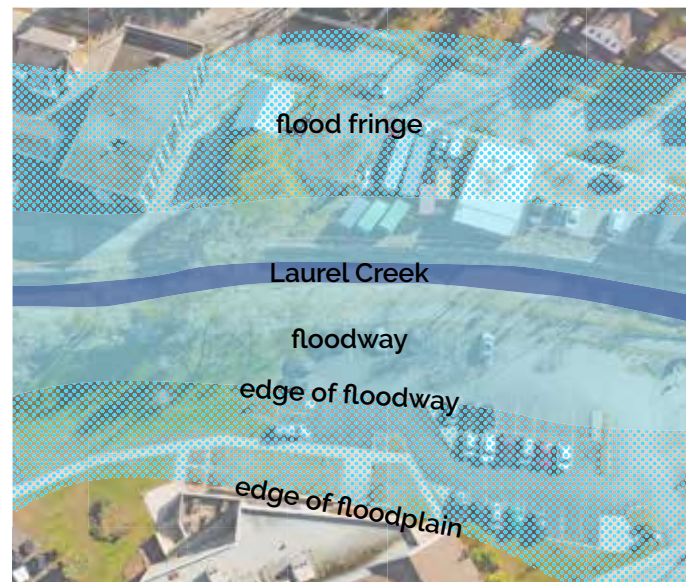
**FLOODWAY:** the area of the floodplain required to pass the flows of greatest depth and velocity. The floodway has the highest level of development and land use restriction.

**FLOOD FRINGE:** the area between the floodway and outer edge of the floodplain.

Any work within special policy areas require review and approval from the GRCA, with key considerations around proposed development impacting the Laurel Creek floodway and flood fringe. In particular, the floodway designation may have constraints on the Laurel Greenway development. As areas of the Greenway progress through detailed design, these constraints will need to be reconciled with appropriate design solutions, and the potential need to model and show adherence to policies.



Arrangement of the Laurel Creek within the floodway and flood fringe zones



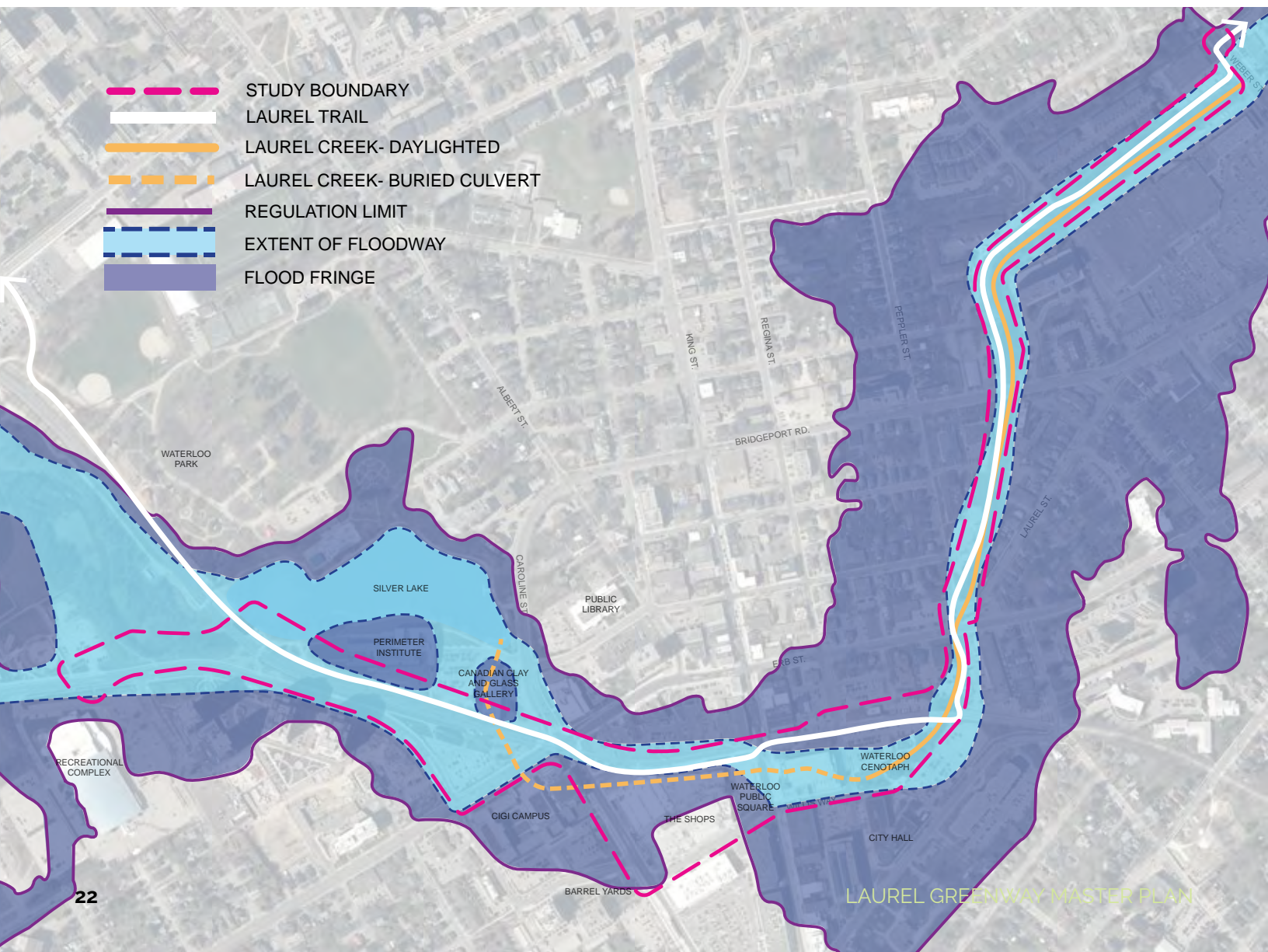
Example of flood zones in the landscape (for example only)



### REGULATORY FLOODPLAIN AREA

Nearly the entire Laurel Greenway Master Plan area falls within GRCA-regulated floodplain lands identified as either floodway or flood fringe zones. In most areas, this floodplain is generally aligned with the path of Laurel Creek.

Six-hundred metres of the Laurel Creek is buried beneath the ground in a culvert. This culvert generally runs from the southeast corner of Silver Lake to Regina Street, where it is then exposed. The rest of the creek is daylighted (exposed) and runs through both concrete and naturalized surface channels.



### 2.7 PLANNING CONTEXT

In developing the Laurel Greenway Master Plan, the scope of work builds on a framework of existing planning guidance. Provincial, regional and municipal directions provide the context in which the Greenway can be realized.

The Laurel Greenway is located in Waterloo's Urban Growth Centre, the latter of which must respond to provincial growth targets and the Region of Waterloo's growth allocations through the Regional Official Plan. This planning context is addressed in the Uptown Public Realm Strategy (UPRS), which outlined the Laurel Greenway area as a priority initiative to support the anticipated public space needs of a more densely populated Urban Growth Centre. The Laurel Greenway Master Plan helps implement UPRS by setting out more detailed direction with respect to the planning, expansion and enhancement of the Laurel Greenway.

This section provides a high-level review of existing provincial and regional planning policy that impacts the Greenway area.

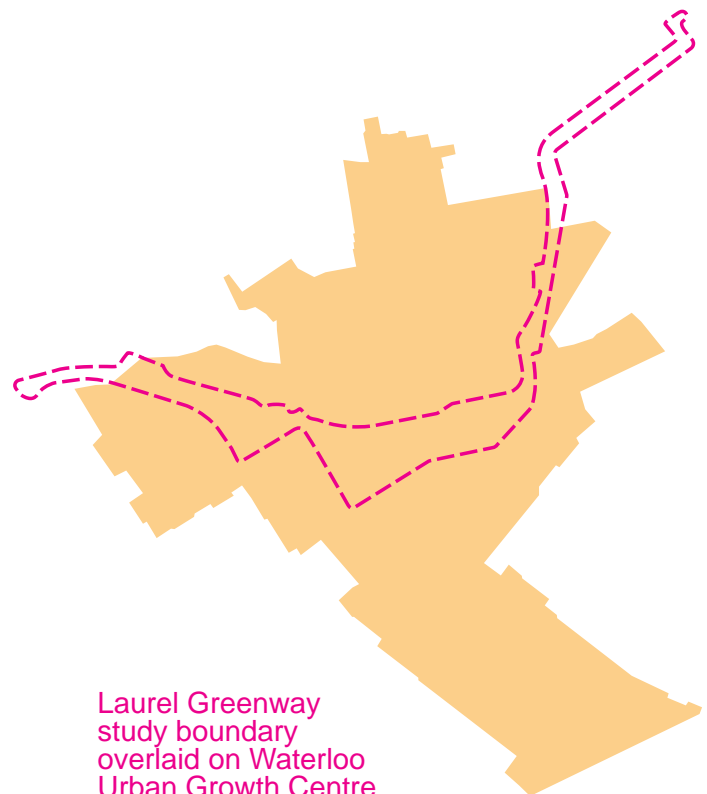
#### REGIONAL GROWTH

Within the Region of Waterloo Official Plan, the Uptown area has been designated as an Urban Growth Centre with a target of 200 people and jobs per hectare by 2031. This growth centre also encompasses a majority of the Laurel Greenway area, as shown on the right.

Uptown Waterloo is largely built-out in terms of land area and dominated by low to mid-rise development. Planned growth will be accommodated in buildings of greater height and density than earlier development forms in the Uptown. This will change the current atmosphere of Uptown and increased densities will require adequate availability of and access to quality parks, public realm and open spaces.

The anticipated growth presents a challenge for the Uptown area and the prospective options for the Laurel Greenway. Where buildings can go up to increase density, the amount of parkland generally relies on ground-level areas, with fewer opportunities to expand upward.

To promote quality parkland in Uptown and the surrounding area, the Laurel Greenway Master Plan focuses on reimagining existing spaces and how to strategically expand with future development to accommodate the pressures of ongoing growth within the region.





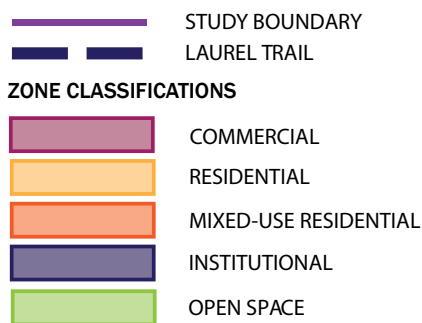
### LAND USE AND THE GREENWAY

The Laurel Greenway Master Plan area overlays a range of land uses as outlined in the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law. The existing Laurel Trail, as the backbone of the future Greenway, falls within a linear system of open space that generally follows the Laurel Creek.

The Greenway area passes throughout an already developed and densifying part of the City. The western-most boundary of the Greenway is designated open space, overlapping Waterloo Park. Moving east, institutional uses include the Perimeter Institute and the Clay and Glass Gallery.

Within the Uptown area, land use is predominantly commercial with the exception of open space designations in the areas of the Waterloo Public Square and the Cenotaph Park space.

The Uptown commercial area supports mixed-use developments, shopping, dining and entertainment. This commercial use transitions into residential and mixed-use residential zoning into the eastern portion of the Greenway area. Currently, this area includes low to medium density housing with commercial strip malls. The Laurel Creek is designated open space where it is day-lit.



# GREENWAY GUIDANCE

As an important and central public realm improvement for the City, the Laurel Greenway is influenced by various strategies and planning documents, in addition to the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law. These documents add to the direction of the Master Plan and should be used in tandem to support Greenway development, as appropriate. Several key pieces of planning guidance are listed below.

### UPTOWN PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

The UPRS led to this Master Plan and outlines the foundations and need for the development of the Laurel Greenway. The UPRS identifies a series of approaches and considerations within three key areas of Uptown: the Laurel Greenway, Willis Way and the Civic Common.

### PARKLAND STRATEGY

Currently in progress, the Waterloo Parkland Strategy has identified the challenges associated with a 5 hectares of parkland per 1000 population target per the Official Plan, notably in the 'central' area (which includes the entirety of the Laurel Greenway area). While Waterloo Park is a major asset, there is significant potential for the Greenway to serve the growth in Uptown for the long term and shape future development. The parkland strategy can become a tool to help grow the Greenway area beyond existing open space land uses.

### TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN 2020

The 2020 plan outlines an active transportation strategy that emphasizes multi-use pathways, wayfinding, connections, lighting, and maintenance, and identifies the Laurel Trail as an area with some of the highest number of active transportation users in the City. Through development of the Greenway, the Transportation Master Plan should be a guide for active transportation considerations and can be a tool to aid in implementation strategies.

### URBAN DESIGN MANUAL

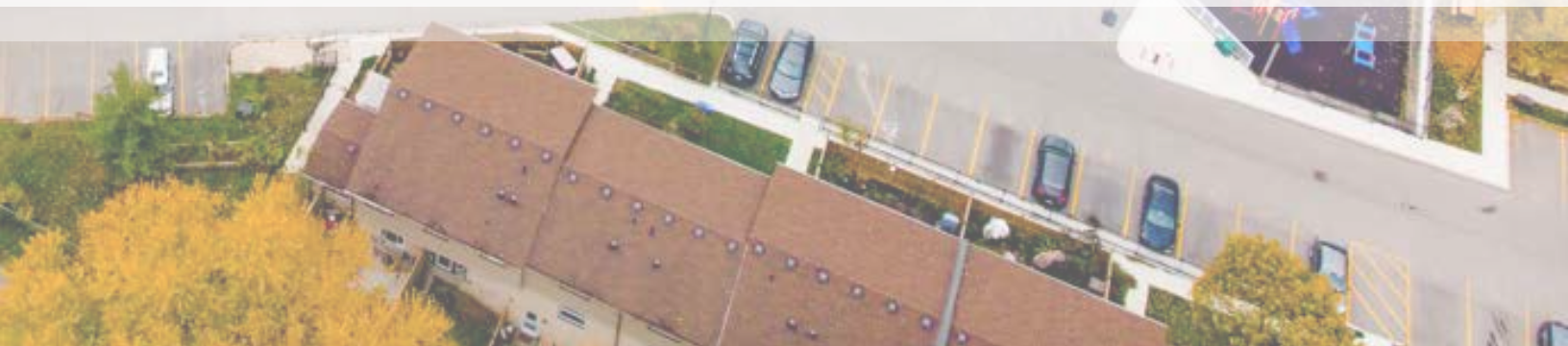
The City's Urban Design Manual presents guidelines for high quality urban design. There is potential for the Laurel Greenway to contribute significantly to the quality of public space design in Uptown Waterloo.





LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

# 3.0 GROUNDING THE GREENWAY





### 3.1 MASTER PLAN GOALS

Through the early project stages, a series of goals were determined that help form the foundation of the master plan. These goals reflect input received through consultation, engagement, and review with City staff. The goals build on previous work and existing site realities, referencing the Uptown Public Realm Strategy, site-specific considerations for the Greenway, and community needs, among others. The goals fall under six categories as outlined below.

#### 1. EVOKE PLACE AND IDENTITY

- Develop a series of inviting spaces along the Greenway that serve as rest stops with seating, gathering space, heritage interpretation, as well as wayfinding.
- Integrate neighbourhood influences into the character of spaces.
- Visually or physically delineate the route of Laurel Trail using plant buffers, markings, or change in materials.
- Develop the existing Manulife Clocktower plaza into a significant urban space that provides a unique refuge of shaded seating and interpretation.
- Enrich the design of the public space at the Cenotaph to provide significant cultural space with more programming opportunities.
- Give more presence to the public square ION station as an entry into Uptown.

#### 2. ESTABLISH A COHESIVE SYSTEM

- Improve the connectivity along the Greenway by providing directional signage and/or pedestrian signals to create a more continuous experience.
- Establish waypoints and emphasize nodes as recognizable stopping, meeting, and waiting locations.
- Expand the reach of the Greenway by identifying areas to extend/widen the corridor.
- Identify and improve priority pedestrian and cyclist crossing areas to ease navigation at busy intersections.

#### 3. OFFER A SAFE EXPERIENCE

- Introduce lighting along the Laurel Trail for the safety and comfort of pedestrians, cyclists and other users.
- Improve the safety of trail crossings by making navigation more intuitive with pedestrian and bike signals and signage.
- Enhance wayfinding at Weber St., Waterloo Public Square, and the Erb & Caroline St. intersection, making clear trail connections and reducing confusion.

#### 4. CREATE A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

- Use important cultural and heritage elements to influence the design of the Greenway, highlighting important views and locations.
- Explore design interventions that pay tribute to the function and history of the creek itself.
- Identify areas to integrate public art (murals, sculptures, lighting installations), supporting Arts and Culture initiatives.
- Support the function and experience of current Uptown event programming and provide opportunities for new uses.



### 5. IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABILITY

- Develop the Laurel Greenway into a resilient landscape corridor that supports Uptown Waterloo and enhances ecological services.
- Enhance the eastern portion of the Greenway (Erb to Weber St.) to support creek ecology.
- Introduce hardy and low-maintenance native and non-native/non-invasive plantings and embrace a wild and natural aesthetic.
- Increased tree planting to create continuous tree canopy along the Greenway.
- Implement low impact design strategies to alleviate the pressure on storm infrastructure by managing runoff with vegetated spaces and permeable surfaces.

### 6. BRING LIVING LANDSCAPES TO UPTOWN

- Break up hard surfaces in Uptown by implementing pockets of planting that increase biodiversity and bring benefits of a more 'wild' landscape into the city core.
- Connect people with nature by providing spaces for people to interact with and be exposed to natural features and elements.
- Create a comfortable microclimate throughout the year, providing necessary shade, wind abatement, planted spaces, and other features.

Laurel Trail at Brighton Street



### 3.2 VISION

The Laurel Greenway is a continuous, playful, and immersive experience that serves the needs of all users, supports natural features and processes, highlights local heritage, and responds to the surrounding urban context.



**THE LAUREL GREENWAY**  
in relation to the Laurel Trail

#### THE LAUREL GREENWAY VS. THE LAUREL TRAIL

The Laurel Greenway is the all encompassing public realm corridor that runs through the urban centre of Waterloo. The Greenway contains the Laurel Trail, a paved path that functions as a main transportation route. This allows trail users to have a continuous connection to the various points of interests and amenities offered along the bounds of the Laurel Greenway.

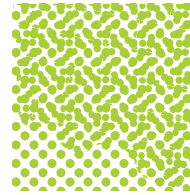


### 3.3 CONCEPT

The concept behind Grounding the Greenway leverages existing spaces along the Greenway and allows for the introduction of new spaces, aiming to ground the Greenway in its place.

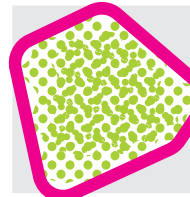
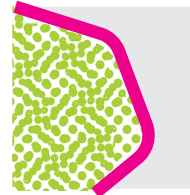
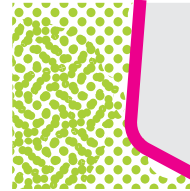
This concept focuses on the implementation of integral greenspaces to define the path and provide spaces to enhance the human experience. From west to east, pockets of greenspace will be highlighted, framed and revealed to create a continuous identity for the public realm. These spaces draw on the culture, history, natural heritage and functional need of Uptown Waterloo and the surrounding area.

As a foundation for the Greenway, vegetation, habitat and ecology would be framed and organized, promoting a healthy urban ecosystem that can be managed.



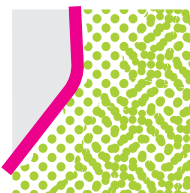
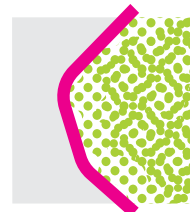
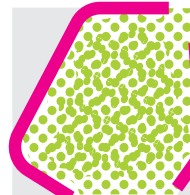
#### OPEN

Dominated by the landscape of Waterloo Park with natural elements and spaces along the trail.



#### FRAME

Naturalized areas contained in pockets and 'frames' within the urban core of Uptown.



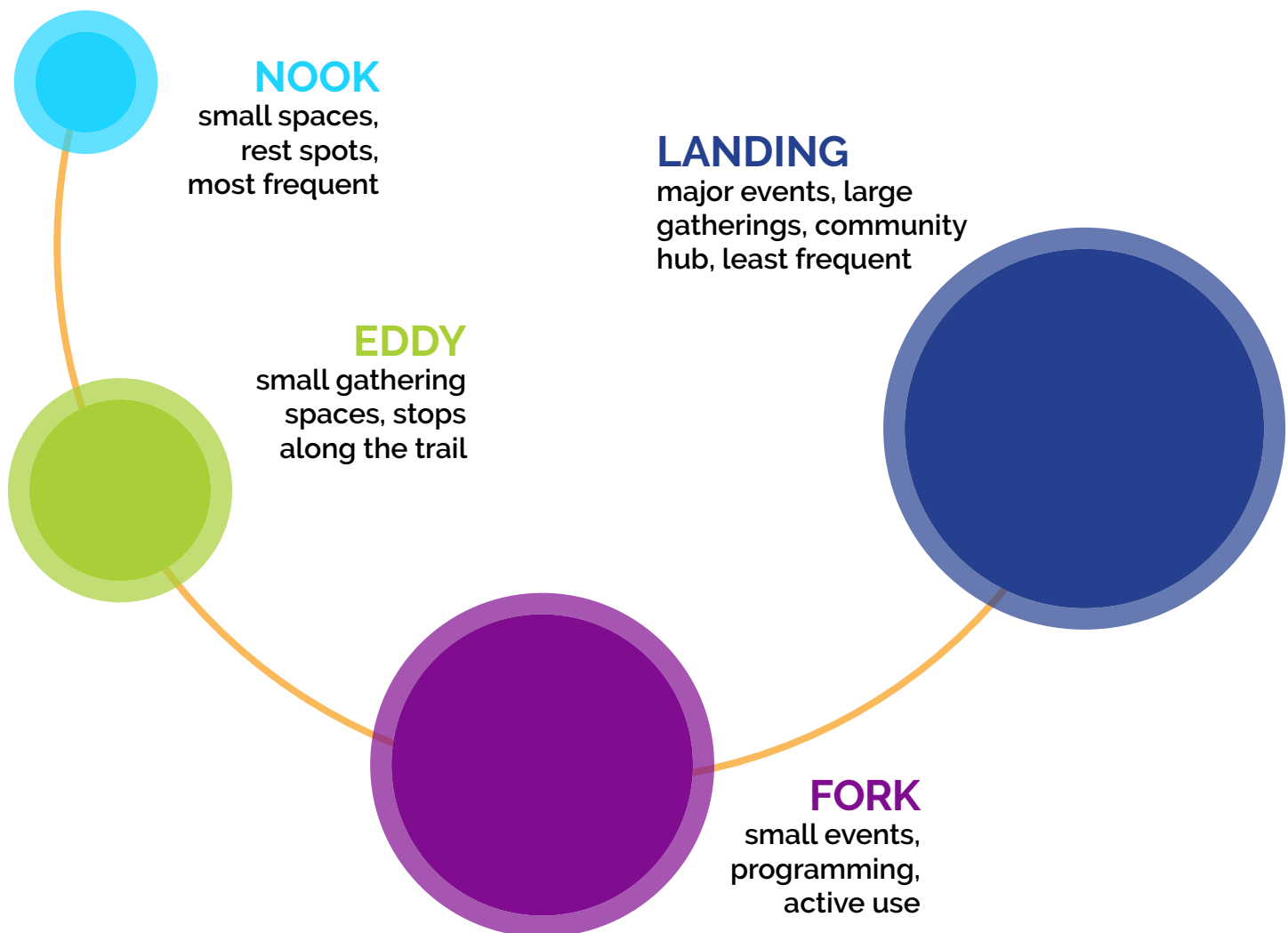
#### ORGANIZE

Continuing to frame the naturalized landscape and arranging high value natural elements along the Laurel Creek and trail.

### 3.4 A HIERARCHY OF SPACES

As a tool to help achieve the Grounding the Greenway concept, potential new public areas within the site are classified within a hierarchy of spaces: Nook, Eddy, Fork, and Landing. The Laurel Trail is the thread that connects these pieces and would run through, around and adjacent to each space along the Greenway.

By characterizing spaces on a hierarchy, it provides a general organization to the needs and potentials that the site-specific spaces warrant. This relates to potential elements such as the type and quantity of seating, furnishings, wayfinding, and size of dedicated space.



**HIERARCHY OF SPACES**  
four scales of open spaces along the Laurel  
Greenway, all connected by the Trail.



## NOOK

Nook spaces are meant to act as rest spots along the Laurel Trail that can be accessed at regular intervals. Designed with the intention of accommodating small groups or individuals for short durations, and drawing the interest of people passing by, these spaces offer minor amenities, seating, and interpretive features. Nooks are embedded in areas that present some significance in the landscape. For example, nooks may be placed in relation to the Laurel Creek, Waterloo history, or other stories of the local landscape.

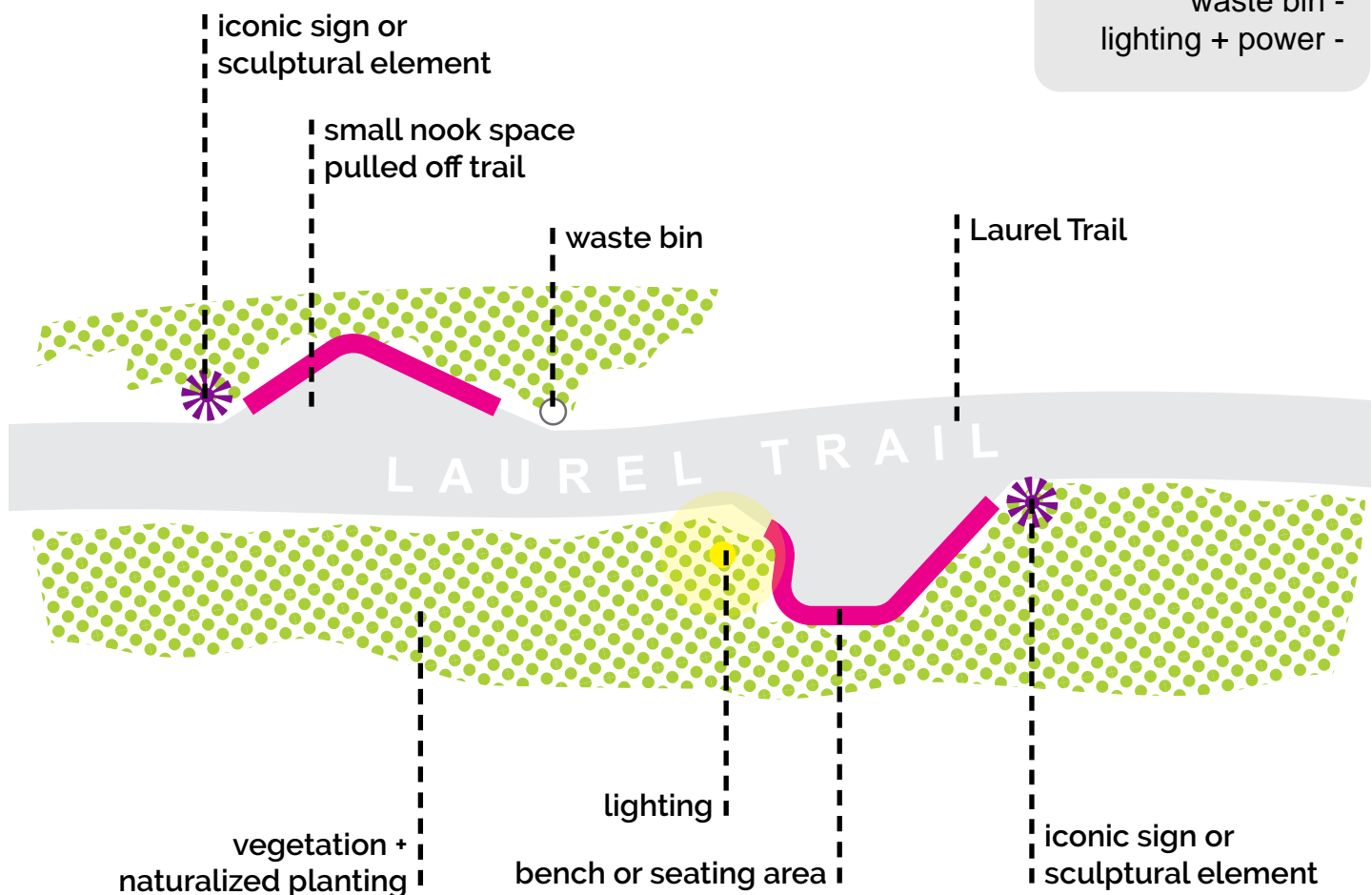


**CAPACITY**  
±5 people



**SIZE**  
±50 m<sup>2</sup>

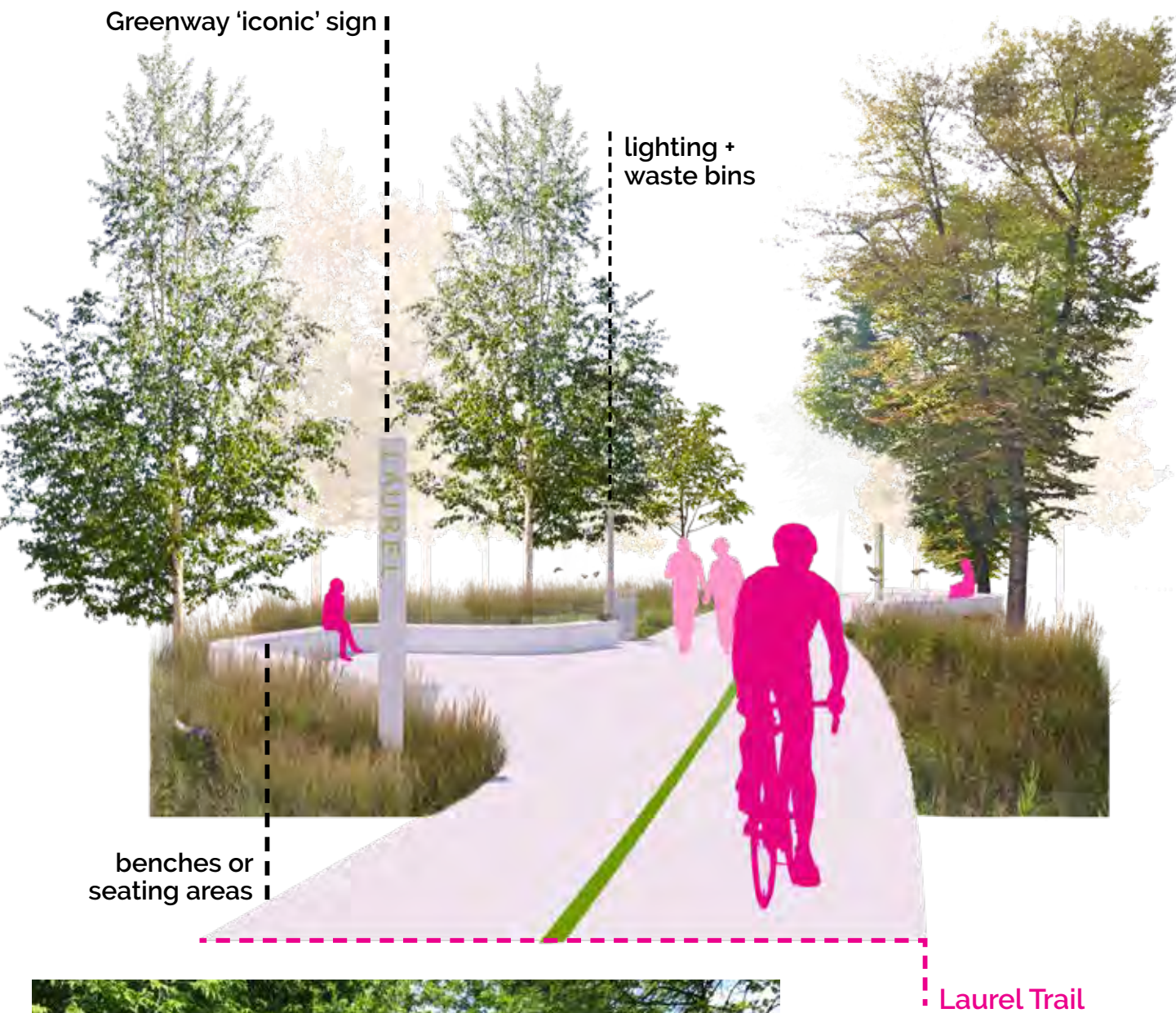
**AMENITIES**  
passive use -  
seating -  
interpretive signs -  
waste bin -  
lighting + power -



### PLAN VIEW

showing two example "nooks" along the Greenway.

# GROUNDING THE GREENWAY





**'NOOK' LOCATION**  
along the Laurel Trail near Weber Street



EDDY

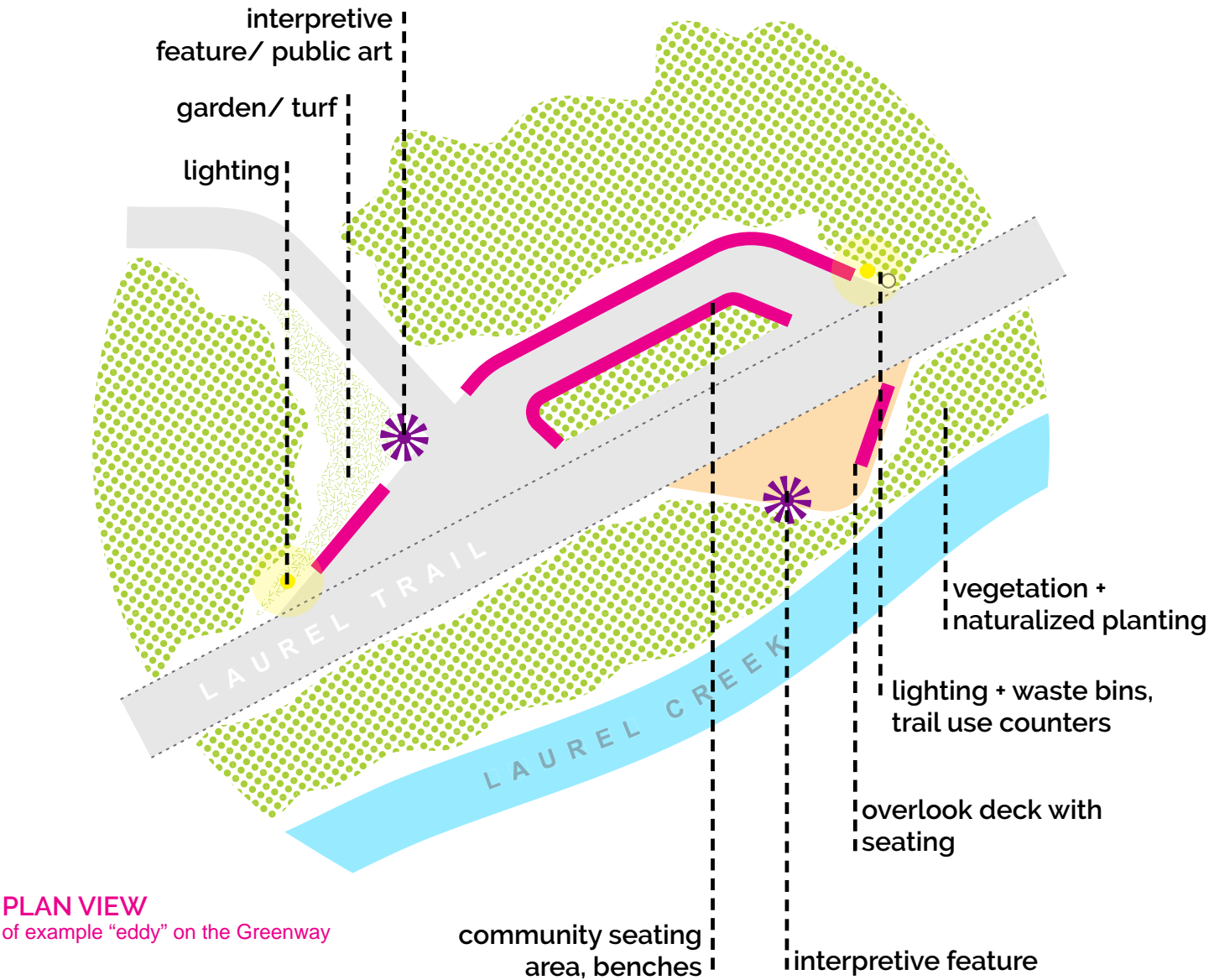
The eddies are immersive spaces that focus on creating an experience related to the surrounding landscape. For example, the design of these spaces can showcase views that connect visitors with the Laurel Creek. Eddies can accommodate gatherings with the possibility of programming for a variety of small events. There is an opportunity to add additional amenities such as play equipment and interpretive features, making them gathering points along the Laurel Greenway.

**CAPACITY**  
±20 people

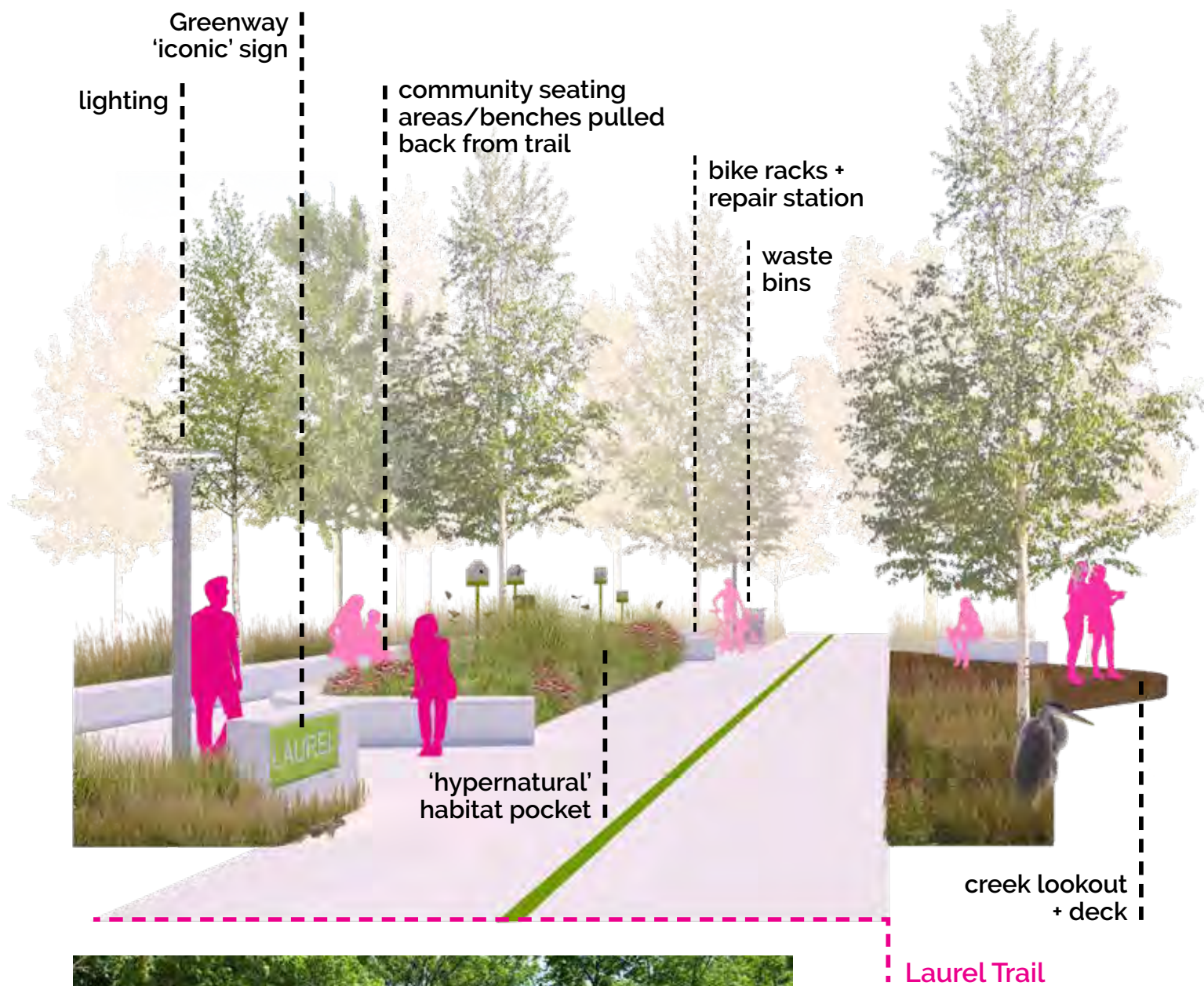
**SIZE**  
±150 m<sup>2</sup>

**AMENITIES**

interpretive features -	mainly passive use -
waste bins -	small gathering space -
lighting + power -	group seating -
bike rack, repair station -	public art -
visual trail use counters -	connect to the creek -



GROUNDING THE GREENWAY



'EDDY' LOCATION  
at Brighton Street and the Laurel Trail



## FORK

Along the Greenway, there are several spaces where the current Laurel Trail meets another pathway, splits off in different directions or is adjacent to existing public space. At these forks in the Greenway - several new spaces are proposed to provide a destination and area for events, gatherings and other programming. The path of the trail remains clear and direct through the fork, with added wayfinding to make navigation of the connecting trails and pathways an easy pedestrian experience. Fork spaces would benefit from the inclusion of public art and significant interpretive features can establish a sense of identity to the space to make it a distinguishable node.



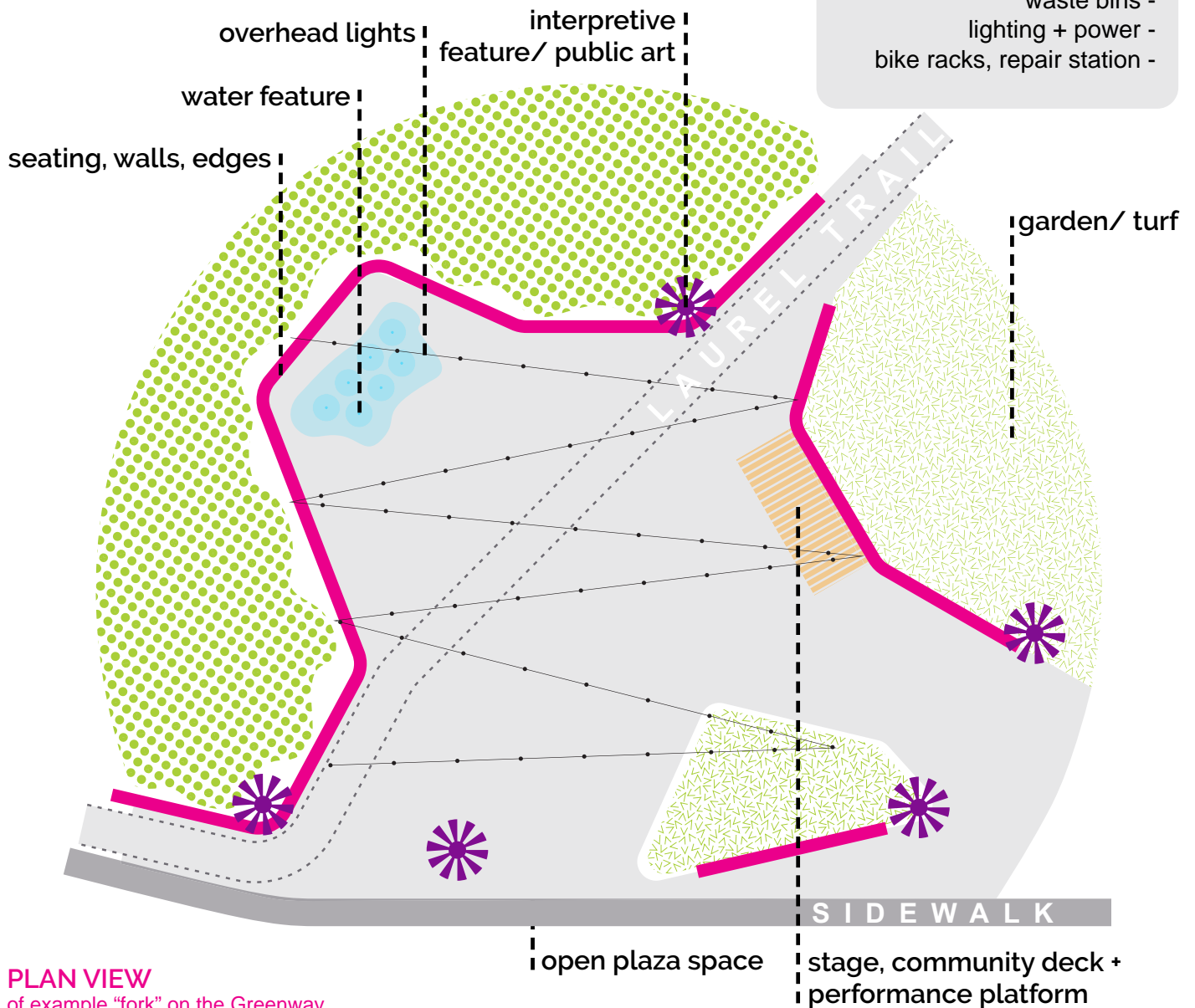
**CAPACITY**  
±125 people



**SIZE**  
1000-2000 m<sup>2</sup>

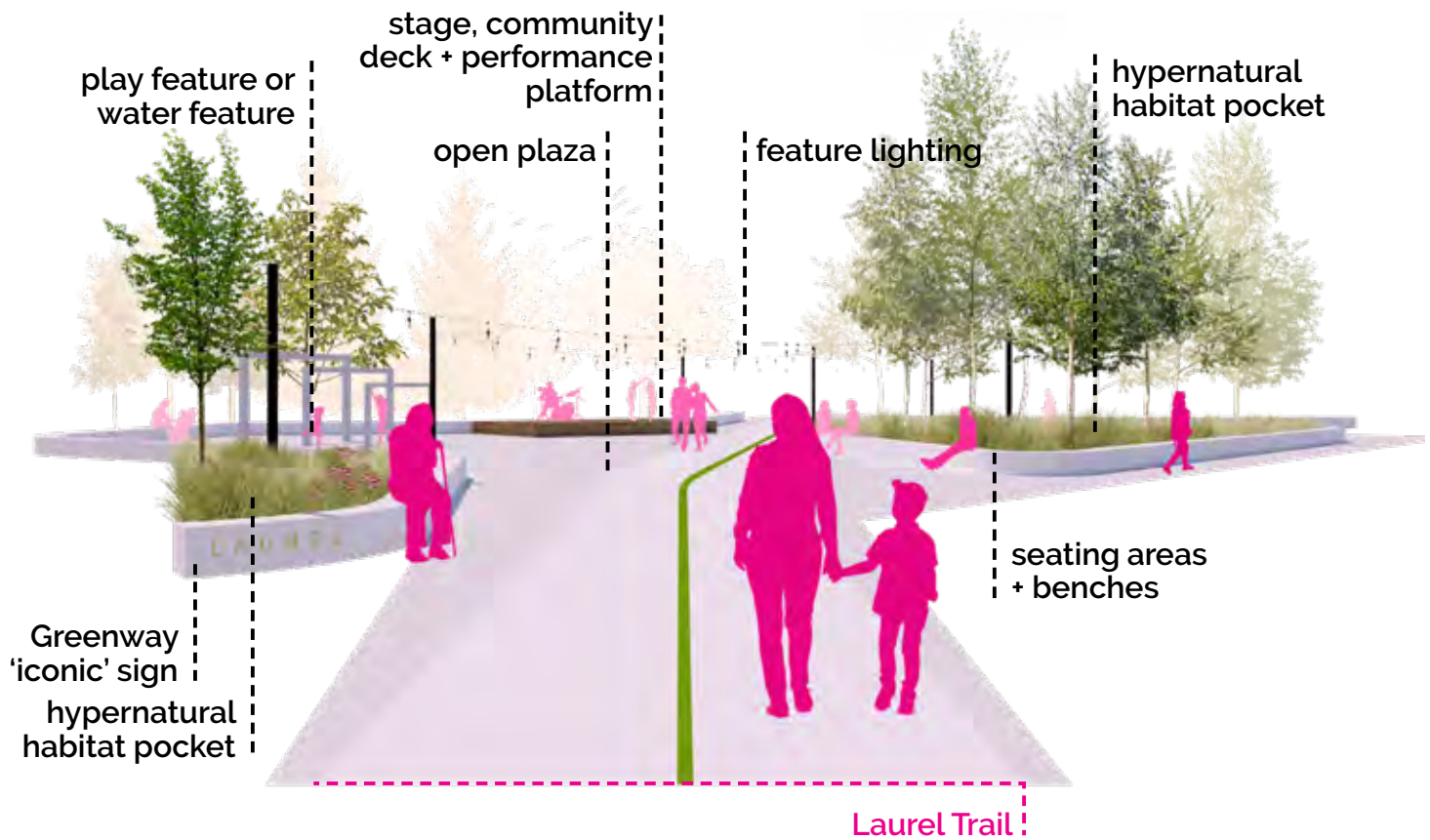
### AMENITIES

- info kiosk -
- active and passive uses -
- Indigenous landmark -
- various gathering spaces -
- group and solo seating -
- public art display -
- connects to the creek -
- interpretive features -
- waste bins -
- lighting + power -
- bike racks, repair station -



**PLAN VIEW**  
of example "fork" on the Greenway

## GROUNDING THE GREENWAY



### 'FORK' LOCATION

at the Visitor's Centre corner of Erb St. and Caroline St.



## LANDING

Similar to the forks, landings anchor the Greenway with a space that can support year-round use and a range of activities within the public realm. The existing Waterloo Public Square already serves the purpose of a landing and, rather than introducing a new space similar to this, the square will be leveraged as an existing asset along the Laurel Greenway. Potential improvements include, implementing a green frame of increased planting, additional seating, and wayfinding features. These strategies aim to improve the ecological and physiological benefit of the space for the natural landscape and people.



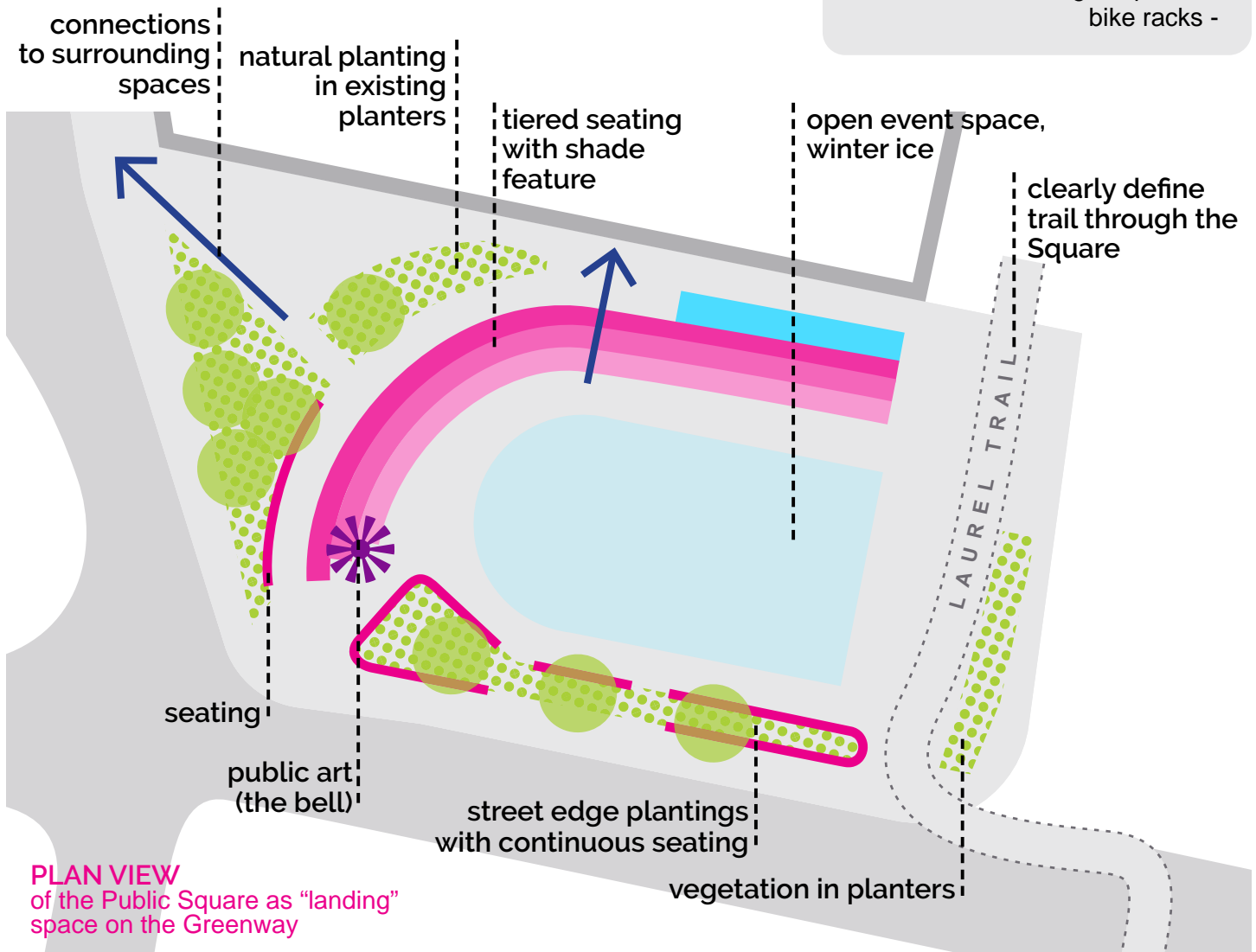
**CAPACITY**  
500+ people



**SIZE**  
±2000 m<sup>2</sup>

### AMENITIES

- supports large events -
- active and passive uses -
- various gathering spaces -
- group and solo seating -
- iconic element/feature -
- info kiosk -
- shade features -
- public art -
- interpretive features -
- waste bins, lights, power -
- bike racks -



**PLAN VIEW**  
of the Public Square as "landing"  
space on the Greenway

## CROSSING

Where the Laurel Greenway intersects roadways, trail users need to easily cross. The crossings should allow people to move efficiently and provide clear wayfinding and information about the Greenway and surrounding area, and support bicycles, pedestrians, and all other trail users.

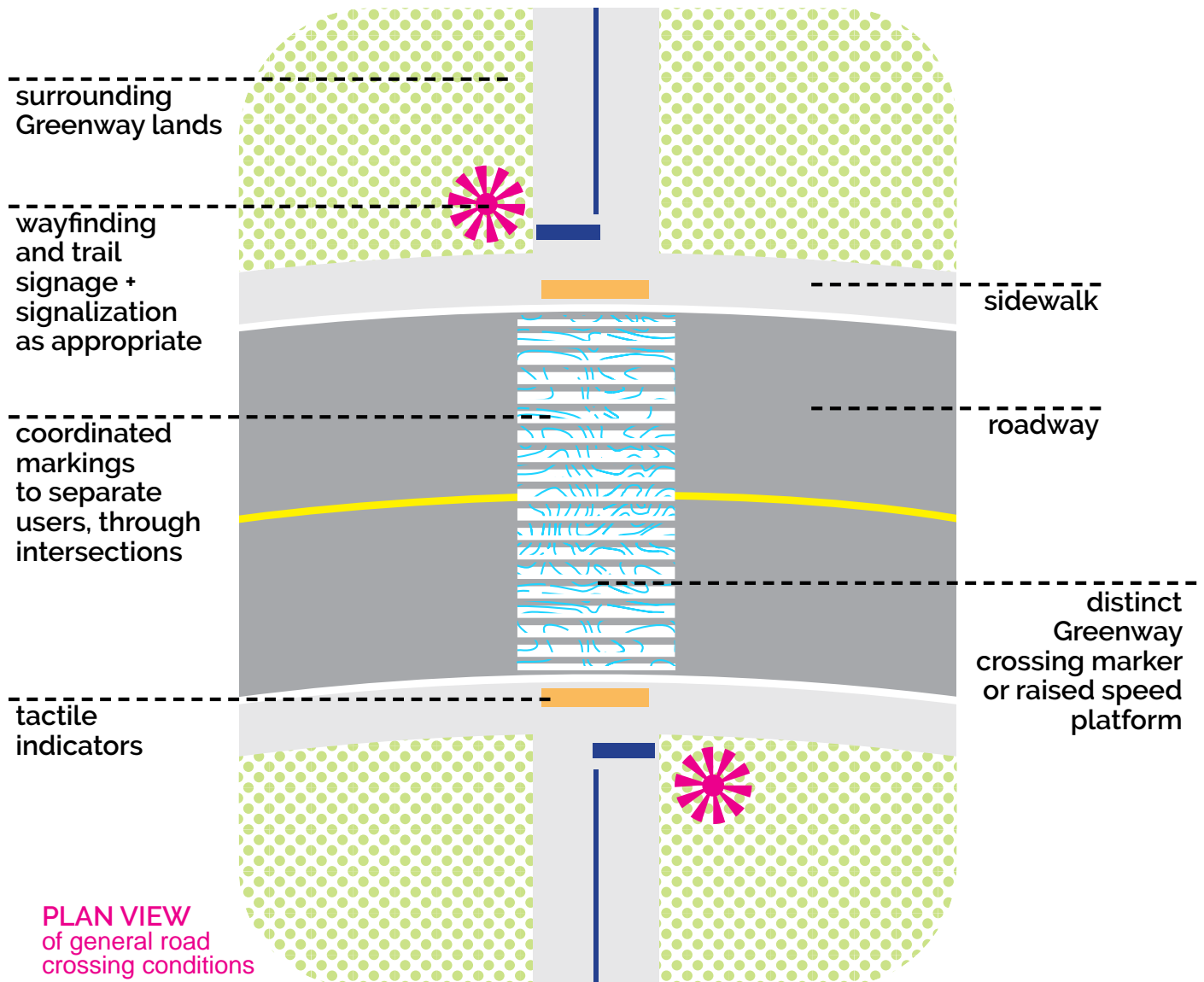
The general approach to crossings is a checklist of requirements in order to support safe and efficient movement along the trail. Each crossing will require specific study and investigation for a site-by-site approach.

### CAPACITY

Supports all Greenway users and all modes of trail transport

### AMENITIES

- signals at crossings -
- wayfinding and signage -
- a defined trail -
- designated trail space -
- waiting space -





### 3.5 DESIGN ELEMENTS

In implementing the grounding the Greenway concept, a number of design elements and performance requirements should be included and addressed throughout all spaces. These aim to bring consistency to the design of the Laurel Greenway and maintain the vision as individual spaces and connections are developed.

Each of the elements noted in this section serve as a starting point of what to consider but should be investigated through detailed design at each individual site as the Greenway is implemented.



PLACEMAKING + IDENTITY



EVENT SERVICING



ALL SEASON FUNCTION



LIGHTING



FLOW + MOVEMENT



HEALTHY LIVING



URBAN NATURE



FLOODABLE SPACES

### 3.5.1 PLACEMAKING + IDENTITY



Uptown Waterloo is an cultural hub, with an identity that reflects an engaged community, advanced public transit systems, local businesses, and major contributions from multiple industries, including technology, manufacturing, and academics. Along with the significant cultural aspects of Waterloo, history is embedded in the area with the ecology of Laurel Creek and sites of previous industry such as Seagram Distillery and Waterloo Manufacturing, among others that helped found Waterloo. Even more embedded in the landscape are the stories of Indigenous people that were established in the area long before the founding of Waterloo and with a presence that still resonates today.

The Laurel Greenway provides a means to tap into and tell the story of the local culture through physical space and by providing a canvas to reflect on the City's changing urban form. The Greenway should call attention to local landmarks and experiences of Waterloo Park, Uptown, and new public spaces to develop a distinct identity that can connect all sections of the Greenway.

The concept of placemaking encourages use and can support a sense of ownership and community adoption of space. It is intended that the Greenway builds on its own context while establishing an iconic identity of its own. Categories of placemaking and identity include: **community-driven space, frequent stops + small spaces, wayfinding, and public art.**



Iconic graphics



Interpretive signage



Eye-catching features



Features that serve the community



Playful public art





### Community-driven space

New spaces along the Greenway must adapt and support a variety of community needs. It is important that the new and updated spaces can be easily enjoyed and programmed by the City and community members. This includes consideration around how each space may be used, including capacity, possible constraints to programming, and adaptability.

The hierarchy of spaces along the Greenway begins to inform types of space based on size and intended use; however, further design is needed to build out each space through more detailed investigation.

Spaces should be flexible to easily support active and passive uses that change from season-to-season, day-to-day or during events. Featured elements can be designed to cater to a variety of programming.

Amenities need to be multi-purpose: platforms that serve as stages during gatherings can also offer elevated surfaces and seating on a daily basis; open spaces and plazas along the Greenway can be functional for typical pedestrian circulation or as space that can accommodate large crowds; interactive water features can become attractive focal points while also providing cooling and play features on hot days. Creating adaptable spaces with provide maximum benefit to the community and Greenway experience.

The Laurel Greenway is a place that currently provides a space where people exercise, commute, socialize, and generally spend time outside. It should be a demonstration of a high-quality urban environment that supports healthy living and human comfort.

### STRATEGIES

1. Introduce space that can easily serve multiple functions. Passive and programmed uses should be supported at all spaces along the Greenway.
2. Engage local neighbourhoods and the broader community in the design process to understand local needs and opportunities.
3. Design spaces that reflect their context and give them an identity. While cohesive, the spaces should be distinct and have features and visual character that defines them.

### Frequent stops + small spaces

Seating pockets and small interactive spaces should be integrated along the Greenway in nooks and eddies to provide moments for people to engage with a space. Small spaces and points to stop provide an opportunity for rest, passive enjoyment and socializing in the public realm.

At regular intervals along the trail, diverse seating options and seating choices should be provided for varying levels of personal comfort or physical ability. Seating should include individual and group options, shaded and sun exposed locations, and options for armrests and back support.

Small spaces should also provide amenities including waste disposal, bike storage, protection from wind, and interactive or interpretive elements. Individual spaces can be unique to each site while maintaining a cohesive character and identity with the overall Laurel Greenway.

Capturing the character of the Greenway, materials used in each space should take inspiration from the local character, history, and natural landscape. Materials should favour a natural palette, including weathering metals, textured plantings, wood, and stone, where possible.

#### STRATEGIES

1. Seating spaces should be located at regular intervals adjacent to the trail, a maximum of 250-metres apart, and fit within the hierarchy of spaces for the Greenway.
2. Material selection should be cohesive with the Laurel Greenway material palette, Appendix #4.
3. Spaces along the trail should meet accessibility requirements and offer space for all ages and abilities.



Gathering along the trail



Places for conversation



Social space in the public realm



## Wayfinding

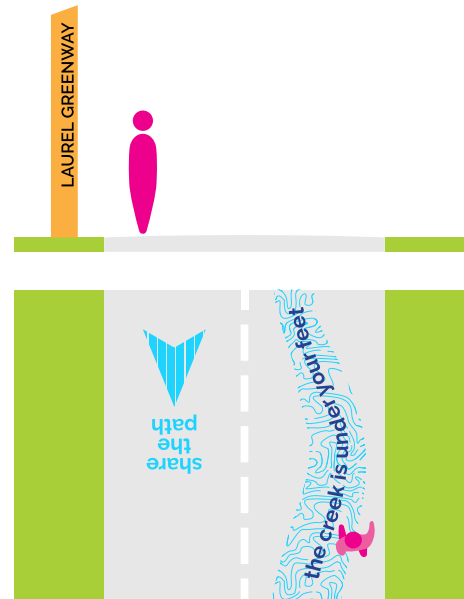
In its current form, several parts of the Laurel Trail are difficult to follow and the path is lost among other sidewalks, roads and infrastructure; this is especially evident in Waterloo Public Square. A wayfinding system is a key component of placemaking and forming an identity for the Laurel Greenway. Wayfinding can provide a means to tie together spaces and provide a visual/tactile identity to the Greenway public realm.

The wayfinding system should provide bold cues or graphic elements that identify the route of the Greenway trail. This system should clearly define the trail as the Greenway spans across road crossings, intersections, and open plazas in Uptown. At these points and others, the Greenway wayfinding system could lay out an intuitive route of travel and spatially define the Greenway area.

At areas including Waterloo Public Square and the path along the north side of The Shops at Town Square, the trail is hard to follow and does not feel part of the Greenway system. Clear and distinct signage can guide users through these complex spaces and define a clear path.

Wayfinding on the surface of the Greenway path should use a variety of distinct graphic or material treatments. This would provide both a clear identity and a safer user experience by avoiding confusion.

Paired with surface treatments, vertical sign elements would support the Greenway brand and give a surface to present directional information and add interest. These would create visual rhythm along the trail and could also support digital display trail counters that give users a sense of how people use the trail, promoting active transportation.



Trail use counters



Information signs



Distinct Greenway trail surfaces

## STRATEGIES

1. Implement a wayfinding program specific to the Laurel Greenway, coordinating with Active Transportation and current City wayfinding tools.
2. Create a playful and engaging brand for the Greenway that can be used on surfaces and with wayfinding options, including a logo, colours, and symbols.
3. Include tactile and visual identifiers in directional, informational, and interpretive sign elements.
4. Include digital trail counters with displays to show trail use in key locations.

## Public Art

Public art is critical to the success of the Laurel Greenway and has the potential to tie it into the surrounding community and landscape.

Waterloo has a strong arts and culture pulse, and this is evident in the many events, performances, and art installations that occur throughout the city. Several art installations currently sit within the bounds of the Greenway and there is an opportunity to build on what exists and begin to see an accessible, linear gallery emerge, with new art installations and performance space along the way.

Art installations coordinated with wayfinding and interpretive elements could form a Laurel Greenway “art walk”, extending the existing Waterloo Park Art Walk. Currently, public art is concentrated in the Uptown area but expanding this into the eastern portion of the Greenway, art could be a tool to bring attention to the surrounding context, and tell the story of the Greenway and the land it is part of.



Public art can build on wayfinding strategies by immediately making a space identifiable based off of a one-of-a-kind feature, iconic element, or interactive experience.

Building on current public art initiatives, “art on the greenway” can provide a voice to meaningful topics in the community and support a cultural contribution to community identity, enhancing the public realm.

This master plan identifies various public spaces along the Greenway, and potential areas for art installations. These locations could be staged for events (Lumen, Buskerfest, etc.), support rotating installations, or incorporate permanent art, embedded in the spaces the Greenway. Art can become an anchor for the Greenway and provide the community with an accessible, engaging, and expressive Greenway experience.

### STRATEGIES

1. Integrate space for public art into the Greenway (installations, performances, events).
2. Link public art with wayfinding to create recognizable destinations and iconic spaces along the Greenway.
3. Promote competitions and rotating installations of public art in tandem with Greenway development.
4. Build on the City’s Public Art Policy and prioritize the Greenway in future Public Art Master Plans.



Interactive features



Cultural influences



Influence of nature





### 3.5.2 EVENT SERVICING

Uptown Waterloo hosts to a number of different events and activities throughout the year that bring thousands of residents and visitors into the City. Events including Lumen, Open Streets, and Winterloo activate the public realm through temporary installations and a transformation of the public realm. Many of these events also use spaces within the future Laurel Greenway area.

To run successfully, each event requires varying levels of electrical power, equipment and other services. Whether it is power supply for a significant Lumen light-art installation or connections for food trucks, current event spaces are limited because of a lack of available services, including electrical power.

As part of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan, new space for public events and programming will be created. With this, there is an opportunity to ensure that necessary infrastructure is provided to support a variety of events.

Waterloo Public Square currently serves as uptown's main hub for events. With the development of the Laurel Greenway, smaller spaces can support the square, creating a connected pathway for events, all organized by the Greenway itself.

Along with power supply, lighting is a critical aspect of the Greenway for both events and regular use. Lighting is discussed further later in this section.



Opportunity for food trucks



Illuminate gathering areas



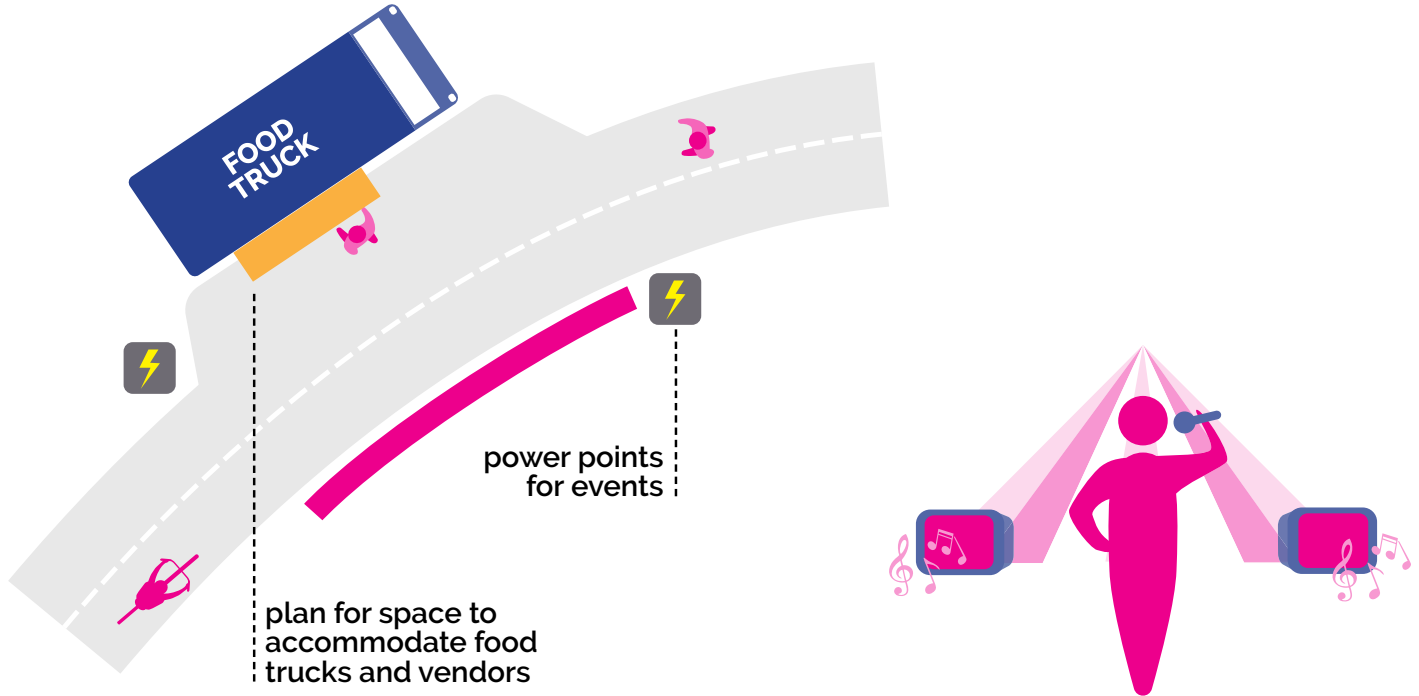
Service support for large events



New possibilities for the City of Waterloo's Lumen Festival



Space for vendors, markets



## Spaces for Specific Activities + Events

Within the Laurel Greenway, upgrades to electrical servicing can provide the capability to host various scales of public events. Being able to connect to convenient power points will provide new possibilities for music, lighting, food trucks, and other forms of entertainment and programming.

The option to host local food trucks and market vendors can support spaces along the Greenway as destinations, and offer different experiences for the public while stimulating small-scale economic benefits. The Greenway can create new spaces for many of Uptown's current event programming.

As spaces are developed along the Greenway (the nooks, eddies, forks, and landings), the detailed design should ensure power is provided, including pedestals, lighting and connection points. These should be coordinated with Arts and Culture to ensure proper capacity is met.

Along with proper services, spaces should accommodate staging areas, equipment, and access for deliveries, if needed. The full function of the spaces should be reviewed with event organizers and operations staff through detailed design.

### STRATEGIES

1. Incorporate power pedestals and power services at new and existing spaces within the Laurel Greenway area.
2. Coordinate servicing requirements with the City's Art and Culture groups, as well as event programming.
3. Plan for adaptability in servicing, and phasing of power supply with the growth of the Greenway.
4. Consider efficiencies around servicing by coordinating with other infrastructure such as lighting, water supply, and internet connections.





### 3.5.3 ALL SEASON FUNCTION

Each year, the City of Waterloo transitions between the extremes of hot and humid summers and cold, snowy winters. While public spaces often work well in the warmer months, the reality is that there are six months of the year (or longer) with the potential for snow and winter conditions.

Seasonal climate conditions directly impact how people use and experience the outdoors. As an important new public space in Uptown Waterloo, the Laurel Greenway must acknowledge and respond to conditions such as snow, wind, and sun to remain an attractive, interactive, and accessible place year-round.

Achieving all-season function is both a design exercise as well as a maintenance and operational exercise. This will ensure the Greenway can support active transportation, recreation, and other programming, even in the depths of winter.

Considerations for all-season function include: considering how spaces can be programmed in the winter, maintaining accessibility on trails, lighting at different times of year, and designing comfortable and engaging spaces for all.



Shaded seating and gathering



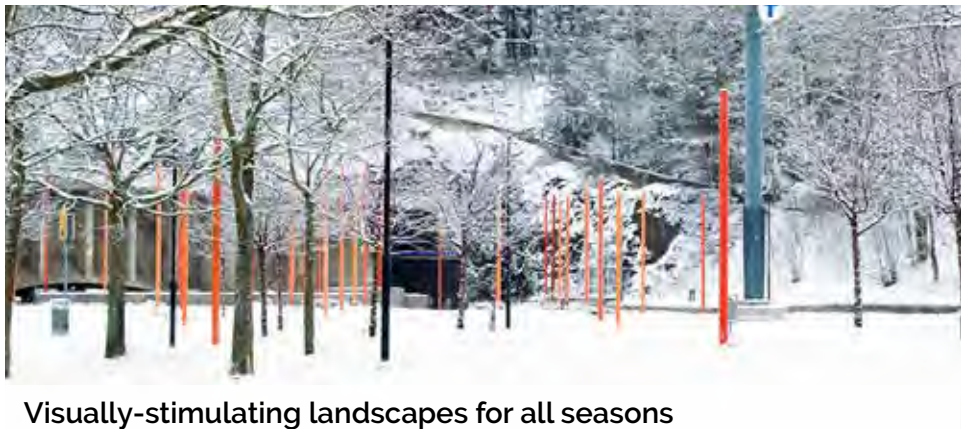
Space for winter events



Winter-focused programming



Seasonal interest



Visually-stimulating landscapes for all seasons

### Winter Spaces + Programming

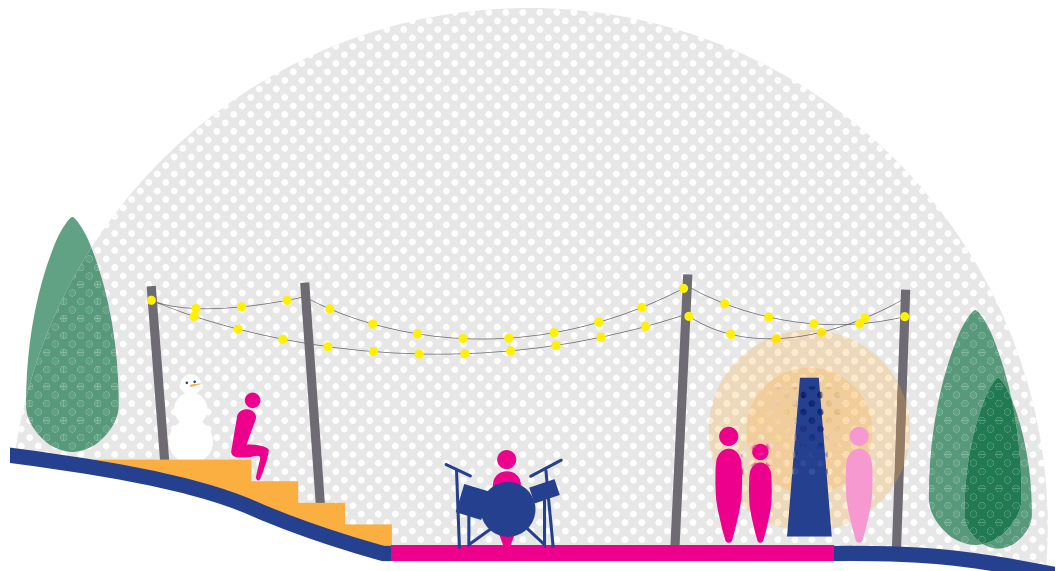
The spaces along the Greenway should support and prioritize cold-season programming and use. With at least half the year in Waterloo's climate having cooler weather, elements should be considered to ensure spaces are comfortable and usable for events, gathering, and passive use.

Many events and festivals take place during the fall and winter months in Waterloo, including Lumen, Winterloo, and New Years Eve events. The Greenway should improve comfort to encourage people of the community to participate.

Elements to support winter spaces may include sufficient lighting to accommodate the early sunsets that come with the winter months, along with efficient electrical capabilities to run outdoor heaters during public gatherings. The colder weather does not have to be perceived as a constraint on outdoor activities, but rather the season can be embraced if properly accommodated. Providing a suitable space for winter-use allows people the opportunity to accessibly seek the benefits of fresh air and natural elements during the colder months.

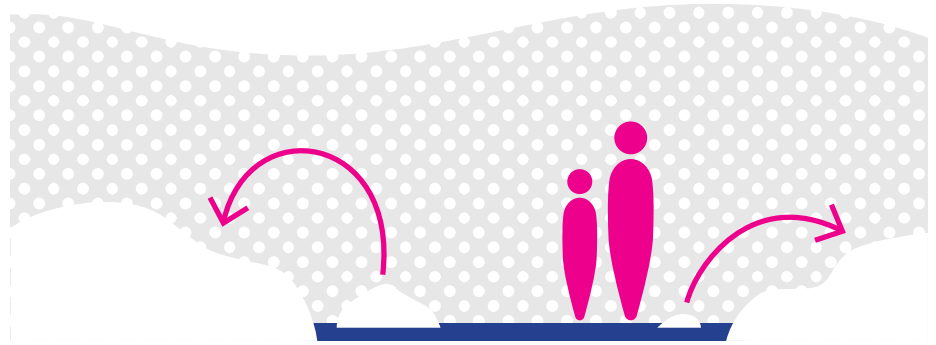
#### STRATEGIES

1. Leverage event servicing strategies for winter use to ensure Arts and Culture groups have the spaces and infrastructure for programming, including power and water service (determine viability and need) during the winter months.
2. Incorporate ways to add winter interest, including a thoughtful lighting design, colourful elements, and vegetation that can be enjoyed all year. Future spaces should be designed with winter interest in mind so outdoor events and gathering during the cooler seasons are normalized, becoming understood as commonplace, building an expectation of members of the community.





### Winter Access + Mobility



The Laurel Trail is used for leisurely and functional movement during all seasons. The trail must support this all-season function by considering the needs of Greenway users.

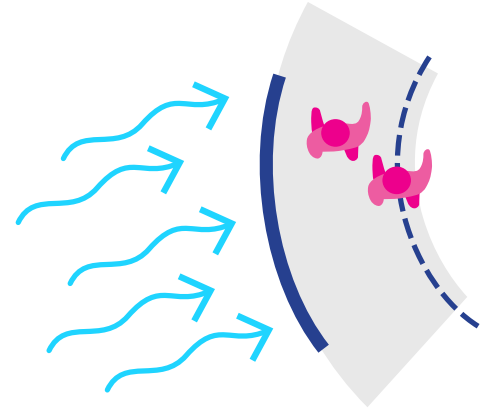
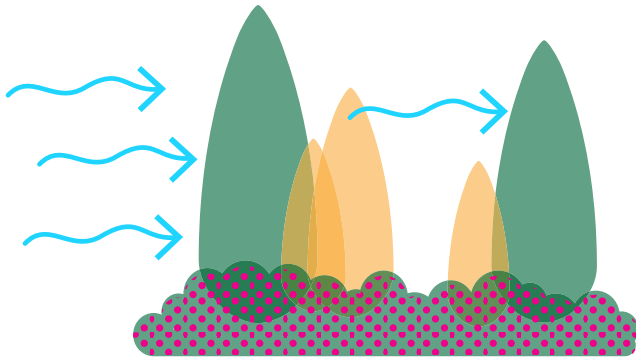
In the winter months, the route must be regularly maintained to keep clear of snow for cyclists, mobility devices and on-foot traffic. Ice and snow can be difficult or dangerous barriers, especially for the elderly or those with physical disabilities, which makes maintaining accessibility a necessity. This requires functional planning of the Greenway and proper consideration toward snow storage to achieve a clear path at all times.

For those who choose the Laurel Trail as their route to work or general means of travel, they expect the path to be reliable and functional even as the threatening elements of winter hit.

### STRATEGIES

1. The Laurel Trail is an important piece of infrastructure and needs to be maintained as such. Clearing of snow should happen at a frequency that keeps the trail safe and secure, allowing users the expectation of use in order to reach their desired destination.
2. Snow storage and the use of ice-melting salt needs to be considered within the broader goals of the Design Elements, including strategies for ecological function and watershed health.

### Year-Round Comfort



The Laurel Greenway should be designed to adapt to the radical changes in weather through the seasons to maintain year-round comfort for its users.

Microclimates along the Greenway can be managed using plantings and other mitigation strategies. Comfortable winter spaces should block Waterloo's strong west and west-southwest winds November through April. Evergreen vegetation can be incorporated into plant beds as an effective way to implement windbreaks along windy corridors of the Greenway. For areas that require more robust wind mitigation efforts, architectural screens can be strategically located to lessen the wind's impact, creating additional points of artistic interest.

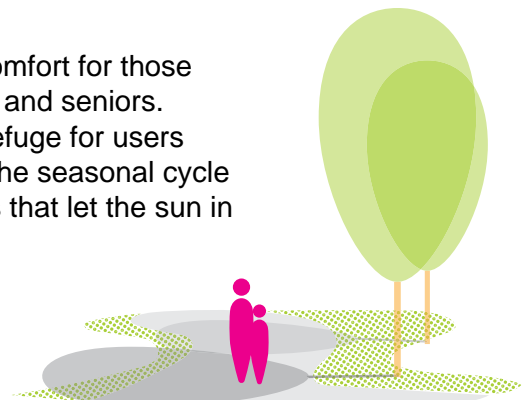
Spaces should also maximize sunlight in winter, spring, and fall, when outside temperatures are low and daylight is minimal.

Summer in Waterloo can be hot and humid and this makes for an uncomfortable experience in combination with the recreational activities that occur along the Laurel Trail. Increased tree canopy will address the current lack of shade along certain portions of the Greenway.

The trail is largely exposed to the sun within the 'Uptown' section, much of 'The Park' section, and east of the cenotaph to Erb Street. More shade should be added through tree planting or architectural focal points including shade structures.

### STRATEGIES

1. Coordinate a winter wind analysis with future Laurel Greenway project spaces. Consider a planting plan and architectural elements that mitigate winter winds where visitors are planned to gather.
2. Increase the shade canopy along the Laurel Trail to ensure comfort for those considered "high risk" for sun-related injury, including children and seniors. Gathering areas should be shaded and treated as places of refuge for users during the warmest part of the day during summer. Consider the seasonal cycle of deciduous trees in future design to create gathering spaces that let the sun in during the winter and provide shade during the summer.





### 3.5.4 LIGHTING



#### Nighttime Safety

Proper lighting adds a sense of increased security to a space and provides the potential of using these outdoor spaces into the evening. Specifically, reliable lighting can extend the duration of use when winter days have limited daylight. Safety concerns have been raised for some existing areas of the Greenway that do not have enough lighting. By illuminating these areas sufficiently, the goal is to deter unwanted behaviour and crimes from occurring. This should include the installation of uniform lighting along the eastern portion of the Laurel Trail, referred to as 'The Wild', where dense bordering vegetation compromises some sightlines and there is less evening traffic.



Lighting at key areas

#### STRATEGIES

1. Coordinate future work with a lighting design that ensures the safety and comfort of users of that particular space.
2. Determine sections of the Greenway that would benefit from consistent pole lighting, such as 'The Wild' zone to increase visibility, perceptions of safety, and decrease the likelihood of hazards for Greenway users.
3. Ensure lighting approaches are kept consistent along the entire Greenway (styles, light quality, frequency).
4. Consider the harmful affects urban light trespass can have on the local ecology and determine ways to mitigate any broad harm.

### Artful Lighting

The Laurel Greenway should use lighting to enhance and add character to the landscape. Using lighting in an artful way will heighten the experience of visitors, adding colour, texture, and interest after the sun has set. The consideration of lighting beyond pure function in strategic zones of the Greenway will extend its programmable hours, making it enjoyable and attractive in all seasons and times of day.

Enhancements to its public realm and extending the Greenway's usefulness into the evening hours will create a supportive environment for hosting large-scale events including the Lumen.

#### STRATEGIES

1. Coordinate with future work to determine spaces where lighting can be used as a focal point to ensure use and interest is maintained into the evening hours, especially considering the shorter days of winter.
2. Consider unique lighting schemes that illuminate landscape and architectural features, adding and enhancing textures and colours for interest.
3. Use lighting as an art element, considering temporary installations and coordinating with City Arts and Culture groups to align with existing festivals and events.



Lighting installations as public art



Unique lighting features to anchor spaces



### 3.5.5 FLOW + MOVEMENT



The Laurel Trail is the main link forming the base of the Laurel Greenway and provides a continuous connection across the Greenway's entire two-kilometre length. To serve both current users and support increased demands driven by future intensification, the ease and function of the trail is a critical component of the Master Plan. The Greenway must support movement for leisure, commuting, exploration, recreation, and, more broadly, active transportation, and can serve as a destination within the Uptown public realm and is easy to access and move along.

This section outlines several important considerations for trail design and integration of the Laurel Trail within the overall Greenway space.

#### Meet Needs Of All Users

The Greenway's alignment and clearway should be accommodating to all users, including those walking (at all abilities and paces), running, rollerblading, skating, cycling, or using mobility devices. The makeup of trail users varies greatly, encompassing families with young children, people travelling to and from work, and those enjoying the trail for leisure. As the Greenway is implemented, any changes to the trail must improve functionality for people in all of these scenarios and not pose any hindrance on their use of the route. This is also true of spaces associated with the trail, ensuring that they support and are well-served by the trail.

Trail enhancements must ensure that the experience is generally barrier-free for those with disabilities, including mobility, visual, or mental impairments. The basic AODA standards must not only be met, but expanded upon to create an enriched Greenway experience for all.



#### STRATEGIES

1. Ensure future work meets AODA regulations and City of Waterloo Accessibility Standards, and consider the principles of universal design to confirm safe and comfortable use of the Laurel Greenway by the community.
2. Ensure a broad spectrum of users are defined so physical design meets the intent and community need. Future design work should be an affirmation of multi-modal use, where community members use the corridor for both recreation and active transportation.
3. Anticipate future trail uses, and consider how e-scooters, electric bikes, and other "e-modes" of transport can be addressed through design.

### Adequate Trail Space

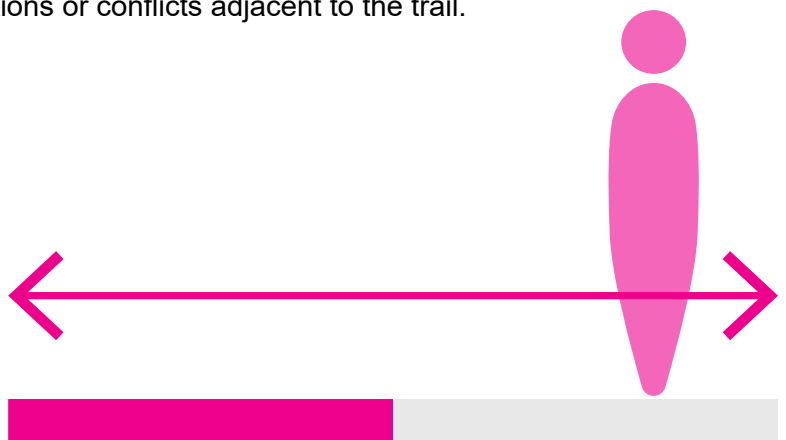
To accommodate various modes of traffic, a minimum 3-metre trail width should be maintained where possible along the length of the Greenway. Where the trail abuts private property or physical barriers, achieving an ideal width may not be possible in the short term but can be explored as the Greenway is established over time.

The goal of the 3-metre trail width would be to allow passing traffic (faster traffic including bikes, those on wheels) to overtake pedestrians or other trail users, and to provide with sufficient individual lane space.

Adequate trail space also means that the trail profile is kept open and users are comfortable in an unconstrained space. Beyond the trail surface, adjacent edges should be kept open to allow for clear views, especially around bends in the trail.

#### STRATEGIES

1. Review City trail traffic counts to understand updated numbers and types of trail users. Ensure trail width is adequate at planned future works, especially through new spaces along the Greenway.
2. Establish a minimum 3-metre width, lined hard-surface trail along the entirety of the Greenway. Build on the established Laurel Trail profile of the 'Park' section, adjacent to the Perimeter Institute and through Waterloo Park.
3. Knowing that the current trail/space conditions pose challenges for this (localized pinch-points, narrow areas), explore opportunities to expand trail rights-of-way.
4. At locations where trail space is an immediate challenge, designated shared space should be communicated to trail users with signage, line painting and tactile surface treatments.
5. Maintain site lines and eliminate obstructions or conflicts adjacent to the trail.





### Minimize Trail Conflicts

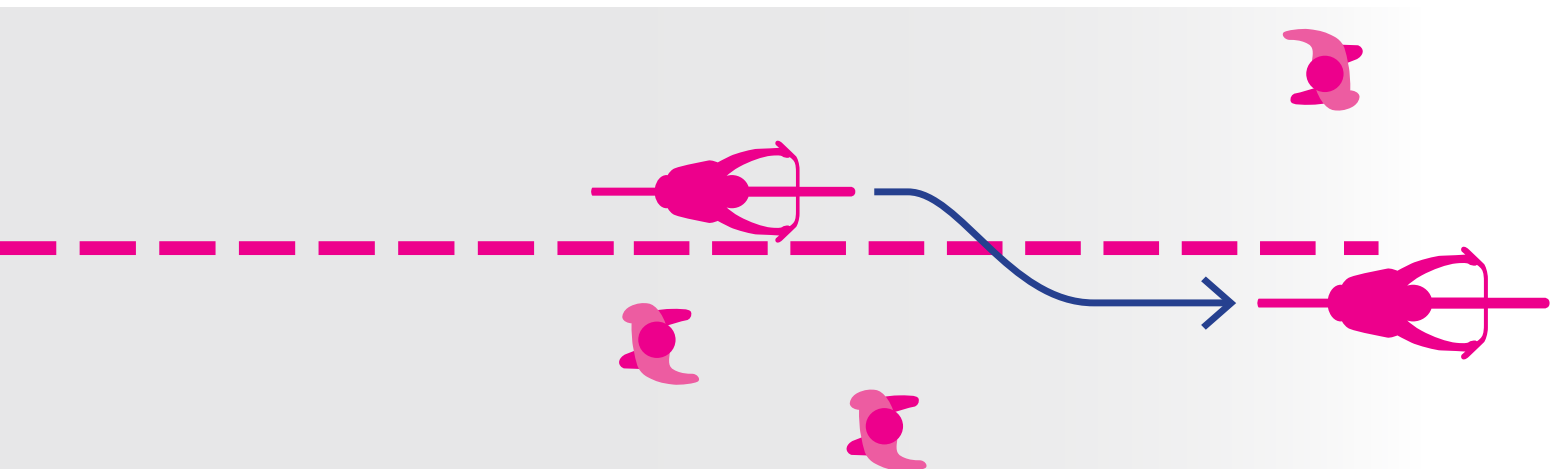
The Laurel Trail is well used and supports various modes of transportation including cycling, running, rolling, walking, rollerblading, and skateboarding. The trail space must be maximized to accommodate these different uses and the quantity of people using the trail at the same time.

A clear delineation of lanes should be considered to prevent conflicts between modes of use. Paired with minimum trail widths, reducing conflicts may include visible line painting dividing the space, the strategic use of bollards, or instructional signage demonstrating trail etiquette.

With improvements proposed for the Greenway, spaces are included along the trail at defined points. While these spaces encourage people to stop and explore while using the trail, detailed design must consider that users should be able to step off the trail itself when entering the spaces to avoid impeding those moving along the trail.

#### STRATEGIES

1. Determine areas where conflict is anticipated and mitigate through physical trail design, line painting, bollards, and/or signage. The physical design of the Laurel Greenway and trail may safely allow for broad uses through lane division based on modes of use or via passive suggestion whereby a user is forced to acknowledge other users through shared space.
2. Communicate clearly to speedier trail users or users on human-propelled vehicles (e.g.: bicycles) to those walking if a particular narrow section needs to be shared, especially at potential conflict areas.
3. Laurel Trail etiquette should be encouraged at a broad scale to kick-start a culture of understanding around trail use, promoting the diversity and inclusion of the community.
4. Consider user dynamics at road crossings. Stopping and waiting to cross major roads will inherently create a mix of users and should be planned for when designing crossings.
5. Where space permits, explore the opportunity for separate pathways to divide pedestrians from faster modes of transportation.



### Clear Route To Follow

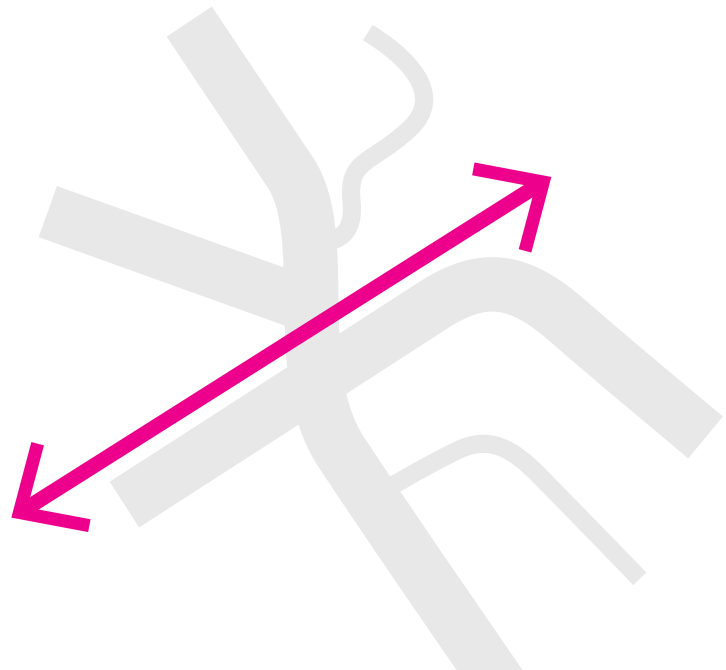
The introduction of a clear, graphic style for the Greenway and trail can create an easily identifiable route to follow. Repetition of colours, graphics, and elements that are attributed to the Greenway 'brand' will increase its legibility and ease of use, for all ages and abilities. This approach should be part of Greenway placemaking and be paired with intentional wayfinding, public art, iconic features, and informative signage.

In areas where the existing path of the Laurel Trail is hard to follow (between Caroline and Regina Street through Uptown, for example), a defined pathway will support continuous movement along the trail and develop the Greenway as a continuous, linear space along its length.

After dark it can become more difficult for users to navigate spaces they might otherwise be familiar with in the daylight. As another aspect of defining a clear path for the Greenway, a thoughtfully executed lighting plan will increase legibility and safety. This will also extend the Greenway's usefulness beyond expected daylight hours, throughout the year.

### STRATEGIES

1. Communicate in a clear way how space is delineated and programmed along the Laurel Trail. This may be done through the strategic repetition of design elements or through non-intrusive signage and line painting. The Laurel Greenway and Laurel Trail will function best for the largest number of people if it is legible and easily understood by users.
2. Consider the Greenway as it may be understood by a first-time user. Determine places of interest that may be helpful suggestions or certain programmed spaces the visitor may seek, and communicate this through wayfinding at particular junctions throughout the Greenway.
3. Coordinate wayfinding and trail legibility with design decisions in future work. The future design of spaces should subtly reveal a program in concert with interesting design-forward wayfinding solutions, establishing a rhythm to the overall Laurel Greenway.







### 3.5.6 HEALTHY LIVING

It is vital that the improvements of the Laurel Greenway continue to support and further enhance healthy lifestyles.

The Laurel Trail is a critical resource for community fitness by providing a route for running, cycling, walking, and other healthy activities. By enhancing the functionality of the trail and developing the overall programming opportunities, the Greenway can be a tool to encourage people to get outside and be active. In order to offer a healthy living landscape, the design must also be inclusive and respond to the needs of a diverse community.

The Greenway is a tool people can use to tend to their mental health by embracing the outdoors and connecting with nature. The added nooks and eddies along the Laurel Greenway present opportunities for people spend time outside of their home. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for and importance of accessible outdoor public spaces has become more evident than ever. The Greenway supports these needs in a variety of ways.

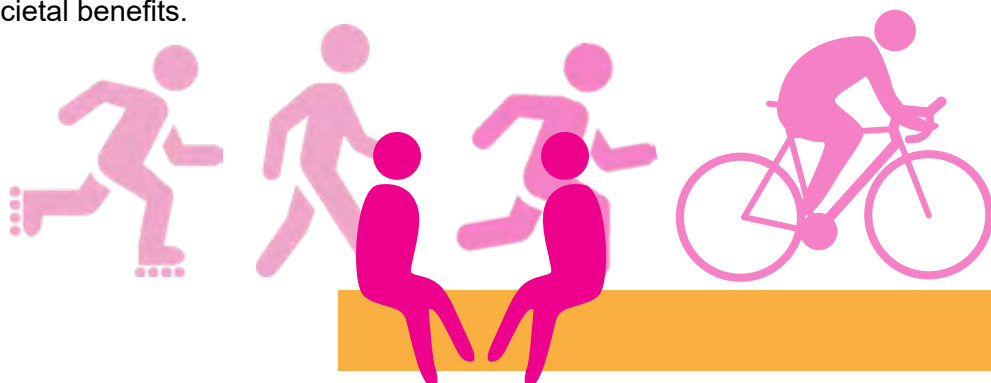
The exposure to greenspace and natural environments, along with visual and tactile interaction with plants can bring significant benefit to a person's health and wellbeing by reducing the feelings of stress and anxiety. Having functional and outdoor spaces maximizes wellness benefits to the community.

Additionally, in efforts to promote mental and emotional wellbeing, spaces that support gatherings will encourage social interaction within the community. The implementation of spaces of various sizes will provide opportunities for the community to come together for daily meet-ups or for special social events. The goal is to provide different opportunities for socialization, recognizing that social interaction is a key element of holistic wellbeing.

Overall, the Laurel Greenway aims to prioritize community health and wellbeing. It is a destination that provides a means of maintaining physical and mental health through exercise, exposure to nature, and social interaction.

#### STRATEGIES

1. Consider the benefits of restorative natural spaces for the mental health and well-being of the community. Integrate planting strategies and connect to existing natural features, including Laurel Creek.
2. Treat the Laurel Greenway as a social space. Beyond the function of a space for movement it should be understood as a place where people gather and interact in a safe and fulfilling way, especially during a pandemic and post-pandemic world.
3. Consider the Laurel Greenway as a way to encourage the physical health of the community. Trail use contributes to a healthy, less car-dependent community, with measurable societal benefits.





### 3.5.7 URBAN NATURE

In the existing urban centre of Uptown, the surface of the Greenway is largely covered in asphalt and concrete. Within this area and along the entire Greenway, new projects should integrate opportunities to ‘carve’ out green space in existing hard surface areas, working around urban constraints and introducing natural infrastructure.

The Greenway would greatly benefit from intensive zones of diverse, ecologically-focused planting.

With an aggregated approach, the intent would not be to create a single large intervention, but rather, multiple small, strategic interventions that collectively make a larger impact, ultimately adding ecological value to the landscape. The Laurel Greenway Master Plan identifies this strategic intervention approach as introducing “hypernatural” spaces.



Introducing “hypernatural” green space provides an opportunity to transform typical expanses of concrete into functioning urban ecosystems.

planters frame dense  
vegetation pockets





### Hypernatural Planting

Through the Greenway Master Plan, the concept of ‘hypernatural’ planting establishes vegetated spaces as intentional pieces of natural infrastructure. The approach of framing pockets of planting in largely hard-surfaced areas allows for controlled wild spaces that provide habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, and creates relief from otherwise harsh areas of the City’s public realm.

This approach also maximizes available greenspace to see planting areas as tools to mitigate air pollution, provide cooling effect from increased planting, and by injecting opportunities for people to experience a “natural” landscape in an otherwise urban context.

**Appendix #5** includes details on the planting approach for hypernatural areas.

**HYPERNATURAL SPACES:** small, dense pockets of planted landscape that provide habitat for native and non-native/non-invasive species, provide biophilic amenity, and contribute ecosystem services to the local area (pollination, stormwater mitigation, shade, air quality). These spaces can also bring psychological and public health benefits to the public realm. The overall approach offers a multi-dimensional solution to bring enhanced levels of living beauty and ecological function in integral pockets throughout the urban landscape.

**DESIGNED PLANT COMMUNITIES:** planting design that is rooted in developing plant communities, inspired by characteristics of the natural landscape. These designed plant communities intend to function similar to ‘wild’ settings but are adapted to perform in the urban context. This requires careful species selection and establishment routines.

### STRATEGIES

1. Seek opportunities to replace turf with native and non-native/non-invasive species in dense hypernatural planting beds.
2. Break up large hardscapes with framed pockets of wild planting and use planting beds to capture runoff, as appropriate.
3. Allow space for people to interact with planting and green spaces to foster biophilic experiences along the Greenway.
4. Provide interpretative elements to share information about green infrastructure and the importance of plants in urban areas.
5. Use designed plant communities tolerant of urban conditions.



Framed pockets of planting



Hypernatural planting approach in a highly-urban setting.



Planting as infrastructure





### 3.5.8 FLOODABLE SPACES

The Uptown Public Realm Strategy frames the Laurel Creek as an asset for the Uptown area that should be celebrated. The Grounding the Greenway concept embraces this approach while recognizing the constraints of the floodplain.

The floodway area is the most significant restriction on Greenway development. Detailed design for spaces included in the Master Plan must account for impacts to water moving through the landscape in the event of a flood. Individual spaces and the elements they are comprised of must not impede water flows or displace volumes in the floodplain.

Despite these restrictions, there are opportunities for the Laurel Greenway to serve as key public realm while also supporting the requirements of the floodplain. Changes to the existing landscape can provide enhancements to both the public realm and the function of the floodplain, seeing the creek as an asset rather than a barrier.

The nooks, eddies, forks and landing spaces of the Greenway need to support the realities of a landscape that will experience more frequent and severe weather events as a result of climate change. A 'floodable landscape' approach should be taken through detailed design that recognizes the inevitability of flooding and is designed accordingly.

The Grounding the Greenway concept provides an opportunity to draw attention to the importance of Laurel Creek and the natural system it is part of, even in areas where it is hidden below the ground.



Site elements accommodate floodwater



Establish and support creek edge ecology



Spaces resilient to flood events

#### STRATEGIES

*The GRCA should be consulted through the design of specific Greenway spaces and can provide input on design decisions for areas within the regulated floodplain. The following are general guidelines only.*

1. Avoid earthworks and grading that displaces floodplain volumes in spaces along the Greenway.
2. Ensure furnishings and fixtures do not impede floodwaters in the event of a flood (ie. open benches instead of solid seat walls).
3. Maintain or increase permeable surfaces and enhance the creek riparian zone with native planting.
4. Provide educational and interpretative opportunities to share information about the importance of the creek and greater Grand River watershed.



LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

# 4.0 PLANNING FOR THE GREENWAY

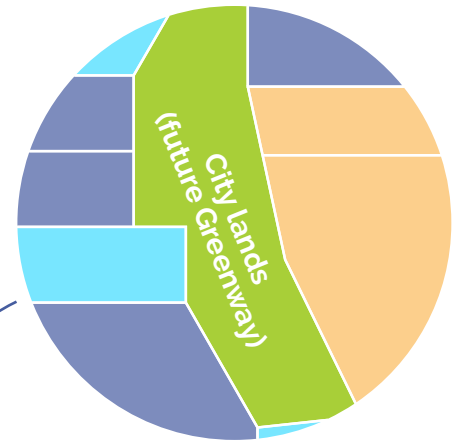


## 4.1 OVERVIEW

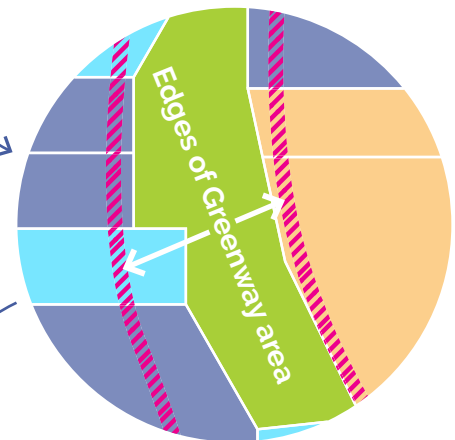
The **Laurel Greenway Master Plan** lays out a vision to guide the evolution of the Greenway over the next 20 years. A key piece of this vision is that the future Greenway provides a continuous experience along its length - a challenge in its current setting.

The area of the Greenway is not a continuous space; it is a mosaic of different land uses, property owners and changing characteristics along its entire length. In order to realize the continuity identified in the vision, a planning framework is required to support and guide consistent implementation, ensuring that there is a strategy behind future planning decisions, facilitating and guiding compatible development.

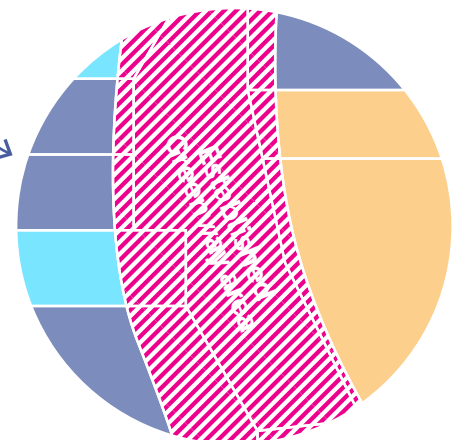
This master plan builds on existing planning guidance at the provincial, regional and municipal levels, setting the context in which the Laurel Greenway can be achieved. The overarching policy and regulatory directions are noted earlier in this plan, **section 2.7**. Moving from the existing policy, this section outlines the strategy for implementing the Laurel Greenway Master Plan and how to define, guide and grow the Greenway through planning.



Example of adjacent land parcel fabric and the Greenway



Establishing the Greenway area within the existing fabric



Designating the Greenway area with specific policy provisions

### 4.2 ESTABLISHING THE LAUREL GREENWAY IN POLICY

The Laurel Greenway will become a critical component of the Uptown Waterloo public realm and, building on the 2019 Uptown Public Realm Strategy (UPRS), the Greenway should *create a connected linear park space through the middle of Uptown*. Building on this, the success of the Greenway will require continuity and consistent approaches to planning to ensure that the space can truly be connected as a linear park along its nearly two-kilometre length.

The Laurel Greenway Master Plan establishes an area that will become the Laurel Greenway. As this landscape is comprised of a variety of parcels with different land owners, rights-holders, uses, and infrastructure, the area will require a consistent approach to ensure development supports the overall Greenway vision, allowing for protection of existing space and opportunities for future growth of the Greenway.

The overall master plan guidance is intended to be supplemental to the planning policies of the City of Waterloo Official Plan and will be supported by direction through the Zoning By-Law. The master plan is also supported by the City of Waterloo Urban Design Guidelines and other development standards. As the plan unfolds and updates to municipal policy are made, it is expected that there will be opportunities to further embed the master plan within those updates.

This planning framework supports the Laurel Greenway as a distinct and defined area with specific requirements to guide development and future work within the Laurel Greenway Master Plan area.

Planning for the Greenway's formal establishment and future growth requires a clear policy approach. This is proposed to hinge on three pillars, noted at the right and further explored in the following pages.

#### DEFINE THE GREENWAY WITH A SPECIFIC PROVISION AREA

To consistently guide and plan for the entirety of the Laurel Greenway area, it first needs to be defined spatially. The Greenway will be established as a bounded area, coinciding with the “Study Boundary” or “Study Area” as noted in the Master Plan. In order to achieve this, the lands within the Greenway study area will be designated as a Specific Provision Area (SPA) and identified on Schedule A6 of the Official Plan.

#### GUIDE DEVELOPMENT WITH POLICY AND SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Uptown Waterloo area, including the Laurel Greenway, is under the jurisdiction and guidance of the City of Waterloo Official Plan. With this ongoing and continued development, City policy is needed to preserve the current open space areas of the Greenway and to intentionally and appropriately guide future development happening within, adjacent to, and near its boundary. Development should respond to the Greenway to enhance the public realm.

#### SEEK OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH USING INCENTIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Laurel Greenway boundary encompasses an area of Uptown that is largely developed and built-out. To grow the Greenway within this built-out urban setting, opportunities should be explored to strategically acquire new lands; guide new development proposals to support the function and vision of the Greenway; and add space to create a wide, linear park. Further, incentives for developers to include privately-owned public spaces (POPS) in new proposals and for the regulated Greenway lands subject to restrictions on development due to flooding hazard to be accepted as parkland space as part of new development .



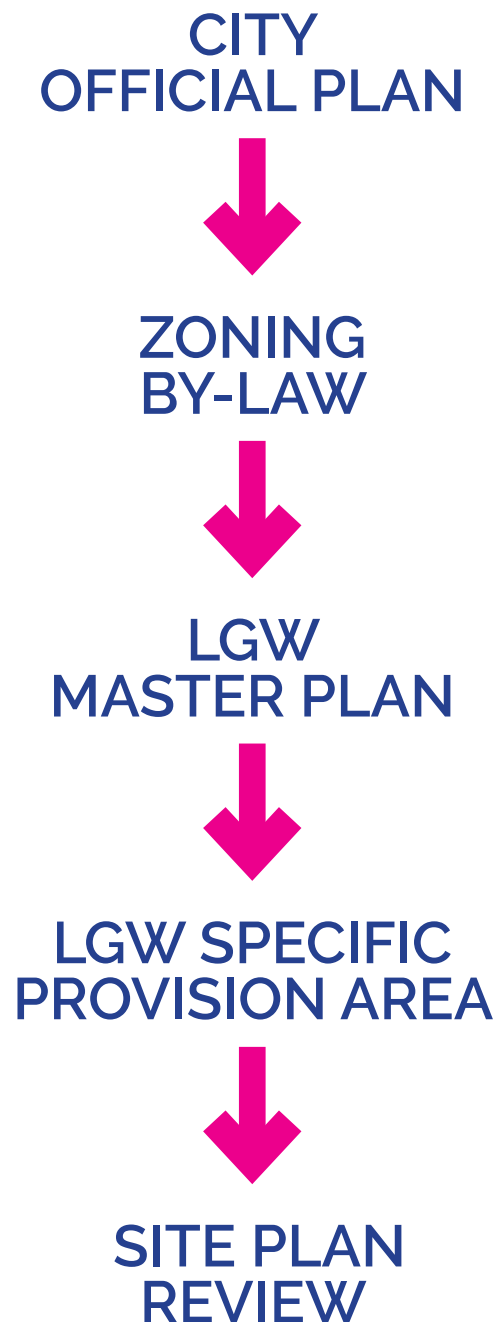
### 4.2.1 THE LAUREL GREENWAY SPECIFIC PROVISION AREA

A Laurel Greenway Specific Provision Area would provide a tool to promote, encourage and enforce the master plan vision consistently along the Greenway.

The City of Waterloo Official Plan (OP) defines several Specific Provision Areas (SPAs) that govern planning and development in defined areas of the City. Currently, these include areas such as the Seagram Lands, Northdale Neighbourhood, a Heritage Conservation District, and individual properties, among many others. The current OP lists over 70 SPAs. In these areas, additional clarity and specific policy direction is provided to note the intent for the future use of land. SPAs are supplemental to the OP and outline direction about the development of those specific areas. Overall, defining SPAs in the City allows for a consistent planning approach to a particular site or defined area.

For the Laurel Greenway, one of the noted challenges is implementing a layer of consistent policy direction over the entire area, ensuring that future development provides opportunities to enhance and reinforce the Greenway itself. By creating a Laurel Greenway Specific Provision Area (LGSPA), policies can ensure that development conforms with the vision and concepts of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan. Beyond this, an LGSPA can further promote the preservation and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage assets within the designated area.

The area and limits defined by this master plan as the Laurel Greenway would serve as the base for the LGSPA. As development proposals arise within this area, the SPA would provide policy direction to assist in the review of Site Plan applications, or applications to amend the Official Plan or Zoning By-law. A policy requiring Holding Provisions on specific parcels could ensure the demonstration of specific requirements prior to approval. Similarly, the *City of Waterloo Urban Design Manual* and other standard and guideline documents would help to realize the Laurel Greenway vision over time.



Potential Greenway  
planning framework

### 4.2.2 ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

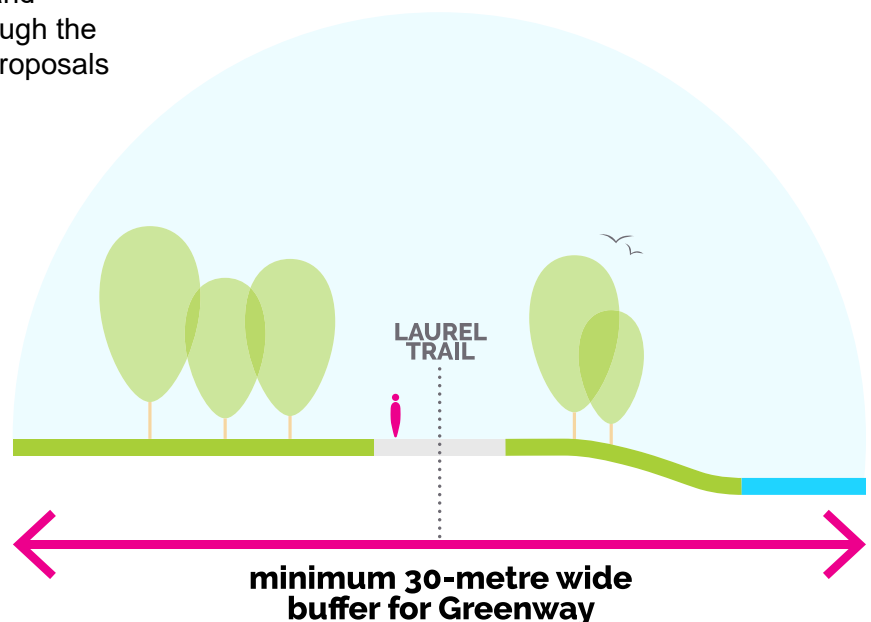
Within the Laurel Greenway SPA, the City of Waterloo would be able to shape future redevelopment to ensure that the Greenway is protected and enhanced, maintaining it as a focus of the public realm and supporting an engaging experience for visitors. Finer-grained, area-specific zoning requirements and added layers of design guidance can further shape how development occurs along the Greenway.

Currently, of the land parcels within the identified Laurel Greenway area, 50% are City-owned, 45% are privately owned, and the remaining 5% are Region-owned. Some of the lands identified are only partially within the Laurel Greenway area, whereas others are entirely within the boundary. Zoning for these lands will come from a revised City of Waterloo Official Plan that includes the introduction of the LGSPA. SPA processes should ensure conformity with the intent of this master plan.

Current zoning along the Greenway includes provisions for higher density, larger developments as well as new uses, all more intensive than currently exists. Zoning within the LGSPA will need to be updated to provide detailed performance standards that reflect the broader vision and policies as set out in the Official Plan through the LGSPA. This will ensure that when new proposals

for these lands come forward, the plans can be reviewed and guided to see the Greenway enhanced and, likewise, new development benefits from the Greenway.

Through zoning and development controls, the goal, as identified in the Uptown Public Realm Study, of a 30-metre wide Greenway can begin to be realized. While the Laurel Greenway area is not a consistent 30-metre width, policy with the LGSPA can guide consistency and allow adjacent private lands to support the Greenway vision. Into the future, should opportunities come up for the City to acquire new lands or when there are redevelopment opportunities, parts of the Greenway can expand and fill out the extent of the 30-meter buffer goal, adding to the City-owned lands that make up the Greenway.

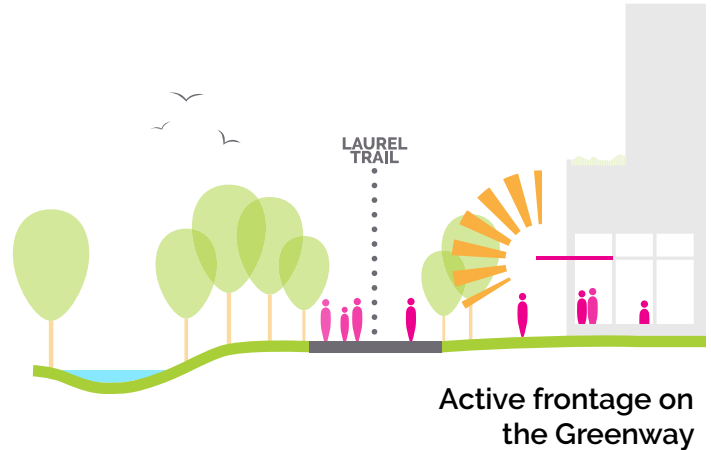




## FRONTAGE ON THE GREENWAY

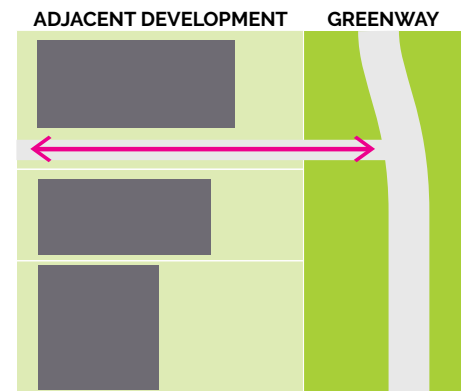
The Laurel Greenway should be viewed as a critical piece of the public realm and as an active transportation corridor that supports recreation, movement and public activity. Development adjacent to the corridor and within the LGSPA should be pedestrian-scaled with a frontage that is inviting, visually interesting and offers a transition between the Greenway and adjacent built form.

While the Greenway is located at the rear of many existing buildings, new development should be required through zoning to be oriented and activated in a way that recognizes the Greenway as an active transportation corridor similar to a streetscape. Zoning regulations for properties within and adjacent to the Greenway should consider activation of elevations that face the Laurel Trail, setbacks and step backs of trail-facing elevations to enhance pedestrian comfort and scale, and tower dimensions and orientation to help manage shadows and wind impacts.



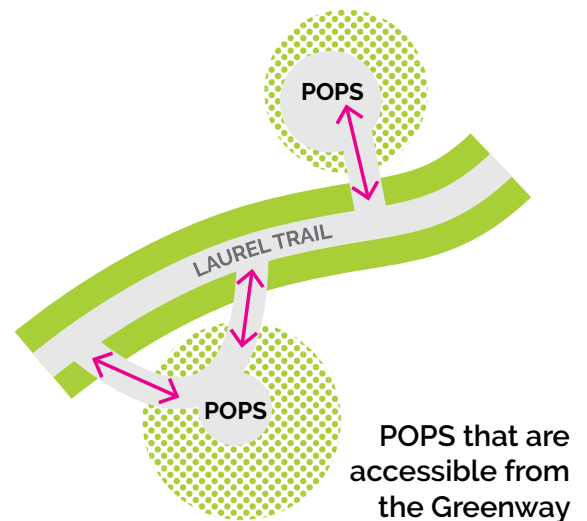
## SUPPORTING ACCESS TO THE GREENWAY

As public realm and a corridor for movement, development along the Greenway should be designed to accommodate access to it and the trail. Built form should not create barriers to accessing the Laurel Greenway, but should instead be porous, providing walkway blocks, direct access to adjacent streets, and access to and from commercial areas, where possible.



## PRIVATELY-OWNED PUBLICLY-ACCESSIBLE SPACES

There will be opportunities for future development adjacent to the Laurel Greenway, connecting to the public realm in a visual and functional way. Privately-Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces (POPS) should contribute to the porosity of the Greenway edges where appropriate, increasing ease of access for all users. These connections should be legible for the user and barrier-free, meeting AODA requirements.



### 4.2.3 POTENTIAL INCENTIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

The Uptown area is currently served by a small number of local parks and open spaces, with the large open space of Waterloo Park in close proximity to the west. The current parkland in the defined Uptown Growth Area is limited and, with higher density targets per the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GPGH), the existing parkland will face increased demand and pressure. There is a limited land base for new, local parkland and greenspace in Uptown because of existing development, and this is true throughout the length of the Greenway area.

The existing built form that defines the edges of the Greenway is another challenge to overcome. As development continues on these edges, a strategy to find new open space is needed. Adding to this pressure to find space, much of the existing parkland/open space falls within a special policy area for flood hazard, with limitations prescribed to these lands in the Official Plan.

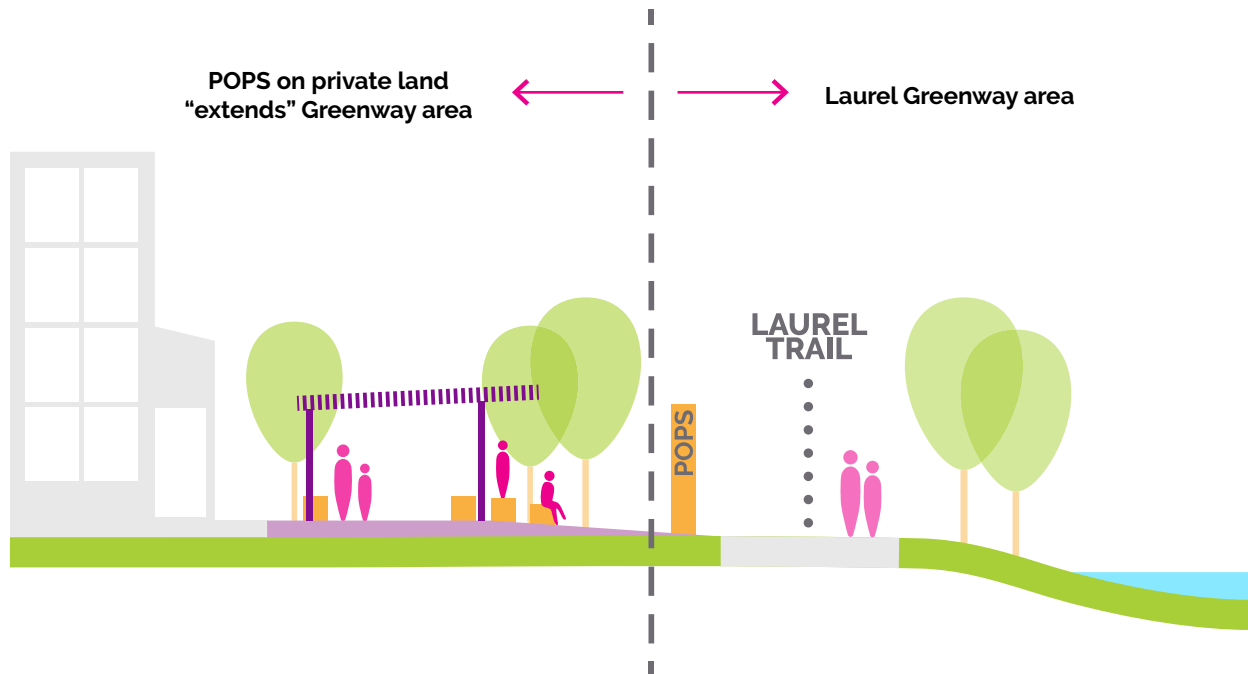
To find space for the Laurel Greenway and encourage expansion of the Greenway area, development can be incentivized and guided with several strategies and policy updates including:

- privately-owned publicly accessible spaces;
- incentives for development that supports the Greenway;
- and redefining the hazard lands in the Laurel Creek floodway and flood fringe.

These strategies are outlined in the next pages.



The existing Laurel Trail moves through a narrow band of open space between existing land uses, all zoned for increased future densities.



### P.O.P.S. ALONG THE GREENWAY

Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS) should be used to expand the experience of the Laurel Greenway on adjacent private lands, better connecting it to the surrounding community. This approach would add amenity to the Greenway where public lands cannot provide adequate space along the narrow Greenway corridor. Greenway POPS requirements should build on Waterloo's Guidelines for Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS).

As private development is proposed along the Laurel Greenway Specific Provision Area (LGSPA), developers should be encouraged to include Greenway POPS that may supplement parkland dedication and enhance public realm associated with a proposed development. Through the zoning and site plan process, the City can guide the development of these 'peripheral' spaces to ensure they meet the direction of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan.

As part of the LGSPA, POPS may be subject to specific considerations, including:

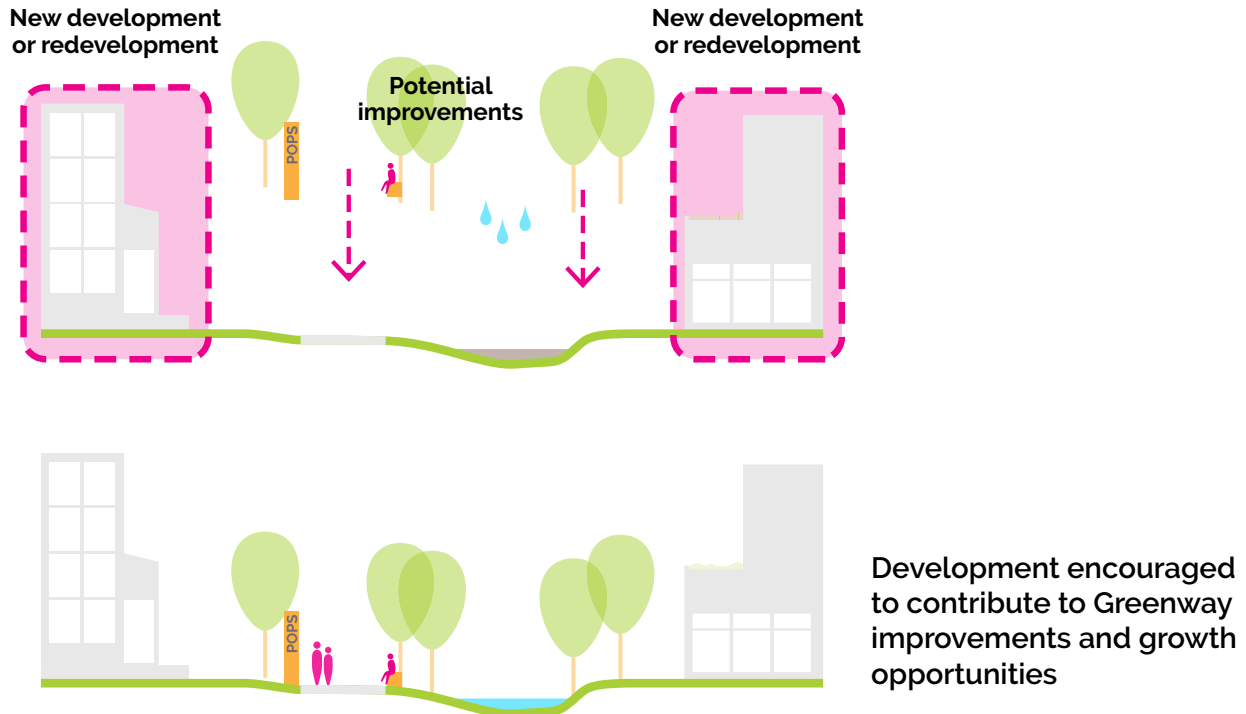
- being consistent with the vision and direction of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan;
- allowing select POPS as parkland dedication within hazard lands; and,
- supporting connections and linkages to allow public access to and from the Greenway.

The use of POPS as tools for Greenway growth and amenity also provide for these spaces to be maintained by private landowners, reducing City operating costs for publicly-accessible spaces.

Wherever proposed private development falls within the LGSPA, POPS should be explored early in development and planning discussions as opportunities to grow the Greenway and provide amenity to Greenway users.



## PLANNING FOR THE GREENWAY



### USE ZONING BY-LAW AND THE SITE PLAN APPLICATION PROCESS TO IMPROVE THE GREENWAY

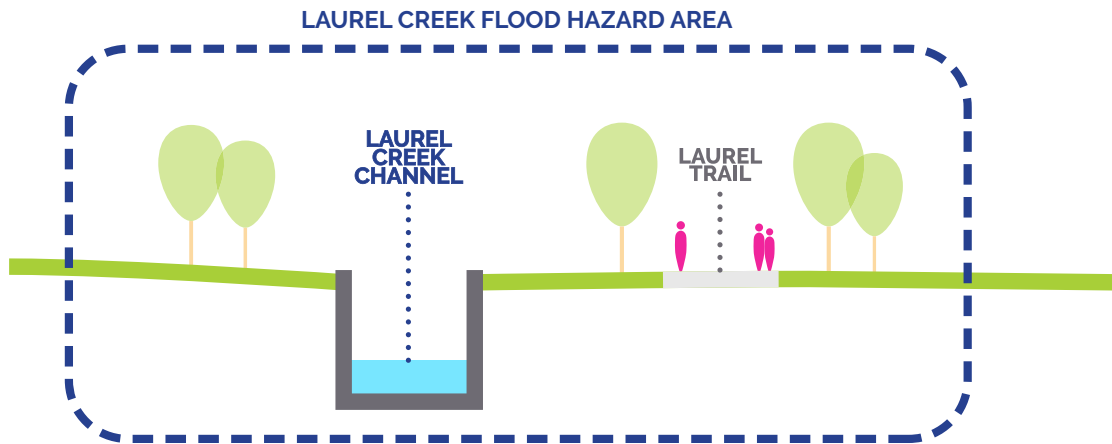
As the area develops, the Laurel Greenway will be viewed as an asset to future growth and it should be addressed as such through zoning by-law and through site plan review.

To encourage development proposals that enhance the Greenway experience and public realm, **Greenway improvement incentives** should be established that promote the implementation of the Master Plan. These incentives can be determined for development within and adjacent to the Greenway area, and include considerations of how development faces and addresses the Greenway, provision of access points, compatibility, environmental quality and sustainable site development, and overall improvement to the Greenway, among others.

Along with improvement incentives, **Community Benefits Charges** and in kind agreements should be considered for the Greenway area.

Some of the considerations and opportunities to consider through Community Benefits Charges and zoning by-laws can include:

- additional parkland dedication;
- privately-owned public spaces that support Greenway use;
- acknowledgment and incorporation of natural heritage and cultural heritage features relating to the Greenway, local area, and Laurel Creek;
- incorporation of active transportation and public access to support Greenway use;
- provision of pedestrian connections, including bridges/crossings of the Laurel Creek;
- environmental restoration or improvements affecting the Laurel Creek;
- maintenance of sections of the Greenway;
- provision of lighting and/or security systems that benefit Greenway use; and,
- public art and performance space.



Explore allowing parkland dedication for the Greenway within flood hazard lands

### ALLOW PARKLAND DEDICATION WITHIN THE FLOOD HAZARD LANDS

The Waterloo Official Plan designates much of the Greenway as flood hazard lands, regulated by the Grand River Conservation Authority. This OP designation imposes significant but important restrictions on development and land use in the Greenway area, mitigating flood risks for uptown through a series of special policies, further detailed in Section 2.6.

With development targets in the uptown growth area pushing density higher, hazard lands and the Special Policy Areas will continue to control development, coordinating with the GRCA. While this density increases, maximizing access to parks and open space is critical and new approaches to finding parkland in the dense uptown are needed.

Current city policy restricts parkland dedication within hazardous areas per the Official Plan, affecting any expansion of the Greenway through development applications.

To reframe this restriction and grow the area of the Greenway, as development proposals along the LGSPA come forward, a new, specialized 'parkland' should be considered, allowing an amount of parkland dedication within the hazard lands, following set criteria. This would provide a means to achieve the goal of a 30m wide "greenway zone."

This would be dedication to the Greenway area, where feasible, and developer incentives could be used to allow for trade-offs, incentive zoning, and encouraging POPS.

As Uptown parkland is reviewed, the inaccessible Laurel Creek drainage channel should also be considered, as it is currently included within parkland area. Through Uptown (and the central area), where space is limited, this falsely represents the actual amount of parkland as the creek here is infrastructure and occupies a large footprint.



LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

# 5.0 IMPLEMENTATION + PHASING



### 5.1 REALIZING THE GREENWAY

#### SEGMENTS AND SPACES

The Master Plan is organized around a hierarchy of five typologies of space, each based on planned programming and relating to areas adjacent to the Laurel Greenway. **These spaces include seven nooks, five eddies, two forks, one landing, and eight crossings.** These locations have been determined through analysis and public consultation as areas that can contribute to a more robust and functional public realm.

The defined nook spaces generally consist of small entry areas, overlooks, and trailhead connection points. The eddies are expressed as plaza spaces and connect to points of interest. Two substantial forks are identified, specifically the Visitor's Information Centre corner and the Cenotaph area, which each have the potential to become significant public spaces. The Waterloo Public Square is established as the primary landing space, being the largest and most momentous gathering space of within the Laurel Greenway area. The main pedestrian crossing areas are recognized within the plan for improvements to address the safety and comfort of trail users.

Between the spaces and crossings, sections of trail are also identified as part of the project implementation.

#### IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH PHASING

The full implementation of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan will be realized using a phased approach. This will ensure such a large project will be achievable under the guidance of the Master Plan. In the following pages, the identified segments and spaces of the Greenway are further defined and categorized into proposed phases of implementation.

Three phases are proposed:

- Phase 1: **Catalyst Projects;**
- Phase 2: **Focused Areas,** and
- Phase 3: **Full Implementation.**

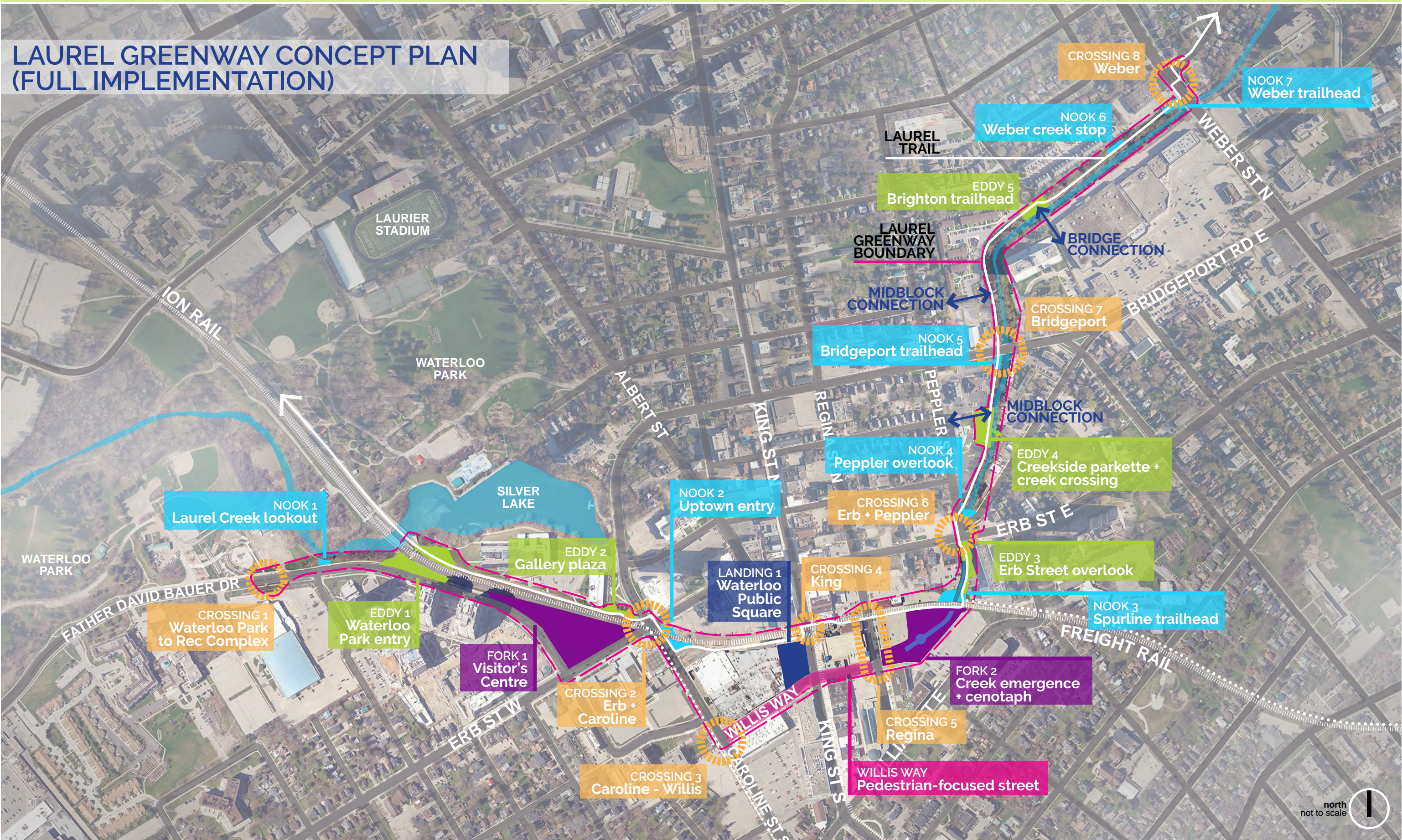
The three levels of phasing should be viewed as short-, medium-, and long-term interventions. Over time, project implementation may not adhere to the prescribed phasing, as new opportunities may present themselves with concurrent redevelopment, related capital projects, and new development applications within the Greenway area.

The following page is a concept map of the Laurel Greenway at the point of Full Implementation.





LAUREL GREENWAY CONCEPT PLAN  
(FULL IMPLEMENTATION)





### PHASE 1: CATALYST PROJECTS

**The catalyst projects** are select spaces and interventions within the project study area that will kick-start implementation of the Greenway concept. These short-term initiatives include smaller, but forward-thinking, interventions at crossings and larger upgrades to areas including the Visitor's Information Centre corner, Waterloo Public Square, and the trail between Bridgeport and Weber, among others.

The catalyst projects were determined through review of the Greenway area, during engagement and outreach, and in consultation with City and Regional staff. Generally, these projects are located in areas with existing conditions that are anticipated to be conducive for implementation, or are projects identified as high-need. Some projects are discreet spaces while others are more general improvements and initiatives.

Catalyst projects can be seen as improvements that reimagine existing spaces in line with the Greenway Master Plan, providing a decisive first step toward the realization of the Laurel Greenway vision. Detailed descriptions of the identified catalyst projects are provided in **section 6.2**.

#### NOOKS

Uptown Entry  
Weber Street

#### EDDIES

Brighton Trailhead

#### FORKS

Visitor Centre Corner  
Creek Emergence + Cenotaph

#### LANDINGS

Waterloo Public Square

#### CROSSINGS

Erb + Caroline  
Weber Street

#### OTHER PHASE 1 PROJECTS

Trail section: The Shops Corridor  
Lighting improvements: Peppler to Weber  
Guardrail improvements  
Greenway wayfinding program

- 
- CROSSING
  - NOOK
  - EDDY
  - FORK
  - LANDING
  - OTHER



### PHASE 2: FOCUS AREAS

The **focused areas** represent projects that reinforce the ultimate vision for the study area but require a level of attention and resources that push them into the medium-term. Some projects in this phase were also not consistently identified as priority projects through Master Plan engagement, outreach, and consultation. As other City work overlaps with the Greenway area, there may be opportunities to coordinate projects to move focus area projects ahead.

Generally, the project identified in the focus area phase may also require updates to municipal planning policy that support the Greenway, additional development agreements with private landowners and other interest groups, or coordination with other infrastructure works. Moving projects into a medium-term horizon allows time for these processes, and also staggers development to support proper consideration and allocation of funding and resources. Site-specific design has not been completed for phase 2 projects.

#### NOOKS

Spurline Trailhead  
Peppler Overlook

#### EDDIES

Gallery Plaza  
Erb Street Overlook

#### CROSSINGS

Erb + Peppler  
Waterloo Park to Rec Complex

#### OTHER PHASE 2 PROJECTS

Trail section: King to Regina  
Trail section: Regina to Erb

- 
- CROSSING
  - NOOK
  - EDDY
  - FORK
  - LANDING
  - OTHER

### PHASE 3: FULL IMPLEMENTATION

**Full implementation** of the concept is the ultimate condition for the Laurel Greenway. Completion of this final phase will include the build-out of all noted spaces and segments, including the nooks, eddies, forks, crossings, and other upgrades. This would also include improvements to all sections of the trail itself, ensuring appropriate space is provided for multiple users and modes of travel, as well as necessary servicing. The projects of this phase include some larger coordination efforts that require agreements and potential studies, as well as updates to infrastructure that, at the time of this plan, has been recently implemented and should not be impacted right away.

It is also anticipated that at the time of final phases of implementation, City of Waterloo planning policy will have embedded Greenway designations and planning considerations to allow for adjacent development and future proposals to enhance the Greenway through approaches including POPS, Greenway access, and appropriate built form. Site-specific design has not been completed for phase 3 projects.

#### NOOKS

Laurel Creek Lookout  
Bridgeport Trailhead  
Weber Creek Stop

#### EDDIES

Waterloo Park Entry  
Creekside Parkette + Creek Crossing

#### CROSSINGS

Caroline + Willis  
Regina  
King  
Bridgeport  
Redvelopment of Erb + Caroline

#### OTHER PHASE 3 PROJECTS

Willis Way redevelopment  
Trail section: Rec Complex to Caroline  
Trail section: Peppler to Bridgeport  
Trail section: Bridgeport to Weber

- 
- CROSSING
  - NOOK
  - EDDY
  - FORK
  - LANDING
  - OTHER



### 5.2 SPACES ALONG THE GREENWAY

The proposed improvements to spaces along the Laurel Greenway have been selected to align with the Grounding the Greenway concept and each space's potential to contribute to the overall Greenway vision.

The following list presents the existing spaces where improvements are planned, and describes what those improvements may include (phase 2 and 3 project improvements are for guidance only). The spaces are grouped together based on typology (Nooks, Eddies, Forks, Landings, and Crossings) and listed in order as they are found along the Greenway, from west to east. **Locations are shown on the plan in section 5.1.**

#### 5.2.1 NOOKS

##### Nook #1: LAUREL CREEK LOOKOUT

###### LOCATION

North side of Father David Bauer Drive, across from Avondale Ave. N. Connects to Waterloo Park trail and overlooks Laurel Creek.

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Seating area and interpretive signage, naturalized planting, waste bins, Laurel Greenway information.



##### Nook #2: UPTOWN GATEWAY

###### LOCATION

Eastern corner of the Erb and Caroline St. intersection.

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Uptown Waterloo gateway signage, public art installation and seating area, hypernatural planting approach, Laurel Greenway information



##### Nook #3: SPURLINE TRAILHEAD

###### LOCATION

The intersection of the Laurel Trail and Spurline Trail, east of Regina St., adjacent to the freight rail line.

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Defined path markings for the Laurel and Spurline Trails, hypernatural planting pockets, seating overlooking the creek channel, Greenway 'iconic' marker



### Nook #4: PEPPLER OVERLOOK

#### LOCATION

North corner of Peppler St. and Laurel St. directly over the Laurel Creek culvert.

#### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 2)

Formalize existing space and include interpretive signage, replace guardrails to open up views along the creek, public art installation and seating.



### Nook #5: BRIDGEPORT TRAILHEAD

#### LOCATION

South side of the Bridgeport Rd. crossing, west edge of the Laurel Trail.

#### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Small seating area with Laurel Greenway information, transition to Bridgeport Road crossing, Greenway 'iconic' marker.



### Nook #6: WEBER CREEK STOP

#### LOCATION

North or south edge of the Laurel Trail between Brighton St. and Weber St., looking onto the creek.

#### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Small, minimal nook space off the path with seating, interpretive features, and naturalized planting.



### Nook #7: WEBER STREET TRAILHEAD

#### LOCATION

West side of Weber St. at the Laurel Trail, both sides of the trail.

#### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Formalized trailhead signifying entry into the Laurel Greenway, seating, information signage, Greenway 'iconic' marker, integration with Weber Street trail crossing.





### 5.2.2 EDDIES

#### Eddy #1: WATERLOO PARK ENTRY

##### LOCATION

North side of Father David Bauer Dr. across from the Barrel Yards development, at ION rail crossing. This site is a southern entrance to Waterloo Park.

##### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Gateway feature to Waterloo Park and Greenway, public art installation (building on existing), seating areas, small plaza space, interpretive signage, Greenway 'iconic' marker, lighting, hypernatural planting areas.



#### Eddy #2: GALLERY PLAZA

##### LOCATION

Open space and entry plaza of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, at the southeast corner of the building adjacent to the Laurel Trail.

##### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 2)

Open seating space with outdoor interactive art installation, overhead shade element. Open space maintained and serviced for event programming and in coordination with Gallery requirements.



#### Eddy #3: ERB STREET OVERLOOK

##### LOCATION

South side of Erb St. E, over the Laurel Creek culvert.

##### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 2)

Expand available trail space to reduce conflicts with parking, interpretive signage highlighting creek views, seating space, Greenway 'iconic' markers, lighting, small hypernatural planting pockets. Easements to private property required.



Eddy #4:

### CREEKSIDE PARKETTE + CREEK CROSSING

#### LOCATION

Existing open space on private land on the west edge of Laurel Creek, adjacent to Christian Horizons centre.

#### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Formalize existing greenspace to serve private landowner needs and Greenway users. Opportunity for POPS agreements. Space may include seating and gathering areas, play features, creek lookout and interpretive elements, public art installation, lighting and servicing, hypernatural planting, and space for food truck programming.



Eddy #5:

### BRIGHTON TRAILHEAD

#### LOCATION

South end of Brighton St. cul-de-sac at the Laurel Trail.

#### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Develop the space as a Greenway trailhead with small seating space, Greenway 'iconic' markers and information, lighting, and potential to provide a lookout onto Laurel Creek. Considerations around adjacent developments and need for public/private separation.





### 5.2.3 FORKS

#### Fork #1: VISITOR'S CENTRE

##### LOCATION

Western corner of the Erb St. and Caroline St. on the south side of the ION tracks, including the Visitor's Information Centre.

##### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Development of formal Uptown gateway and public space, including gathering areas, public art, shade elements, wind buffers, water feature, interpretive elements, Greenway information, and fully-serviced event space.



#### Fork #2: CREEK EMERGENCE + CENOTAPH

##### LOCATION

Park area between Regina Street and freight rail tracks including the cenotaph area, parking lots, and creek.

##### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Redevelopment of the existing park space to focus on the creek and memorial aspects including the cenotaph. Features include significant seating and gathering areas, open plaza, connections to adjacent trails, public art, hypernatural planting, interpretive elements, and Greenway 'iconic' markers and information.



### 5.2.4 LANDINGS

#### Landing #1: **WATERLOO PUBLIC SQUARE**

##### LOCATION

Existing public plaza at the intersection of King St. and Willis Way.

##### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Upgrades to the existing space focused on creating shade, including the introduction of new shade elements to the south end of the Square, wood seating options, and potential planting improvements.





### 5.2.5 CROSSINGS

#### Crossing #1: **WATERLOO PARK TO RECREATION COMPLEX**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 2)**

Mid-block crossing of Father David Bauer Dr. to connect Waterloo Memorial Recreation Centre to Waterloo Park and the Greenway.

#### Crossing #2: **ERB STREET + CAROLINE STREET**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)**

Crossing to provide better navigation for Greenway users through the intersection and to separate cyclists and pedestrians. Proposed project is a short-term solution.

#### Crossing #3: **CAROLINE STREET TO WILLIS WAY**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)**

Connection across Caroline St. to provide a crossing to Willis Way and access to the existing ION station.

#### Crossing #4: **REGINA STREET**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)**

With the development of Willis Way (east end) and the Creek Emergence space, create additional opportunities to cross Regina St., between the existing Laurel Trail crossing and Willis Way.

#### Crossing #5: **KING STREET**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)**

Create a clearer connection for Greenway users crossing King St. Opportunity to relocate cyclist crossing point to use Willis Way to connect to Caroline St. and back to Greenway/Laurel Trail.

#### Crossing #6: **ERB STREET + PEPPLER STREET**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 2)**

Formalize crossing of Erb St. and extend crossing over Peppler St. to Laurel Trail. Crossing should be coordinated with development on corner of Erb and Peppler St.

#### Crossing #7: **BRIDGEPORT ROAD**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)**

Prioritize Greenway Users through intersection and integrate traffic calming. This crossing had been recently upgraded at the time of the Master Plan report development.

#### Crossing #8: **WEBER STREET**

##### **PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)**

Develop formal crossing of Weber St. at the Laurel Greenway, connecting to Mackay Cr. Signalization should be explored, considering larger volumes of trail users over time.

### 5.2.6 TRAIL SECTIONS + OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

#### TRAIL SECTIONS

##### WATERLOO PARK TO RECREATION COMPLEX

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Long-term improvements to existing sidewalk condition. Introduce increased pathway width, where possible. Introduce wayfinding elements to connect to Visitor's Centre Fork and Waterloo Park. Opportunity for wind buffering throughout space.

##### THE SHOPS CORRIDOR

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Clearly define Laurel Greenway between the ION rail line and Shops at Town Square building, and through the Waterloo Public Square.

##### KING TO REGINA

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 2)

Prioritize the Laurel Trail through this block, promoting the route with clear wayfinding and consistent trail surface.

##### REGINA TO ERB

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 2)

Ensure minimum trail widths and pursue property easements to give space for the Greenway. Explore routing options and potential to route Laurel Greenway main trail (cyclists) to Willis Way rather than the current trail from Regina to King.

##### PEPPLER TO BRIDGEPORT

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Ensure minimum trail widths are kept consistent along entire section. Provide clear wayfinding and integrate with Greenway spaces.

##### BRIDGEPORT TO WEBER

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Ensure minimum trail widths are kept consistent along entire section. Provide clear wayfinding and integrate with Greenway spaces.

#### LIGHTING:

##### PEPPLER TO WEBER

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Implement consistent trail lighting to promote safety and usability of the Greenway throughout the year.

#### CREEK CHANNEL GUARDRAIL UPGRADES

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Improve existing guardrails along the Laurel Creek channel to improve safety and integrate interpretive features, viewpoints and art.

#### GREENWAY WAYFINDING PROGRAM

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 1)

Develop a wayfinding program unique to the Greenway and establish a brand that can support the Laurel Greenway identity throughout the entire Master Plan Area.

#### WILLIS WAY REDEVELOPMENT

###### PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS (PHASE 3)

Redevelop Willis way as a pedestrian-focused or fully-pedestrian route in the long-term. Explore the street as park-like space with active transportation options. Full scope to be part of separate visioning and master planning exercise.



### 5.3 CATALYST PROJECTS

The catalyst projects are the first phase of development for the Laurel Greenway. These projects have been identified as strategic interventions that begin to realize the overall Greenway vision while taking advantage of development opportunities and addressing community needs. The selection of nooks, eddies, forks, landings, crossings, and other projects noted as catalysts spread upgrades along the Laurel Greenway to enhance the user experience while being a financially viable first step towards full Greenway implementation. The projects are also intended to be achievable in a relatively short period of time.

The smaller interventions (Nooks and Eddies) will allow for effective improvements in a shorter timeframe. The identified catalyst crossing areas will immediately address existing functional issues to improve safety and convenience for users. Both the Fork and Landing spaces are important locations that need to support both the flow of pedestrian movement and civic gathering.

The implementation of the catalyst spaces will help the City to understand how users interact with the new spaces and further inform the implementation of the Greenway over time. The proposed conceptual designs of these catalyst spaces are explored in the following pages and represent spatial plans that should inform future detailed design work.

**The identified catalyst projects are described in the following pages. Each project includes a description as well as key considerations needed as it proceeds to implementation.**

The catalyst projects provide will launch the first phase of Greenway development. As they move forward, each project will help refine how the Greenway vision is realized.

#### TEST

The catalyst projects provide space to test and model some of the constraints of the Greenway through design, especially as related to the floodway.

#### DEMONSTRATE

Projects provide a site-specific resolution of the conceptual ideas and Greenway components and introduce them to the public and Greenway users.

#### REVIEW

Allows for a tangible examples to take forward to stakeholders, the public and other interest groups to clearly illustrate intent and design considerations.

#### DEFINE

Projects are meant to be discreet pieces of the Greenway that have clear boundaries, allowing for specific site development that can contribute to the overall plan.

#### COORDINATE

Catalysts are identified as 'first step' projects but other concurrent developments in the Greenway area may provide opportunities to explore additional catalysts.

### 5.3.1 WEBER STREET NOOK

This space is where the Greenway meets Weber Street, where people access the trail and connect to nearby commercial and residential areas. This catalyst project introduces a trailhead condition and minor amenity space to form a gateway to the Greenway.

The existing space is situated adjacent to a commercial parking lot, along the north bank of the Laurel Creek. There is a concentration of naturalized and invasive plants along the steep bank and existing amenities include sidewalk connections, a nearby bus stop, and an informal crossing of Weber Street.

The new space builds on existing features to create a small seating area or bus stop set back from the road. Given proximity to the creek and as a gateway to the Greenway, passive interpretive elements and wayfinding can support placemaking.

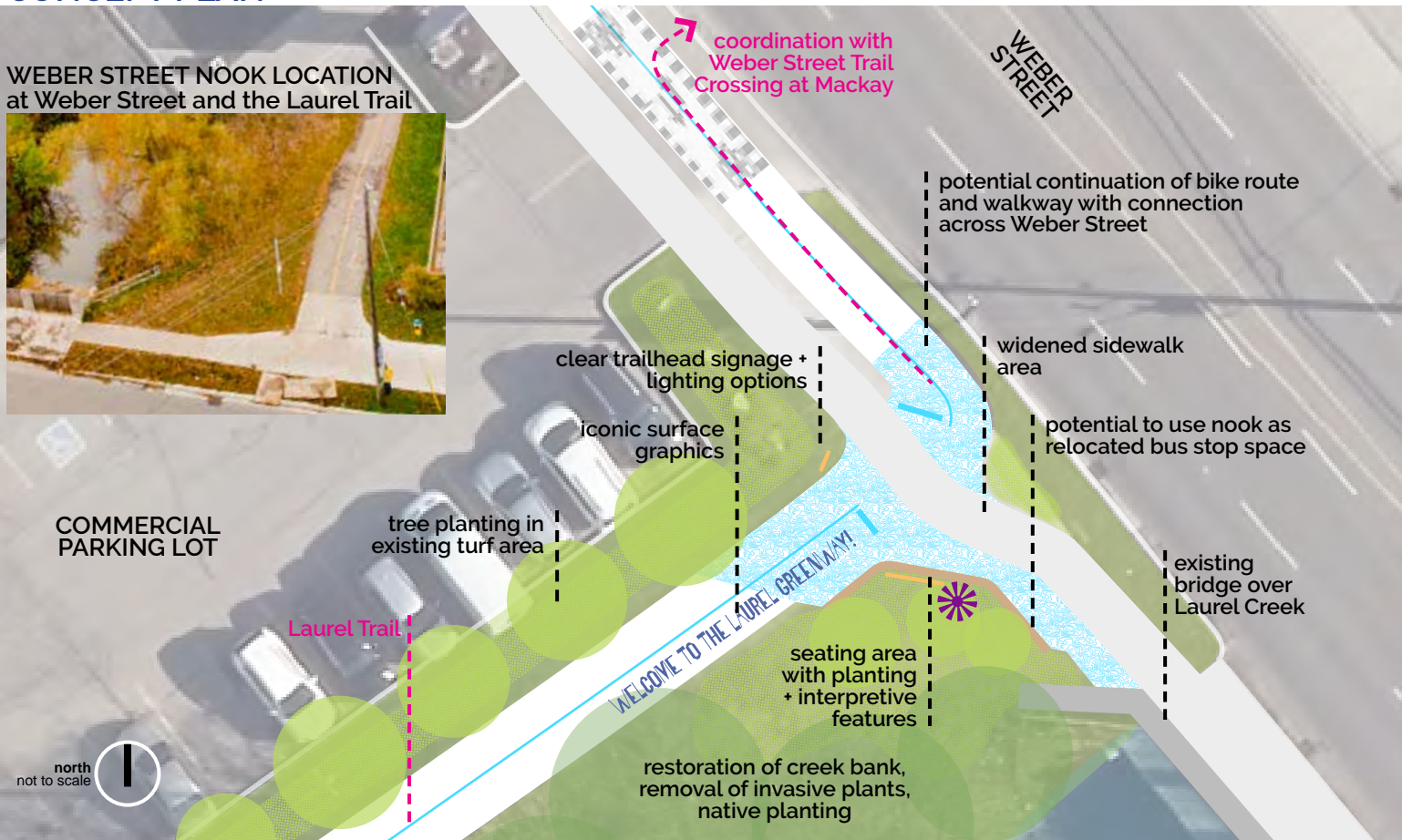
Building on the Greenway brand, iconic surface graphics and interpretive features should draw attention to the creek and overall Greenway, supporting the space as a defined gateway.

The concept also includes widening the sidewalk, a small curving seating feature, and planting in existing turf and vegetated areas to improve the comfort and ecology at this point along the creek.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Coordination with Grand River Transit required review bus stop potential and requirements, as appropriate.
- Features and elements will need to respond to floodway and flood fringe regulations from the City and GRCA.
- The design should be coordinated with a defined Weber Street trail crossing plan.

#### CONCEPT PLAN



### 5.3.2 BRIGHTON TRAILHEAD EDDY

Along the Laurel Trail at the south end of Brighton Street, the Laurel Greenway includes a new 'eddy' space, providing both trail amenities and a opportunity to connect to the Laurel Creek. This space is identified as a catalyst project site in the overall Greenway development.

The trailhead will formalize pedestrian connections to the street and Brighton Park and include seating, interpretive features, enhancements to the Laurel Trail, plantings, and lighting. Improvements will ensure the trail remains unobstructed through the space while adding adjacent passive opportunities to gather and learn about the creek.

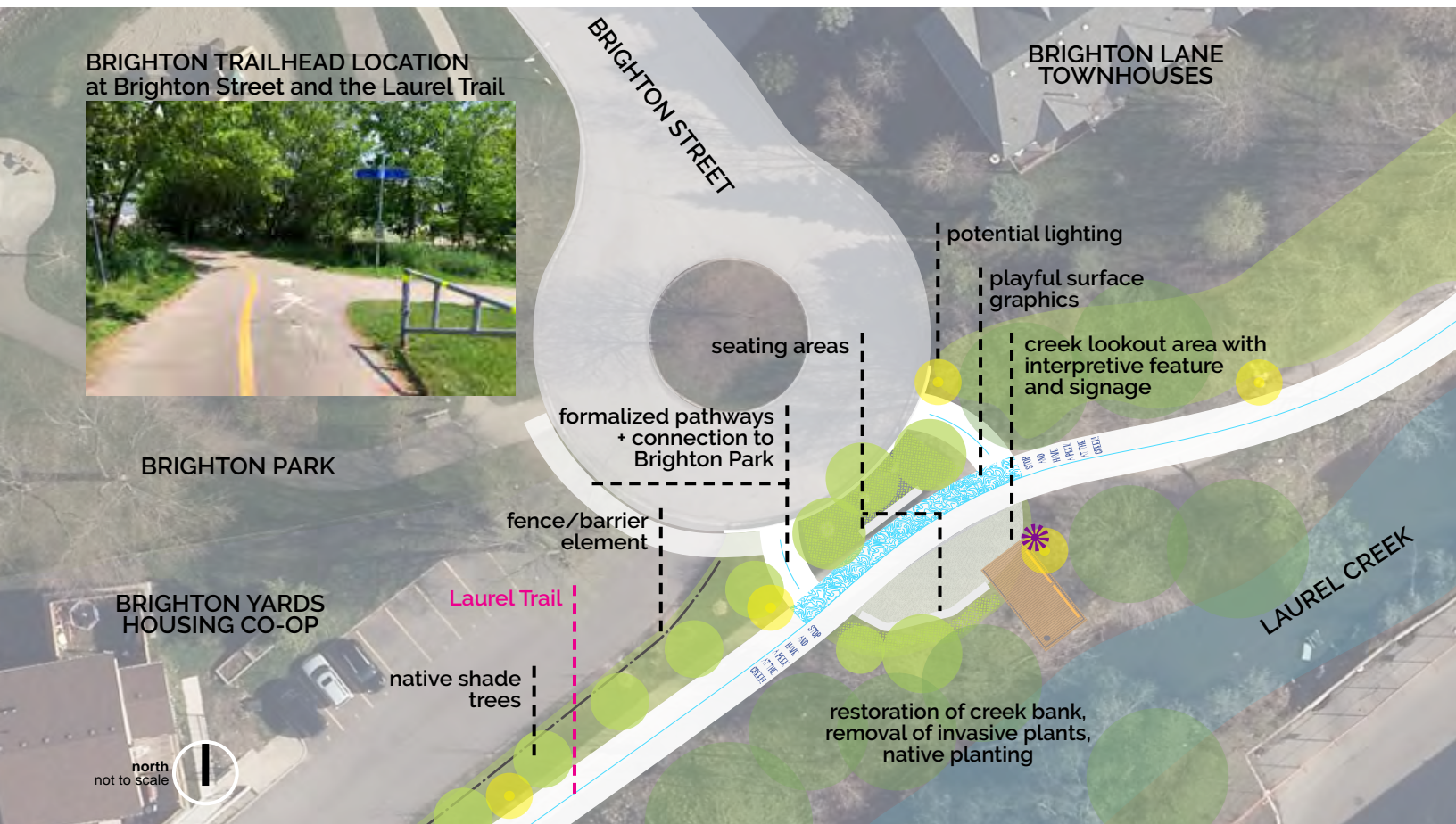
The Brighton Trailhead Eddy concept includes an overlook located along the south side of the trail. This capitalizes on the existing space and is intended to provide a connection to the creek, with interpretive features and accessible creek views.

Playful graphic elements and visual cues should be incorporated as placemaking and wayfinding for the Laurel Greenway, and to give the space a clear identity for trail users.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Detailed design should consider the isolated context of this space and use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies, including maintaining views, strategic lighting and site controls.
- Features and elements will need to respond to floodway and flood fringe regulations from the City and GRCA.
- Lighting and services should allow for future connections as the Greenway is developed.
- Coordination is needed with adjacent residential developments to address needs.

#### CONCEPT PLAN





### 5.3.3 THE SHOPS CORRIDOR

The corridor that runs north of The Shops at Town Square, between Waterloo Public Square and the Erb and Caroline intersection, functions as a main active transportation path and central transit platform. The corridor is a well-used piece of the Laurel Greenway but the trail is not well-defined or even visible here. This is a part of the Uptown public realm that both functions and visually reads as a back alley of the shopping centre.

While the area currently is back of house for businesses in the Shops building, the space should prioritize active transportation along the trail and highlight a clear connection from King Street to Caroline.

To improve the space, proper wayfinding to highlight the Laurel Trail and Greenway is critical to maintain continuity of the Greenway. As well, the Waterloo Public Square station should be better connected to the square and offer a welcome introduction to the area for commuters and visitors to Uptown.

The existing service lane that runs between the Shops building and the Laurel Trail also provides an opportunity to introduce colour, texture and visual interest into the mundane space. While still functioning as a service space, opportunities to make the back of the building more attractive to Greenway users is an important consideration to support the overall Greenway identity.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Coordinate with Shops building owners and tenants to determine delivery requirements and potential conflicts to consider through detailed design.
- Explore planning tools to guide how buildings - such as the Shops - interface with the Greenway corridor.
- Prioritize trail users in the space and define where people cross the path with clear cues.
- Highlight the connection to the Public Square and the ION transit stop.

Location of views shown below are on next page.



1

#### DEFINE THE TRAIL

Repetition of iconic surface graphics will connect to the entire Laurel Greenway and help define the space.



2

#### ADD VISUAL INTEREST

Blank walls and extensive paving present opportunities to introduce visual character, art and interest into existing 'back-of-house' spaces.

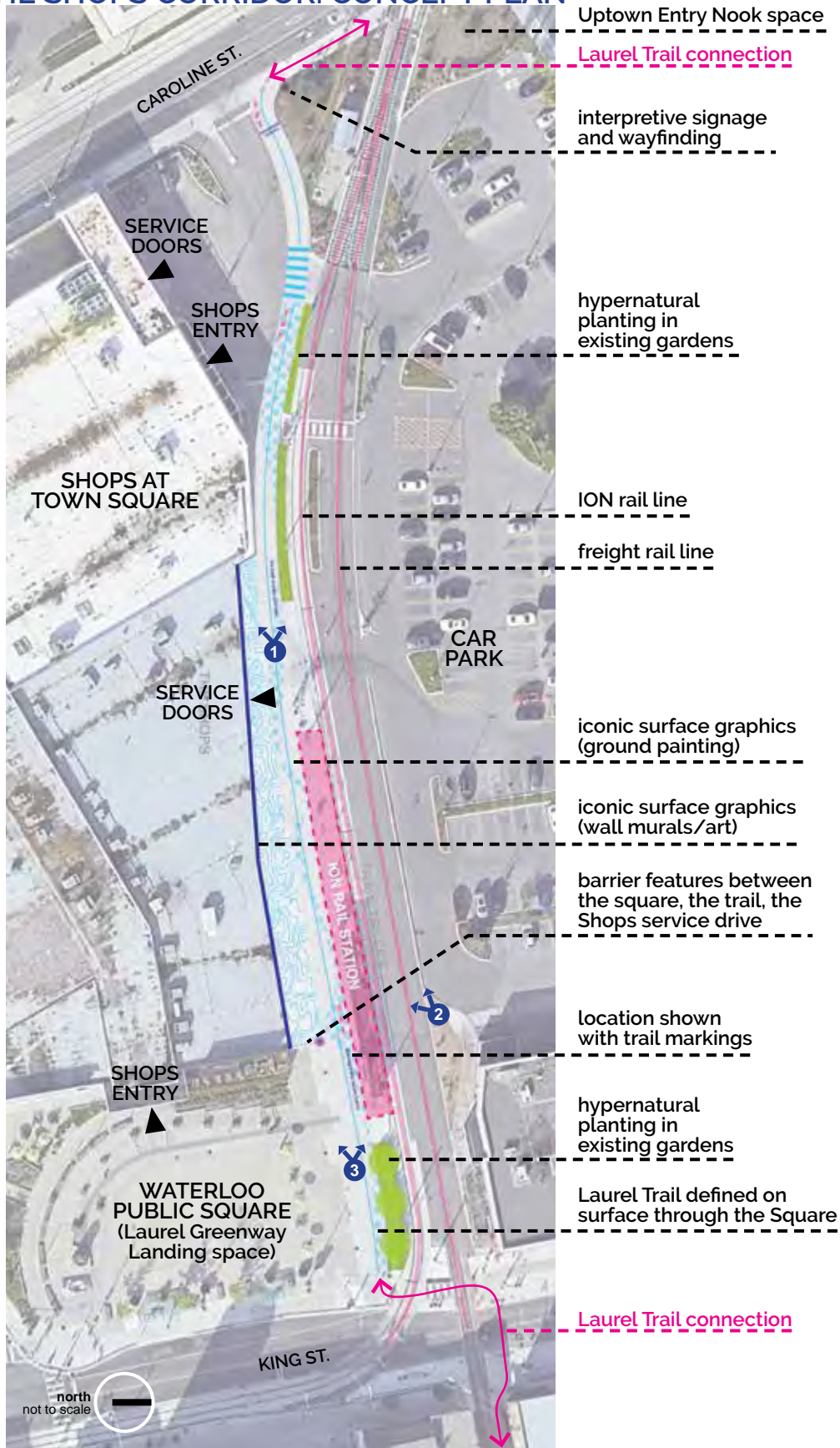


3

#### IDENTIFY LANDMARKS

Vertical wayfinding and ground markings add visual cues to enhance wayfinding and create separation where necessary.

## THE SHOPS CORRIDOR: CONCEPT PLAN





## 5.3.4 UPTOWN ENTRY NOOK

The intersection of Erb Street and Caroline Street is a entry point for multiple modes of travel into Uptown Waterloo. In the east corner of the intersection, adjacent to the ION line, a small existing space includes a garden bed with a low wall with the Uptown Waterloo logo.

The Uptown Entry Nook proposes a space that provides clear gateway into Uptown Waterloo, and a meet-up point set back from the intersection. The space includes a significant gateway sign or art installation, a small plaza area, shade trees, hypernatural planted beds, a large seating feature.

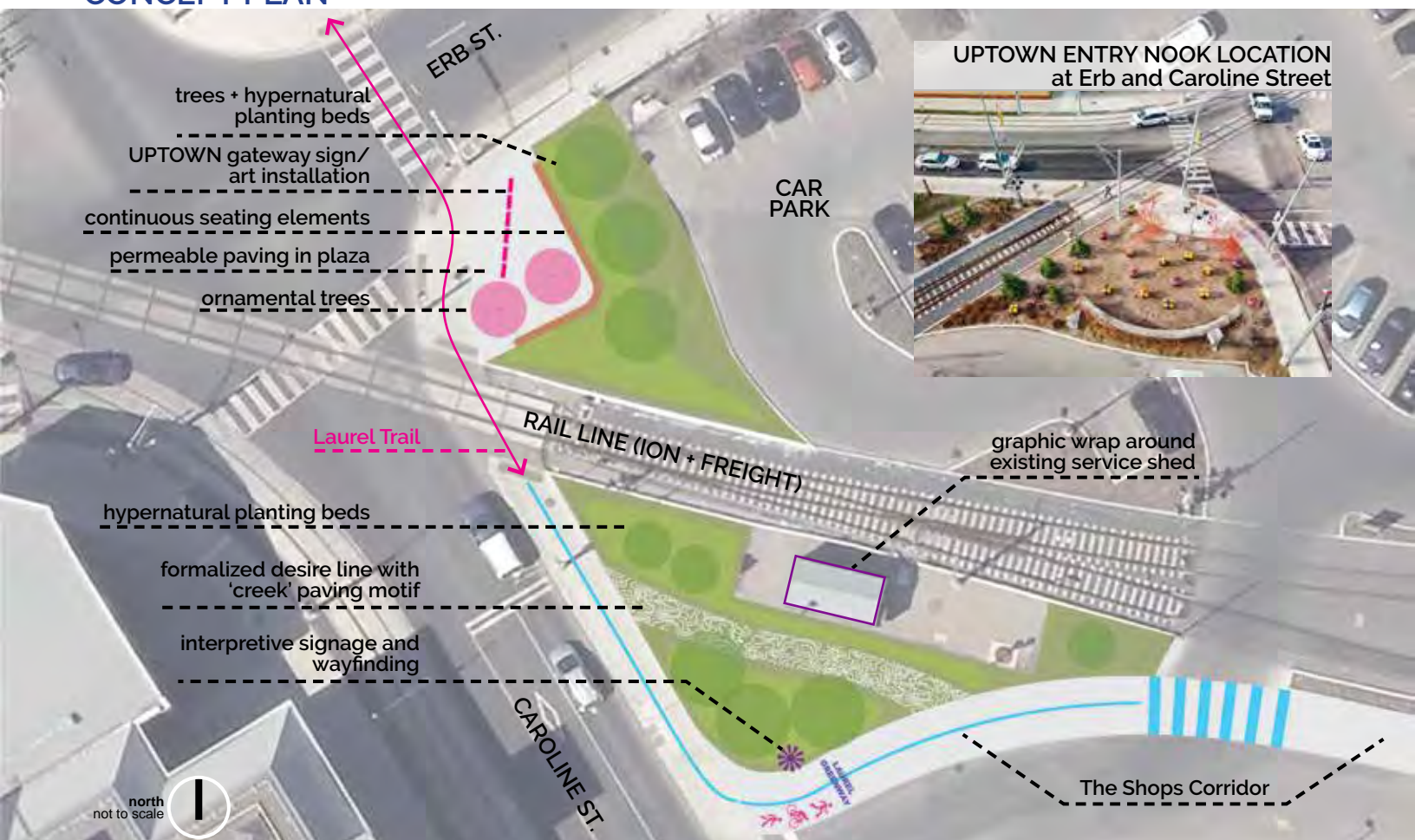
South of the ION line, adjacent to the nook space, a second area benefits from a formalized desire line echoing the form of Laurel Creek (buried below), new planting, and a graphic image wraps on an existing service shed for the ION line.

The context of this intersection presents a great opportunity for a space that provides a space for trainspotting and people watching while also providing a formal gateway to Uptown.

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Respond to height constraints for features adjacent to the rail lines.
- Coordinate the design of the space with potential intersection crossing improvements.
- Consider pedestrian movement at times when access is restricted because of ION train crossings.
- Features and elements will need to respond to floodway and flood fringe regulations from the City and GRCA.

### CONCEPT PLAN





### 5.3.5 VISITOR'S CENTRE FORK

The existing plaza at the northwest corner of Erb and Caroline Streets, includes the Manulife clock tower, several planters, a trail, and a small paved area that loosely connects to the adjacent Visitor's Information Centre. The area was once part of a larger space that was orphaned with the development of the ION rail line, but now provides the opportunity to develop a key space for the Laurel Greenway: the Visitor's Centre Fork.

The vision for this catalyst project is for a unique space that can be programmed to offer amenities and features that support passive uses as well as community programming and events. In the concept, two large community decks offer the space for passive seating for daily use, but these can also serve as elevated platforms for performances. The concept addresses several challenging site conditions such as a water feature to diffuse vehicular noise, screens for wind mitigation, and rows of high-canopy trees to offer shade.

There is an amazing opportunity to make this space an important piece of the Laurel Greenway, and a gateway to Uptown and Waterloo Park. To offer an identity to the space, a custom trellis feature runs the length of the space, casting abstract ground patterns on sunny days, or projecting patterns of light at night. The eye-catching anchor at the corner of Erb and Caroline will welcome pedestrians through a threshold between Uptown Waterloo and Waterloo Park, and will establish this fork as a significant gateway.

The design concept builds on current attributes of the space to better provide for visitors. Safety and comfort are main priorities for the improvements to the space and lighting as well as microclimate are key considerations. The concept presents the possibility of integrating lighting into the overhead steel trellis to provide consistent lighting along the path.

As a destination space, the site must support events such as Lumen, Winterloo, Night Lights, Open Streets, and other community driven activities. As the space is redeveloped, servicing should be in place to meet the needs of large events.

The existing parking lot remains in the concept and provides staging areas for events but also offers space for future expansion, as appropriate.

It is important that the Greenway Fork space is influenced by and upholds the architectural quality of the surrounding area, including the CIGI Campus, Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Perimeter Institute, and Shopify building (former Seagram Warehouse). A detailed and meaningful design must respond to the surrounding context.

Elements and materials of the proposed concept recall pieces of cultural heritage in the area. The incorporation of wood through decks and seating, and the form and material of the steel ring trellis, take inspiration from the prevalent use of wood and barrels in the distilling process that historically took place at the Seagram Distillery. The abstracted inspiration grounds the design in a purposeful and playful way.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Respond to height constraints for features adjacent to the rail lines.
- Coordinate the design of the space with potential intersection crossing improvements.
- Support the through-site movement corridor that leads to the south side of Waterloo Park.
- Buffer winter winds and support seasonal microclimates.
- The space should remain open to facilitate various scales of events and passive use.
- Where possible, expand the space into the existing parking lot, reviewing updated parking demand statistics.
- Allow the space to support summer use of the Visitor's Information Centre, including camps, artist installations, and events.
- Features and elements will need to respond to floodway and flood fringe regulations from the City and GRCA.







### 5.3.6 CREEK EMERGENCE + CENOTAPH FORK

After traveling below ground through Uptown Waterloo, the Laurel Creek finally emerges east of Regina Street, near City Hall and the Cenotaph Park. This existing space surrounds the concrete creek channel and includes mature trees, seating areas, parking, and lawn, as well as public art, the cenotaph, and a military vehicle commemorating the war in Afghanistan.

There is an opportunity to refine the existing area to further enhance the space as an important memorial and refuge of green space in Uptown Waterloo. The Creek Emergence and Cenotaph Fork concept brings increased function and new amenities to the area, including larger event spaces, areas for reflection, and increased planting. It also reduces the amount of parking by partially expanding the green space into a portion of the existing parking lot.

Around the existing site, all memorial features are preserved. The concept aims to create a more meaningful plaza space around the cenotaph to make it the prominent feature of the area while providing space for ceremonies, including Remembrance Day. The cenotaph space is currently hidden between two parking lots, and the concept strives to provide the space with a significant street presence from Regina Street, drawing in visitors throughout the year.

Along Regina Street, at the end of Willis Way, a small entry plaza transitions from sidewalk to park space, tying in Greenway wayfinding and iconic features to emphasize the Creek Emergence and Cenotaph space.

The design concept highlights the Laurel Creek through curated views, including creek lookout points, and offers additional seating areas around the creek channel. While the existing concrete channel remains unchanged, opportunities for new guard rails, additional planting, and interpretive elements can support how visitors view and interact with the creek. The concept also proposed art and murals on the exposed concrete channel walls.

Moving into the space from Regina Street, the site will require earthworks to navigate existing berms and grade changes. This can be used to define the space, helping to define two pathways that run along either side of the creek.

Near the cenotaph, a large deck provides an accessible space to overlook the creek channel and memorial plaza. This part of the site also opens up to the Laurel Trail, allowing easy access to the new space for trail users.

Throughout the space, intentional use of materials, including wood, pavers, and furnishing details can elevate the area to be a unique public space that becomes a critical junction along the Laurel Greenway. The hypernatural planting approach will also soften then space and support ecology.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Respect the prominence of the cenotaph and other memorial features in the space.
- Connect the Willis Plaza entrance visually to Willis Way and the cenotaph area.
- The existing “Laurel Creek” art installation will need to be properly integrated into the space.
- Coordinate servicing to support major Arts + Culture events.
- Where hard surfaces are proposed, explore permeable options, and support tree planting with soil cell structures.
- Consider how access to the space will be controlled during events.
- Where possible, expand the space into the existing parking lot, reviewing updated parking demand statistics.
- Features and elements will need to respond to floodway and flood fringe regulations from the City and GRCA.
- Provide shade and visual connection to the Greenway concept through tree planting.







### 5.3.7 ERB + CAROLINE CROSSING

The intersection of Erb and Caroline Streets is part of the western end of the Laurel Greenway. During the development of the Master Plan, this space was consistently identified as a challenging location, with navigation, safety and barriers to movement all noted as issues from the public, among others.

The intersection includes a number of challenging constraints, including Regional roads, two rail lines, two trails, and cycling lanes along both streets. Each of these must be considered in improving the way the crossing functions for Greenway users.

The intersection was reviewed thoroughly to determine how to provide immediate options to improve the way people and vehicles navigate the space, supporting the continuity of the Laurel Greenway. The ultimate solution is a 'quick win' approach that focuses on improving movement for trail users with small-scale upgrades to existing infrastructure.

The two improvement areas in the intersection are a crossing over Caroline on the north side of Erb Street and a crossing over Erb on the east side of Caroline Street. At both points, the design concept aims to separate users as much as possible, but because of limited space at the corners, it is not possible to completely separate pedestrians and cyclists. Treatments at corners are designed to provide additional space, prioritizing pedestrians but allowing for continuous movement by cyclists.

The intersection improvements also include a reduction to the width of the slip lane for vehicles travelling south on Caroline Street, turning right onto Erb.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

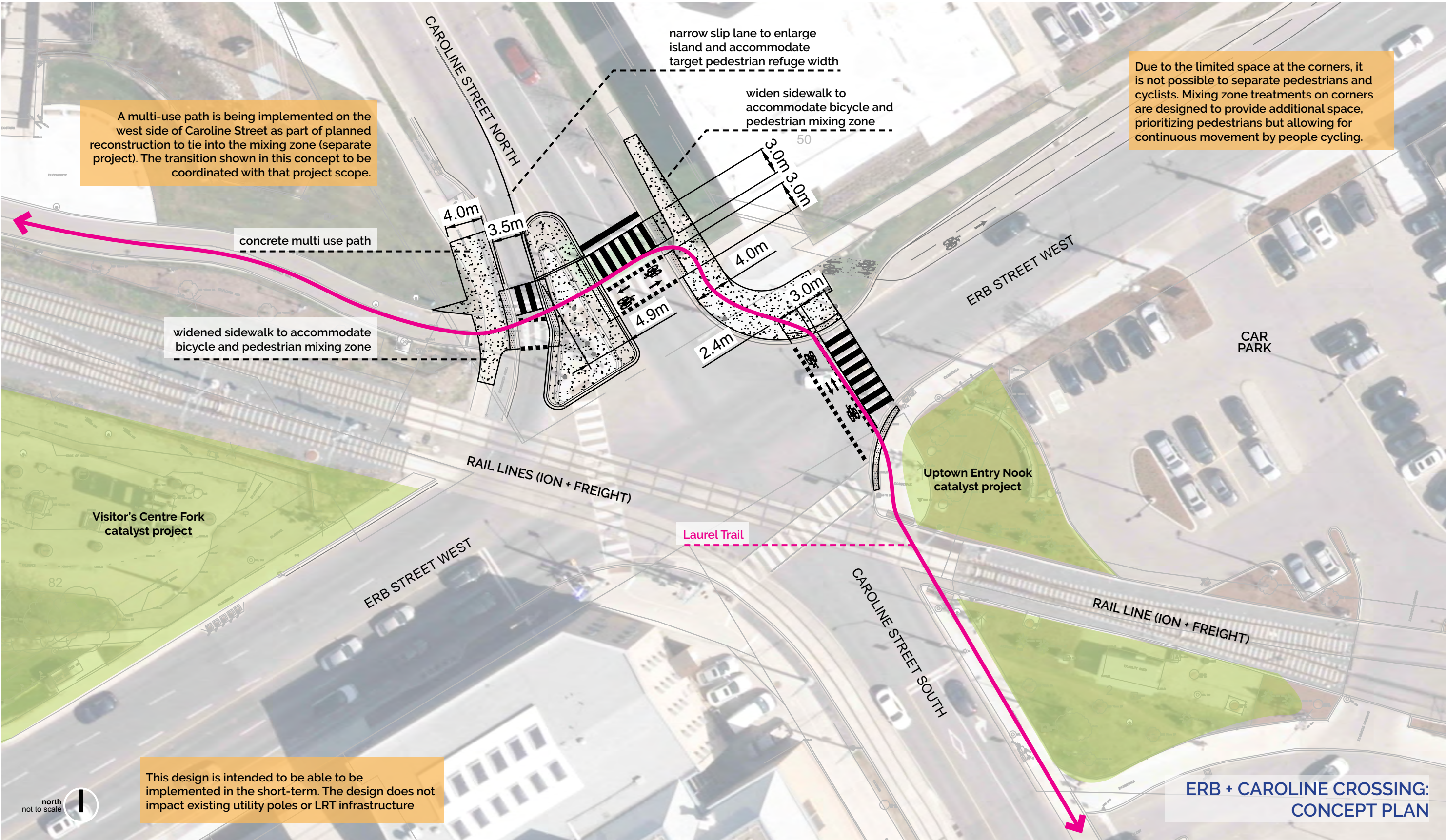
- The design has been supported by the Region of Waterloo at the concept stage. Additional review will be required to coordinate with concurrent regional projects.
- Coordination required with improvements to the Uptown Entry Nook space.
- This concept is intended as a "quick win" option. It is anticipated that in the future, as opportunities arise, the intersection may be revisited in a complete redevelopment plan (long-term) to address overall challenges.



Erb + Caroline Intersection, looking west



IMPLEMENTATION + PHASING





### 5.3.8 WEBER STREET CROSSING

Weber Street marks the eastern edge of the Master Plan area, and an entrance point to the Laurel Greenway. As a busy roadway with no formal crossing option, this crossing point was identified as a priority for improvement through engagement and outreach.

Where the Laurel Trail terminates, there are informal traffic refuge islands that provide limited crossing options. While there is a formal intersection crossing 100-metres south of the Laurel Trail on Weber, the trail access creates a clear desire point to cross.

Through concept design, the project team worked with the Region of Waterloo to review options to improve the crossing at Weber Street. Some of the challenges and constraints that are apparent include existing private land owners, limited space in the boulevards, and the need to align the crossing with Mackay Crescent, across from the trailhead.

The design concept balances the existing constraints and proposes a formalized crossing of Weber Street to support trail users and access to the Greenway.

Improvements include the separation of cyclists and pedestrians where possible, tapered driving lanes to calm traffic and increased pedestrian refuge islands. The concept shown requires signalization in the configuration shown, but a scaled-down option would remove signals and trail users would be required to yield to vehicular traffic while retaining the same general layout.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- The design has been generally supported by the Region of Waterloo at the concept stage. Additional review will be required to coordinate with concurrent regional projects.
- While there is a strong desire for crossing signals, signalization will require additional review with the Region, considering proximity to other crossings.
- Coordination required with improvements to the Weber Street Nook catalyst space.
- This concept is intended as a short-term option. It is anticipated that in the future, as opportunities arise, the roadway and crossing may be revisited in a complete redevelopment plan (long-term) to address overall challenges.



Weber Street and the Laurel Trail, looking west







### 5.3.9 ADDITIONAL CATALYST PROJECTS

In addition to the specific catalyst project projects outlined above, there are additional projects that should be explored in the first implementation phase as catalyst projects for the Greenway. These include several projects that have been identified by the City separately but contribute to the Greenway vision, or are general improvements, not specific to a particular site or location (lighting and safety improvements, for example).

#### WATERLOO PUBLIC SQUARE SHADE IMPROVEMENTS

In parallel with the Laurel Greenway Master Plan work, options to bring shade into Waterloo Public Square were being explored. As a defined “Landing” space along the Greenway, these shade improvements help solidify the Square as central destination in Uptown.

The shade elements may be paired with additional improvements, including hypernatural planting and new seating options. A water wall feature is also being installed in the square as another amenity for the space.

##### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Shade elements should complement the Public Square and add interesting forms and materials to soften the expanse of concrete.
- Elements must support current programming in the Square.
- All seasons should be considered through detailed design, including maintenance requirements and longevity.
- Future improvements to the Square should borrow from the materiality of the shade features, including wood, metals, and other natural materials.



Concept drawings of new shade elements planned for Waterloo Public Square



### LIGHTING: PEPPLER TO WEBER

Through the development of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan, the need for increased lighting was noted as a critical improvement to support safety and extend the use of the Greenway in the dark.

The east end of the Greenway between Bridgeport Road and Weber Street was identified as a priority area for trail lighting. The trail between Peppler and Bridgeport Streets was also noted as a section in need of additional lighting.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Lighting design must consider light pollution and trespass on adjacent properties as well as the creek channel.
- Ensure electrical systems provide for potential power points, including at the Brighton Trailhead Eddy location.
- As the most significant stretch of trail lighting along the Greenway, ensure light pole and fixture selection tie into proposed spaces to maintain a consistent appearance.



Additional lighting along the east Greenway between Brighton and Weber Streets

### CREEK CHANNEL GUARDRAIL UPGRADES

Where the Laurel Creek emerges from the culvert east of Regina Street, the concrete creek channel includes a continuous guardrail at its top edge.

The channel attracts Greenway visitors and there is an opportunity to update the railings to be safer and more conducive to looking at the creek, while also becoming a more intentional design element, with opportunities for art and interpretation.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Coordinate improvements to guardrails with planned channel works and catalyst projects.
- Develop a new standard channel guardrail detail specific to the Greenway that allows for integration of art and interpretive elements.
- Consult with the GRCA to determine specific design considerations related to the floodway.



Upgrade guard railings along the Laurel Creek channel from Regina to Erb Street.

### GREENWAY-SPECIFIC WAYFINDING

As a key piece of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan, creating a Greenway *brand* will help establish a consistent identity for the Greenway. The brand provides cues that let users know and understand that they are on the Greenway. A strong wayfinding approach will establish the Greenway brand through a visual, tactile and experiential identity that can be revealed in signage, trail elements, and other designed features.

Working closely with the City's Active Transportation group, this catalyst project would engage a consultant to develop the wayfinding system for the Greenway.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Wayfinding should showcase a clear identity for the Greenway.
- Coordinate the approach with existing wayfinding elements and features in the City.
- Elements should be bright, include natural materials, and create a playful and engaging experience along the entire length of the Greenway.
- Engage with local communities to inform key destinations and local waypoints.
- Carry wayfinding onto various surfaces, including the ground plan, vertical features, and existing infrastructure.
- Clearly define the Laurel Trail where it intersects with large urban spaces (Waterloo Public Square), road crossings, and other trails.



Examples of trail wayfinding to inform the approach and brand of the Laurel Greenway



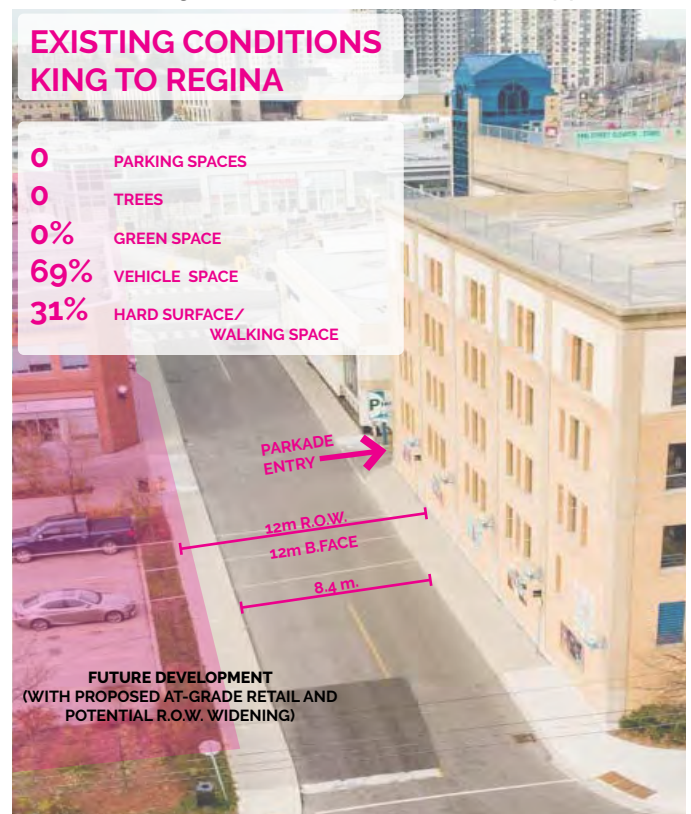
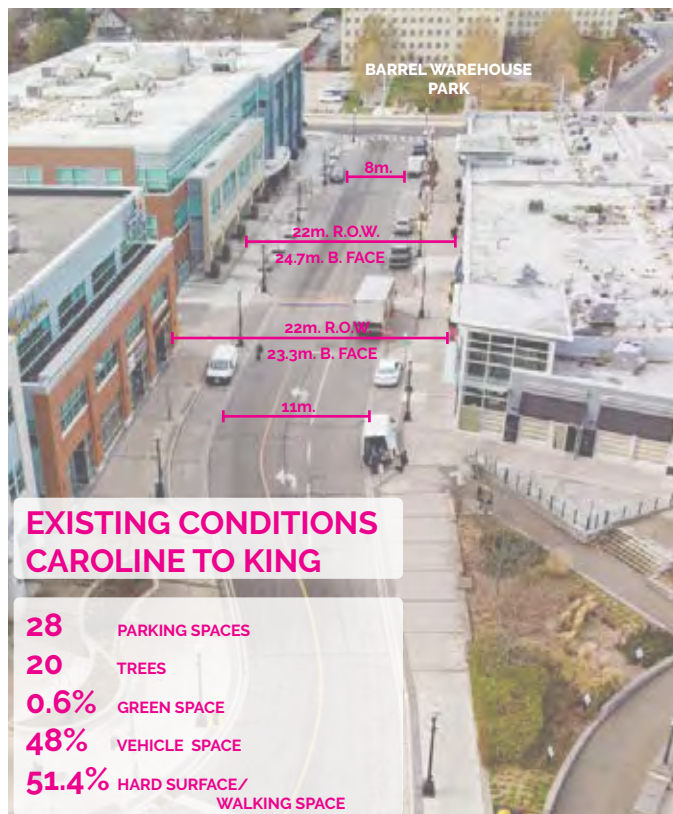
## 5.4 WILLIS WAY CONCEPT

An integral part of the Laurel Greenway Master Plan is to create guidance on an improved Willis Way. As the result of preliminary work with key City of Waterloo stakeholders and public survey, a design concept with two options was developed to guide a future public outreach and detailed design phases.

As a unique and valuable part of the Laurel Greenway, an improved Willis Way will strengthen connections between the Laurel Trail and Uptown by valuing the pedestrian experience, creating programmable spaces, and adding shade and vegetation to the streetscape. Improved access to adjacent businesses and future development have been considered, and should continue to be realized through the design phases.

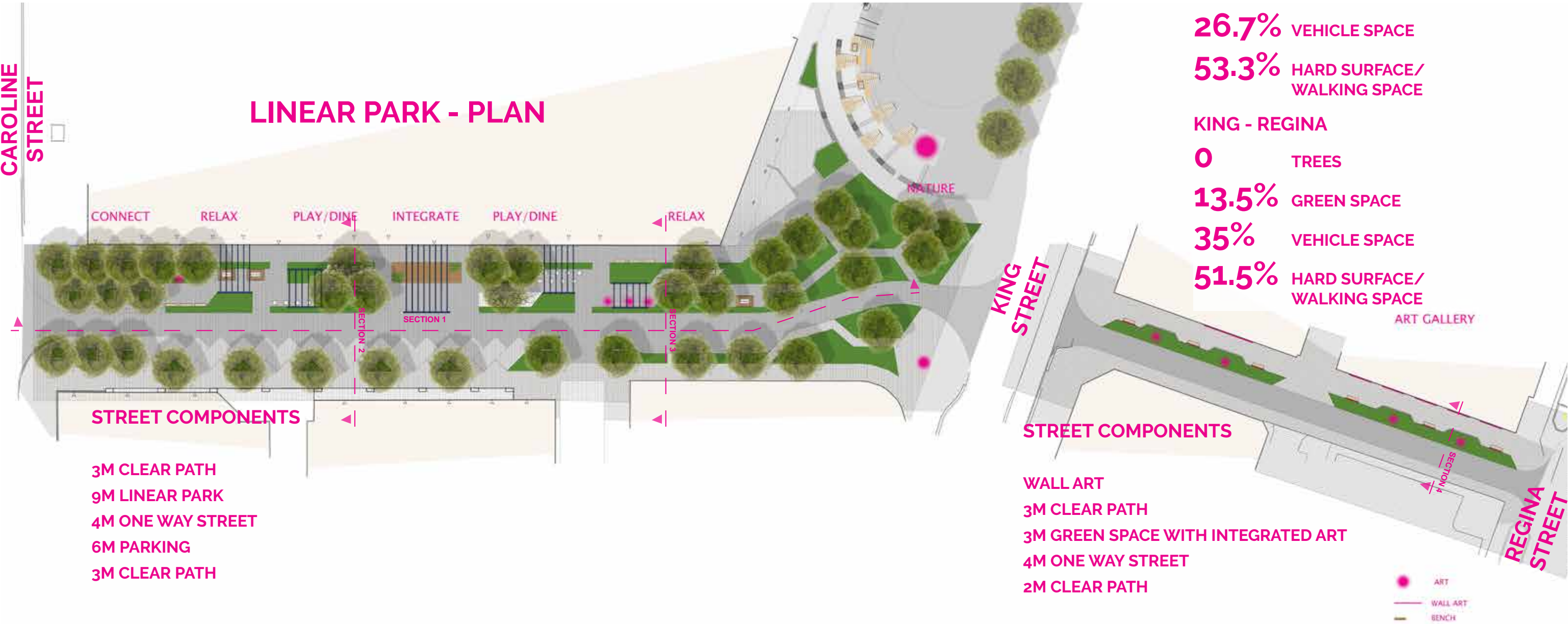
### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Willis Way should be a pedestrian-focused connection across Uptown, providing easy and enjoyable access to shops, areas of rest, and areas for gathering.
- A redesigned Willis Way should accommodate a broad spectrum of public people-focused use, while maintaining maximum flexibility for engagement and events.
- Willis Way is bookended by the historic Seagram Building and City Hall/Cenotaph/Laurel Creek. Its design should leverage these assets by providing clear views to each of the street's terminuses as a placemaking device.
- Multi-seasonality should be considered to provide comfort and interest for visitors. Multi-season maintenance regimes should be considered.
- Parking can be considered where applicable.



OPTION 1  
WILLIS LINEAR PARK

Pedestrian-focused  
Pedestrian-only Options (limited vehicular access)  
Public Realm as Destination



LINEAR PARK - SECTION 1



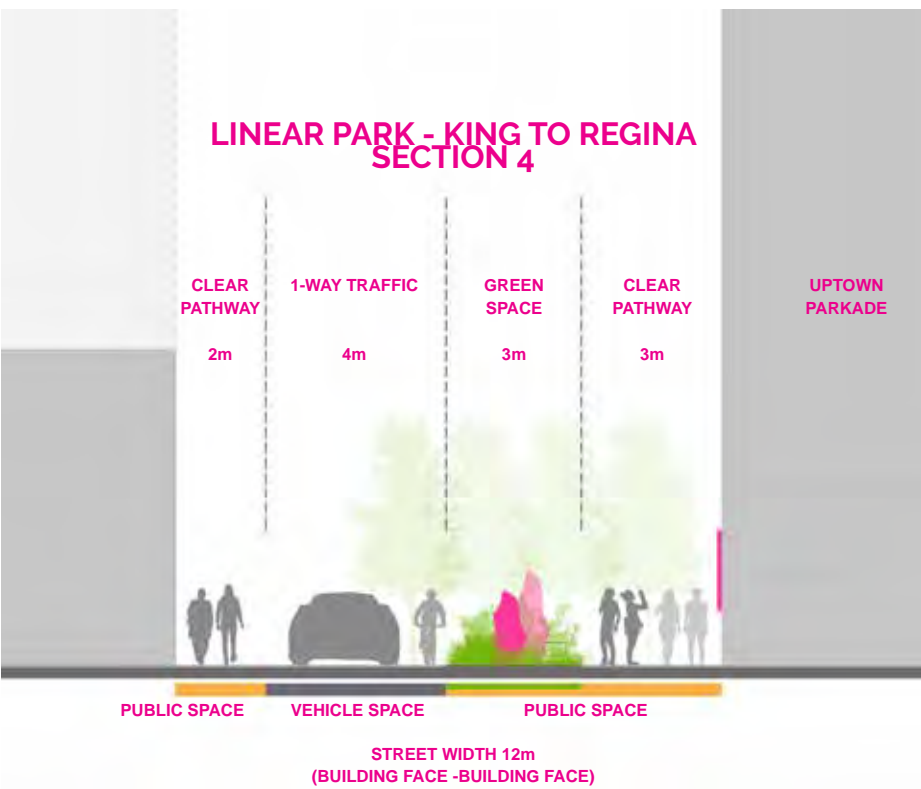
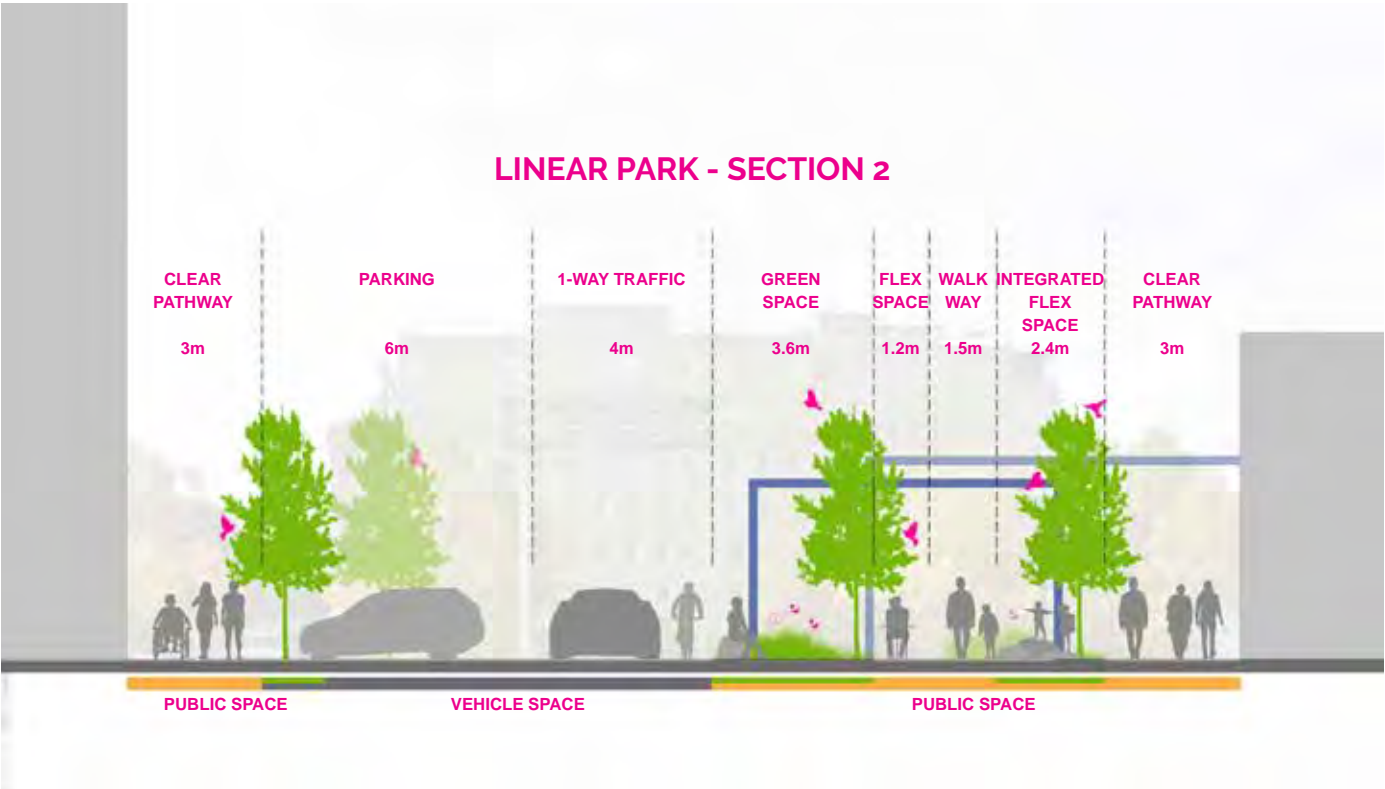
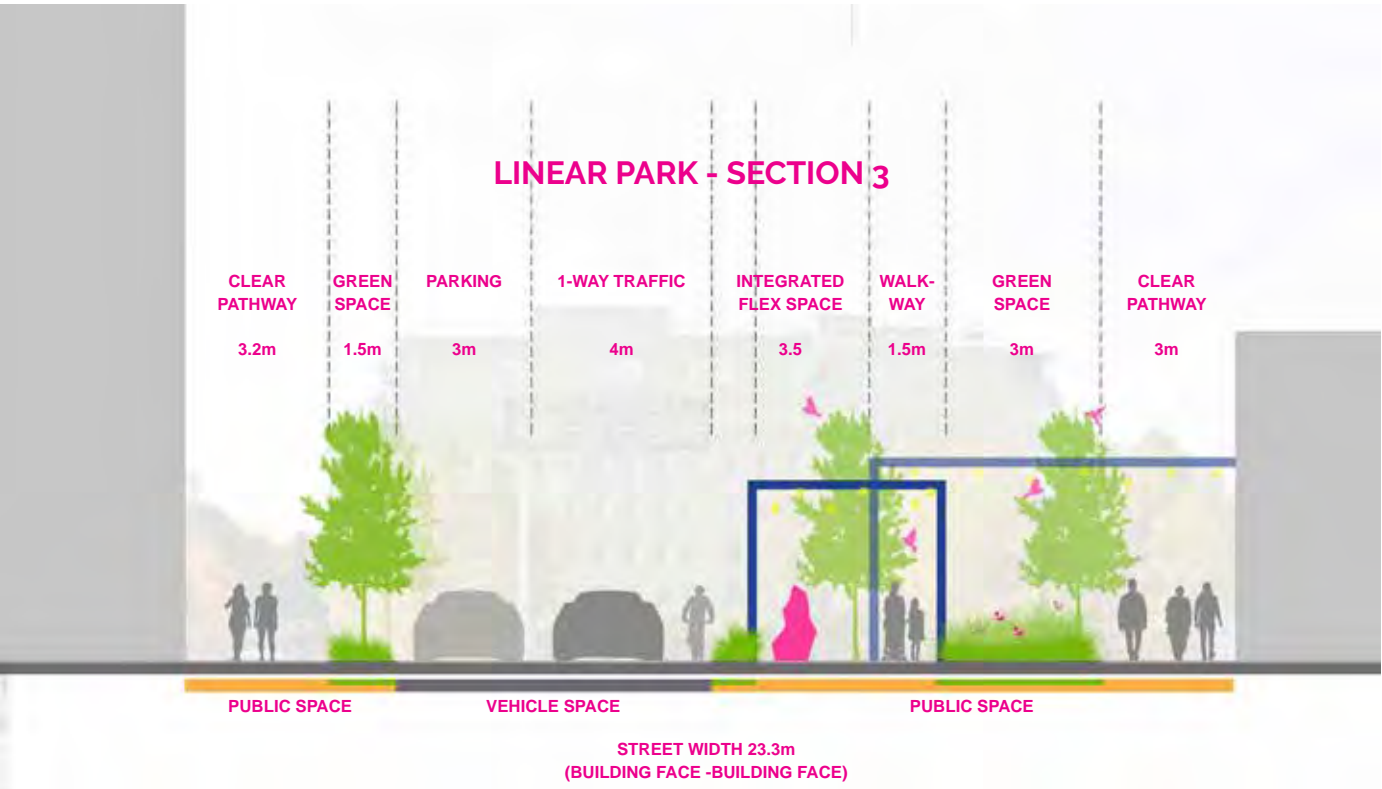


OPTION 1  
WILLIS LINEAR PARK

Option 1 of the Willis Way concept introduces a significant pedestrian-focused linear park the length of the street, from Caroline through to Regina Street. Connections to Waterloo Public Square are consolidated to its south via improved paths and plant beds.

Between Caroline Street and King Street this option introduces a wide pedestrian realm on the north side allowing for seating, feature lighting, plant beds where people can gather, stroll, and dine comfortably. Between King Street and Regina Street plant beds and public art are the feature elements.

This option allows for one-way vehicular traffic with 20 on-street parking spaces located between Caroline and King Streets.



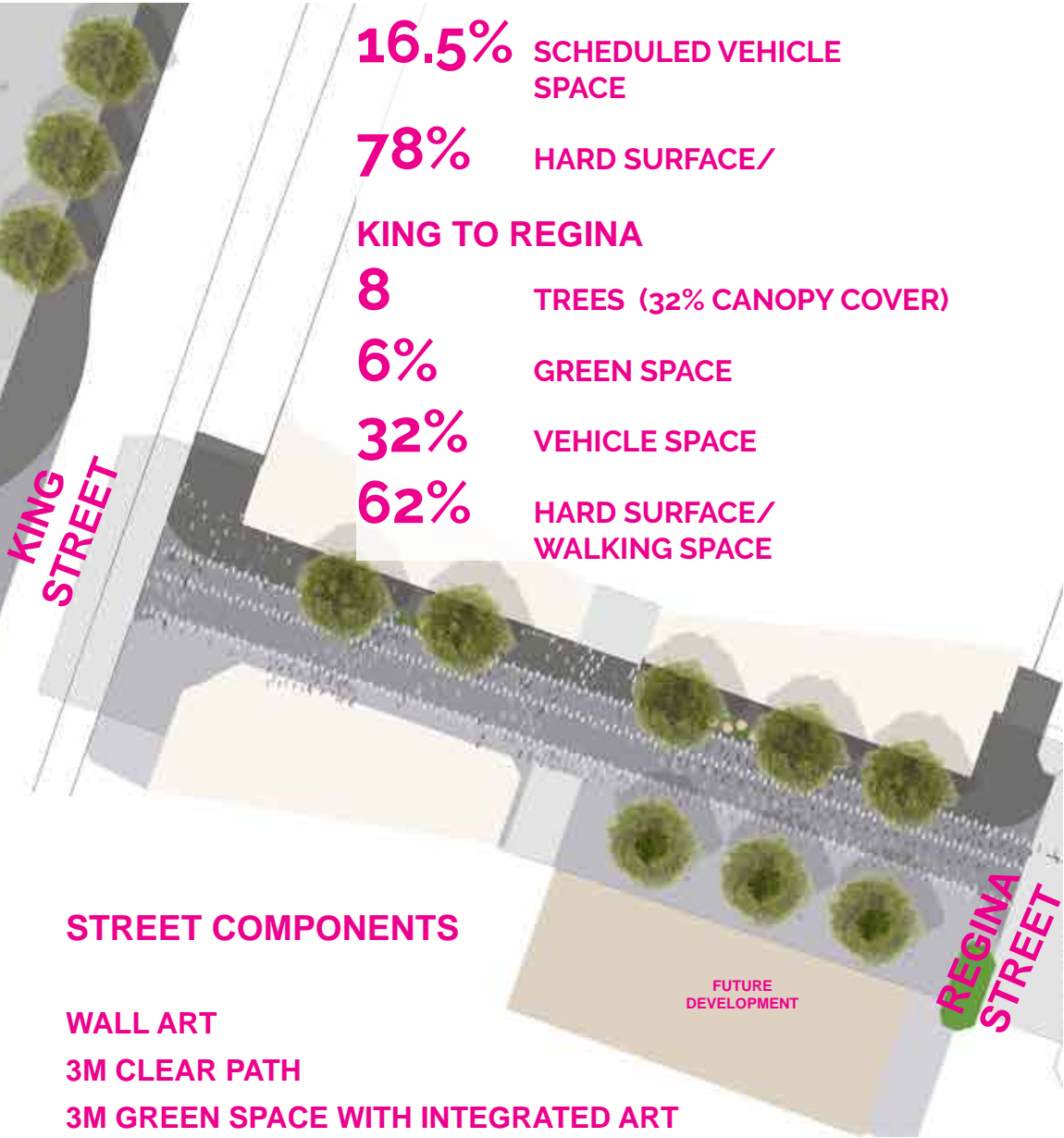
OPTION 2  
WILLIS PROMENADE

Pedestrian  
Emergency and Service Traffic Only  
Adaptable to Different Uses



STREET COMPONENTS

- 3.2M CLEAR PATH
- 3.7M FLEXIBLE AREA/ STREET FURNITURE
- 2M BIKE LANE
- 4M CLEAR PATH / EMERGENCY & SERVICE ACCESS
- 8M FLEXIBLE AREA
- 2-3.8M CLEAR PATH



STREET COMPONENTS

- WALL ART
- 3M CLEAR PATH
- 3M GREEN SPACE WITH INTEGRATED ART
- 4M ONE WAY STREET
- 2M CLEAR PATH

CAROLINE TO KING	
0	PARKING SPACES
33	TREES (33% CANOPY COVER)
5.5%	GREEN SPACE
16.5%	SCHEDULED VEHICLE SPACE
78%	HARD SURFACE/
KING TO REGINA	
8	TREES (32% CANOPY COVER)
6%	GREEN SPACE
32%	VEHICLE SPACE
62%	HARD SURFACE/ WALKING SPACE

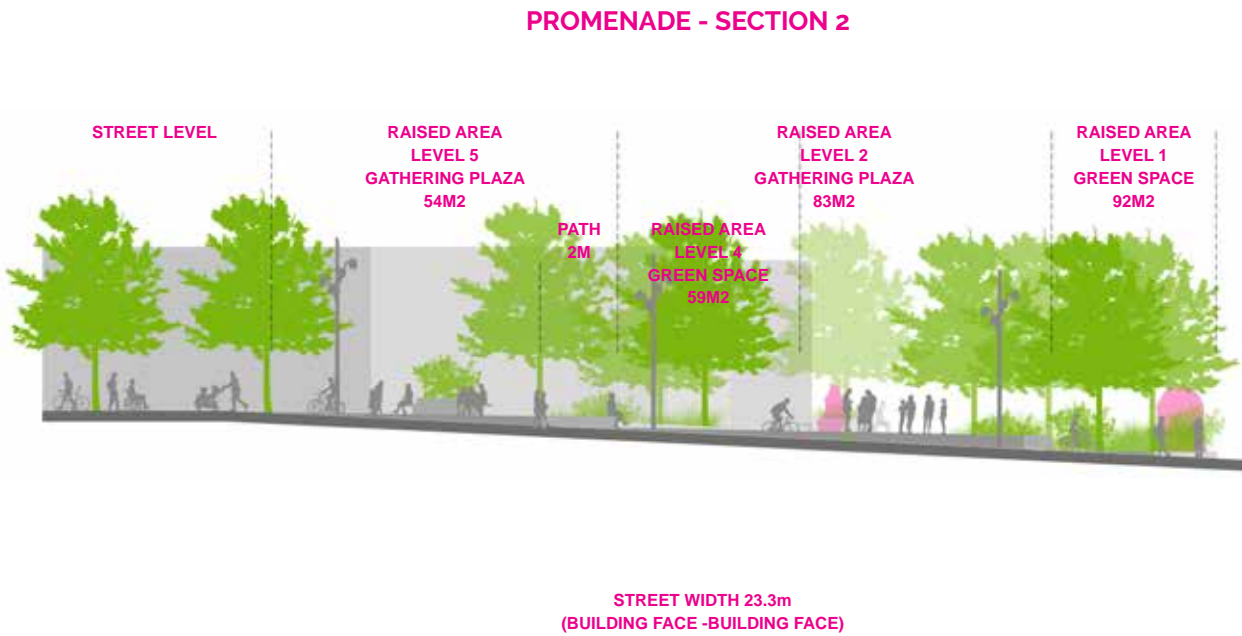
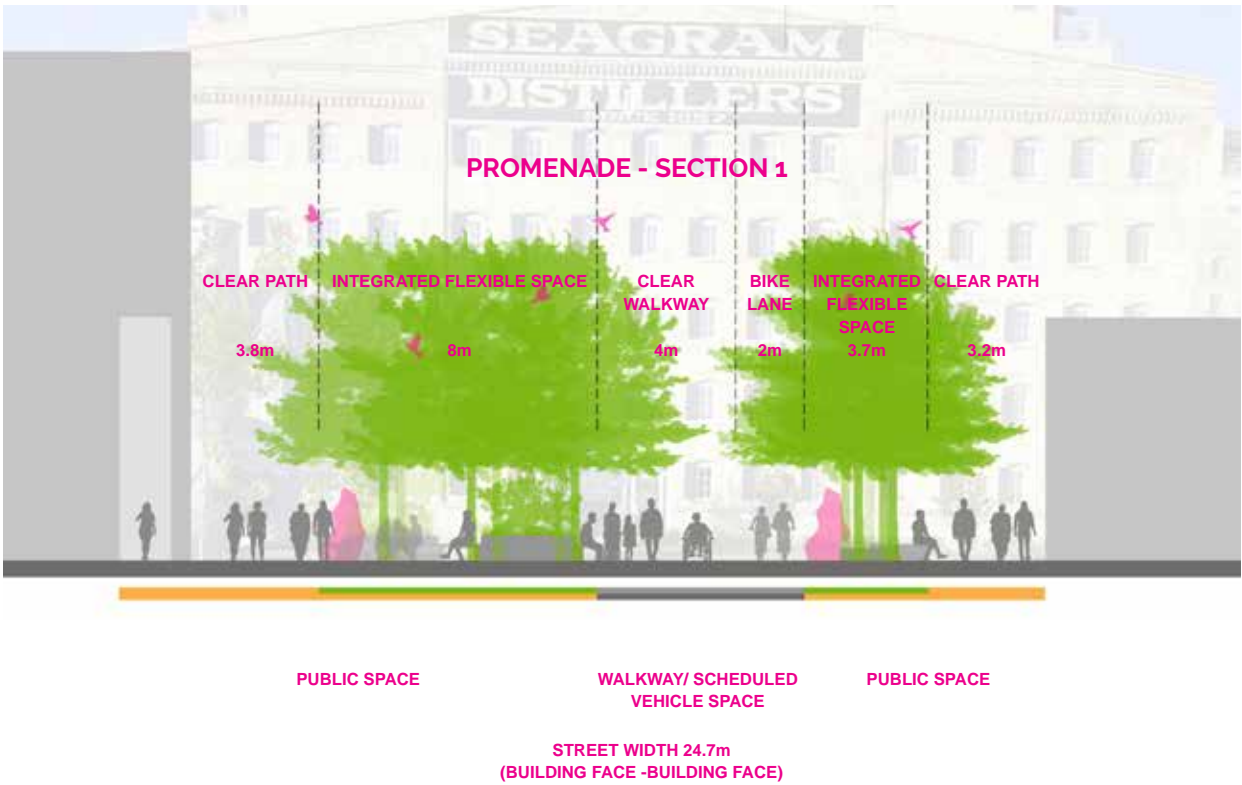
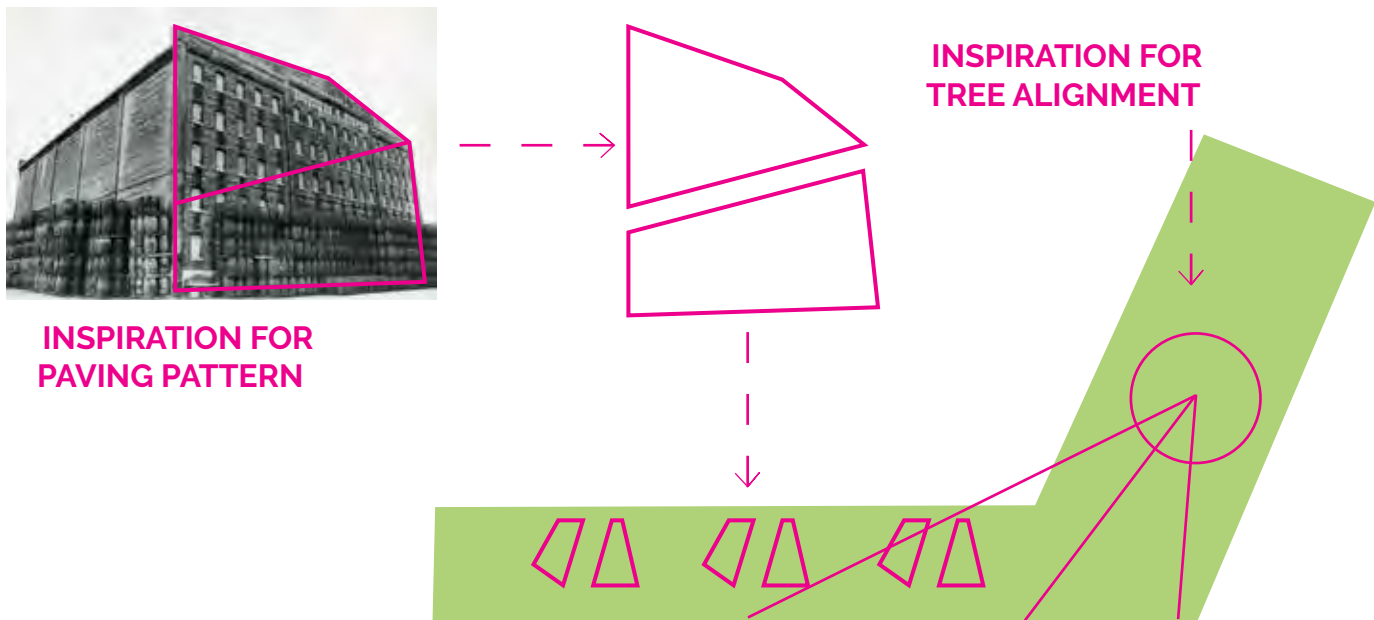


OPTION 2  
WILLIS PROMENADE

Option 2 of the Willis Way concept approaches its look, feel, and function as that of an urban plaza. This option is connected to Waterloo Public Square through a series of paved terraces taking cues from its plaza-like nature.

Between Caroline Street and King Street delineation of program is maintained primarily through the colours and textures of the ground plane. The space between building faces is mostly permeable in each cross section, creating flexibility in use and unrestricted travel by pedestrians. Street tree alignments radiate from a centre point at the public square. Between King Street and Regina Street the elements are simple allowing the paving and street trees to define the space, and accommodating coordination with future development.

Only service and emergency vehicles are allowed access in this option.







LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

# 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS



### 6.1 LAUREL GREENWAY MASTER PLAN OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the considerations, strategies and other actions noted throughout this document, the following is a list of overall recommendations that address the overarching direction of the Master Plan and potential first steps.

#### 1. ESTABLISH THE LAUREL GREENWAY SPECIAL PROVISION AREA

Define the Laurel Greenway in planning policy to ensure it can be implemented in tandem with the development and growth in Uptown Waterloo. Establish zoning and formalized design guidelines that can build out the planning provisions for the LGSPA.

#### 2. CONTINUE TO MAKE DEVELOPERS AND PRIVATE LANDOWNERS AWARE OF THE MASTER PLAN AND ITS ULTIMATE VISION

The Master Plan should begin to inform site plan applications in and around the defined Greenway area. There may be opportunities for development to support the Greenway through some of the strategies noted in section 4.

Discussions with adjacent landowners should be started in order to investigate opportunities to increase the Greenway area and explore options to deal with immediate pinch points or future growth opportunities.

#### 3. PROCEED WITH CATALYST PROJECTS FOR DETAILED DESIGN AND REQUIRED STUDIES/INVESTIGATIONS

Taking direction from the master plan, determine priority for catalyst projects based on concurrent work and available funding. Allocate funding for the detailed design, investigations and studies for those projects to move forward to implementation. The City can then engage consultants in the process of detailed design and contract documents.

#### 4. DEVELOP A WAYFINDING PROGRAM FOR THE GREENWAY

A key component of the Grounding the Greenway concept is the identity of the Greenway itself. While this will be articulated throughout the entire physical space, a wayfinding program will introduce a brand that can define a visual, tactile and experiential identity to the Greenway.

#### 5. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO INTEGRATE HYPERNATURAL PLANTING STRATEGIES THROUGH UPTOWN

A new planting approach will allow existing spaces to support higher-quality, ecologically enhanced spaces throughout the Greenway. Many existing planting areas provide a testing space to introduce hypernatural planting and new spaces can break up some of the hardscape, notably through Uptown.

#### 6. PROMOTE AND PROGRAM THE GREENWAY

Many events and activities organized by the City, Uptown BIA, and others currently take place within areas of the Laurel Greenway. Continue with and enhance these events, and use programming as a marketing tool to promote future projects and Greenway growth opportunities.







APPENDIX #1

# HISTORY OF LAUREL CREEK

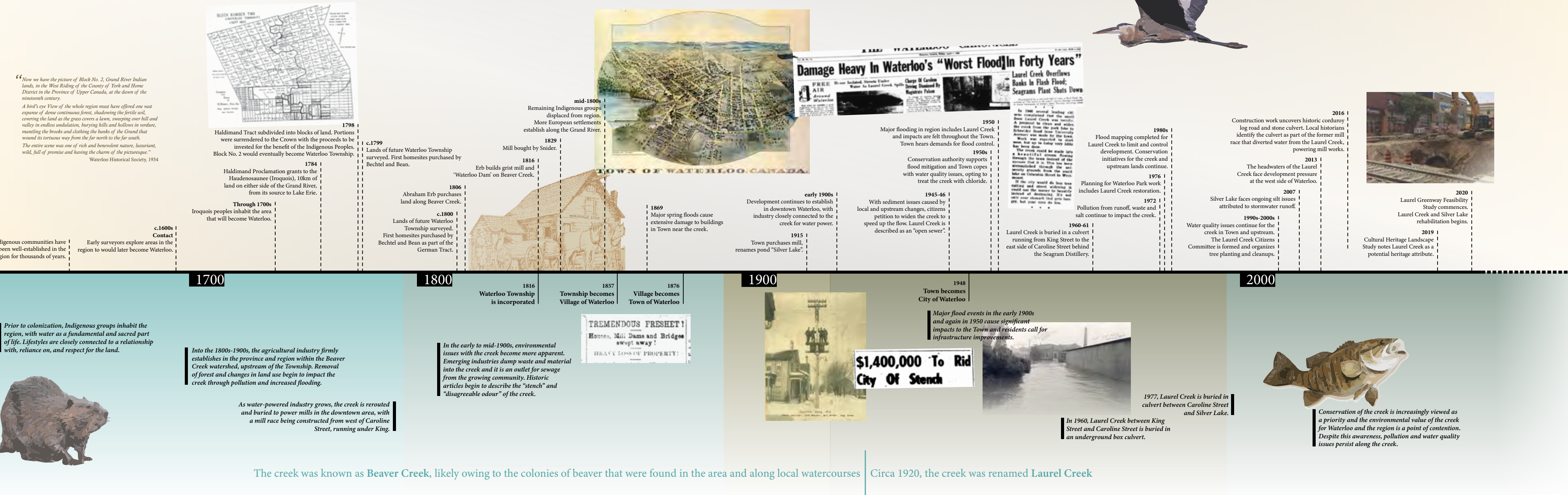




Graphic showing the history of the Laurel Creek over time, as posted on Engage Waterloo during the early stages of project outreach and engagement.

# A History of Laurel Creek

The evolution of Waterloo’s relationship with the creek







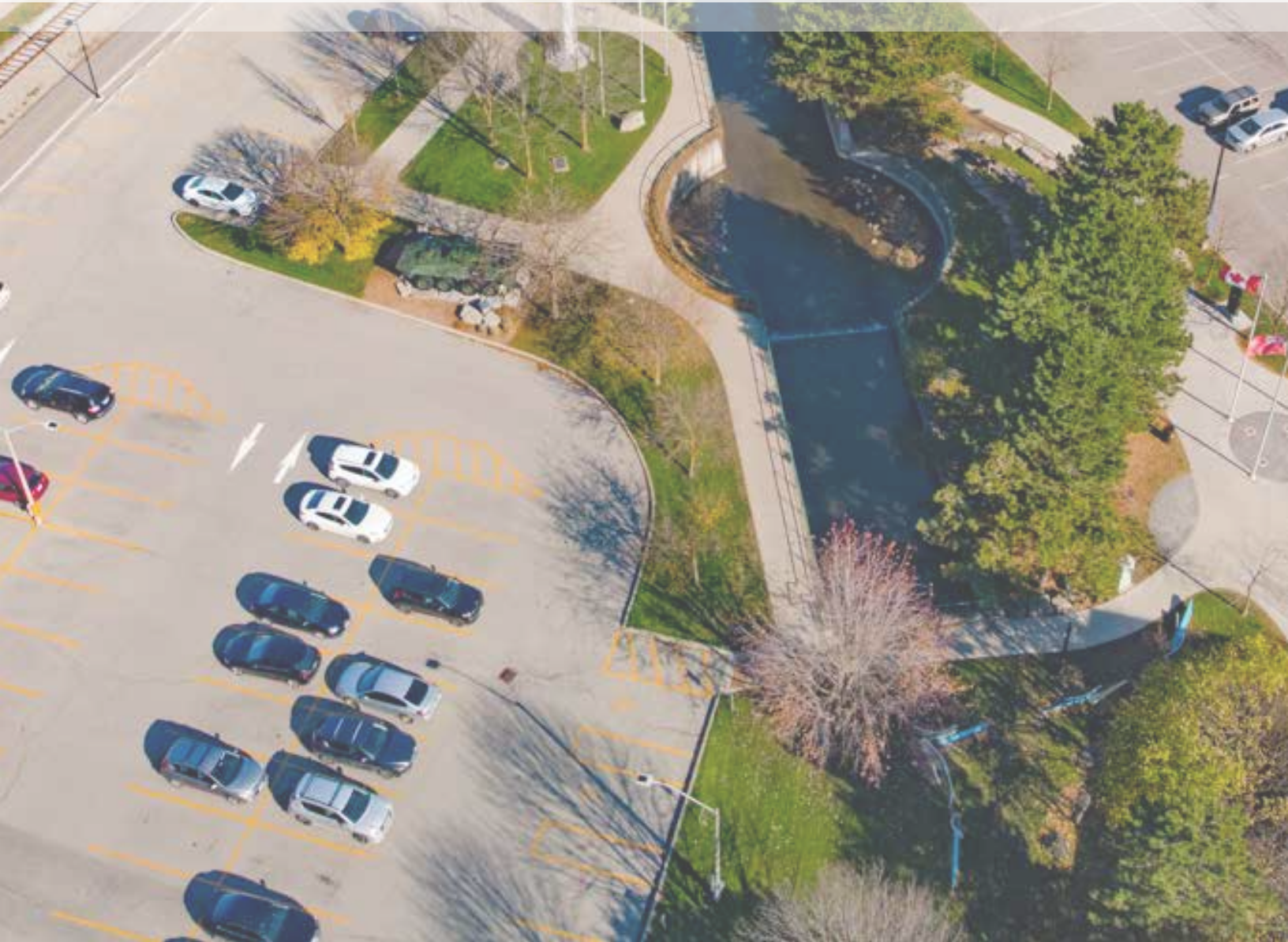
APPENDIX #2:

# ENGAGEMENT + OUTREACH SUMMARIES





# APPENDIX #3: LAUREL GREENWAY PROJECT LIST





Laurel Greenway Master Plan							
PROJECT LIST							
ID	Project Name	Project Location	Potential Improvements, Description	Owners	Phase	Construction Cost Est.	Consulting, Study Cost Est.
NOOKS							
LG1.1	Laurel Creek Lookout	North side of Father David Bauer Dr. across from Avondale Ave. N. Connects to Waterloo Park trails and overlooks Laurel Creek	Seating area and interpretive signage, naturalized planting, waste bins, Laurel Greenway information	City	3	N/A	N/A
LG1.2	Uptown Gateway (Erb and Caroline)	Eastern corner of the Erb and Caroline St. intersection	Uptown Waterloo gateway signage, public art installation and seating area, hypernatural planting approach, Laurel Greenway information. Coordination required with Region related to proximity to Regional road and intersection.	City Region	1	\$ 201,770.00	\$ 42,375.00
LG1.3	Spurline Trailhead	The intersection of the Laurel Trail and Spurline Trail, east of Regina St., adjacent to the freight rail line.	Defined path markings for the Laurel and Spurline Trails, hypernatural planting pockets, seating overlooking the creek channel, Greenway 'iconic' marker. Coordination required with Region for rail crossing.	City Region	3	N/A	N/A
LG1.4	Peppler Outlook	North corner of Peppler St. and Laurel St. directly over the Laurel Creek culvert	Formalize existing space and include interpretive signage, replace guardrails to open up views along the creek, public art installation and seating.	City	2	N/A	N/A
LG1.5	Bridgeport Trailhead	South side of Bridgeport Rd. crossing, west edge of the Laurel Trail	Small seating area with Laurel Greenway information, transition to Bridgeport Road crossing, Greenway 'iconic' marker. Coordination required with Region related to proximity to Regional road and intersection.	City Region	3	N/A	N/A
LG1.6	Weber Creek Stop	North edge of the Laurel Trail between Brighton St. and Weber St., looking out onto the creek	Small, minimal nook space off the path with seating, interpretive features, and naturalized planting	City	3	N/A	N/A
LG1.7	Weber Street Trailhead	West side of Weber St. at the Laurel Trail, both sides of trail	Formalized trailhead signifying entry into the Laurel Greenway, seating, information signage, Greenway 'iconic' marker, integration with Weber Street trail crossing. Coordination required with Region related to proximity to Regional road and intersection.	City Region	1	\$ 180,750.00	\$ 40,670.00
EDDIES							
LG2.1	Waterloo Park Entry	North side of Father David Bauer Dr. across from the Barrel Yards development. Aligned with ION rail crossing. This site is a southern entrance to Waterloo Park	Gateway feature to Waterloo Park and Greenway, public art installation (building on existing), seating areas, small plaza space, interpretive signage, Greenway 'iconic' marker, lighting, hypernatural planting areas. Coordination required with Region for rail crossing.	City Region	3	N/A	N/A
LG2.2	Gallery Plaza	Open space and entry plaza of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, at the southeast corner of the building adjacent to the Laurel Trail.	Open seating space with outdoor interactive art installation, overhead shade element. Open space maintained and serviced for event programming and in coordination with Gallery requirements.	City	2	N/A	N/A

Laurel Greenway Master Plan							
PROJECT LIST							
ID	Project Name	Project Location	Potential Improvements, Description	Owners	Phase	Construction Cost Est.	Consulting, Study Cost Est.
LG2.3	Erb Street Overlook	South side of Erb St. E, over the Laurel Creek culvert.	Expand available trail space to reduce conflicts with parking, interpretive signage highlighting creek views, seating space, Greenway 'iconic' markers, lighting, small hypernatural planting pockets. Easements to private property required.	City Private	2	N/A	N/A
LG2.4	Creekside Parkette + Creek Crossing	Existing open space on private land on the west edge of Laurel Creek, adjacent to Christian Horizons centre.	Formalize existing greenspace to serve private landowner needs and Greenway users. Opportunity for POPS agreements. Space may include seating and gathering areas, play features, creek lookout and interpretive elements, public art installation, lighting and servicing, hypernatural planting, and space for food truck programming.	City Private	3	N/A	N/A
LG2.5	Brighton Trailhead	South end of Brighton St. cul-de-sac at the Laurel Trail.	Develop the space as a Greenway trailhead with small seating space, Greenway 'iconic' markers and information, lighting, and potential to provide a lookout onto Laurel Creek. Considerations around adjacent developments and need for public/private separation.	City	1	\$ 263,750.00	\$ 59,350.00
FORKS							
LG3.1	Visitor's Centre	Western corner of the Erb St. and Caroline St. on the south side of the ION tracks, including the Visitor's Information Centre.	Redevelopment of formal Uptown gateway and public space, including gathering areas, public art, shade elements, wind buffers, water feature, interpretive elements, Greenway information, and fully-serviced event space. Coordination may be required with Region for adjacent rail requirements.	City Region	1	\$ 2,485,800.00	\$ 459,900.00
LG3.2	Creek Emergence + Cenotaph	Park area between Regina Street and freight rail tracks including the cenotaph area, parking lots, and creek.	Redevelopment of the existing park space to focus on the creek and memorial aspects including the cenotaph. Features include significant seating and gathering areas, open plaza, connections to adjacent trails, public art, hypernatural planting, interpretive elements, and Greenway 'iconic' markers and information. Coordination may be required with Region for adjacent rail requirements.	City Region	1	\$ 2,206,000.00	\$ 408,100.00
LANDINGS							
LG4.1	Waterloo Public Square	Existing public plaza at the intersection of King St. and Willis Way.	Upgrades to the existing space focused on creating shade, including the introduction of new shade elements to the south end of the Square, wood seating options, and potential planting improvements.	City	1	determined through separate project	determined through separate project



Laurel Greenway Master Plan							
PROJECT LIST							
ID	Project Name	Project Location	Potential Improvements, Description	Owners	Phase	Construction Cost Est.	Consulting, Study Cost Est.
CROSSINGS							
LG5.1	Waterloo Park to Rec Centre	Mid-block crossing of Father David Bauer Dr. to connect Waterloo Memorial Recreation Centre to Waterloo Park and the Greenway.	<b>Varies for all crossings listed:</b> Clear marking of trail crossing or pedestrian and cyclist crossing across intersections. Inclusion of priority signals, where appropriate. Integration with surrounding road, sidewalks and cycling facilities. Potential options for traffic calming and prioritization of Greenway users. Wayfinding integration with surrounding Greenway trails and spaces. Coordination required with Region for crossings where applicable.	City	2	N/A	N/A
LG5.2	Erb + Caroline	Crossing to provide better navigation for Greenway users through the intersection and to separate cyclists and pedestrians. Proposed project is a short-term solution.		City Region	1	\$ 132,600.00	\$ 13,260.00
LG5.3	Caroline + Willis	Connection across Caroline St. to provide a crossing to Willis Way and access to the existing ION station.		City Region	3	N/A	N/A
LG5.4	Regina	With the development of Willis Way (east end) and the Creek Emergence space, create additional opportunities to cross Regina St., between the existing Laurel Trail crossing and Willis Way.		City	3	N/A	N/A
LG5.5	King	Create a clearer connection for Greenway users crossing King St. Opportunity to relocate cyclist crossing point to use Willis Way to connect to Caroline St. and back to Greenway/Laurel Trail.		City Region	3	N/A	N/A
LG5.6	Erb + Peppler	Formalize crossing of Erb St. and extend crossing over Peppler St. to Laurel Trail. Crossing should be coordinated with development on corner of Erb and Peppler St.		City Region	2	N/A	N/A
LG5.7	Bridgeport	Prioritize Greenway Users through intersection and integrate traffic calming. This crossing had been recently upgraded at the time of the Master Plan report development.		City Region	3	N/A	N/A
LG5.8	Weber	Develop formal crossing of Weber St. at the Laurel Greenway, connecting to Mackay Cr. Signalization should be explored, considering larger volumes of trail users over time.		City Region	1	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 132,000.00

Laurel Greenway Master Plan							
PROJECT LIST							
ID	Project Name	Project Location	Potential Improvements, Description	Owners	Phase	Construction Cost Est.	Consulting, Study Cost Est.
TRAILS SECTIONS + OTHER IMPROVEMENTS							
LG6.1	Trail Section: Recreation Complex to Caroline	Crossing over Father David Bauer Drive between Waterloo Park and Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex.	Long-term improvements to existing sidewalk condition. Introduce increased pathway width, where possible. Introduce wayfinding elements to connect to Visitor's Centre Fork and Waterloo Park. Opportunity for wind buffering throughout space.	City	3	N/A	N/A
LG6.2	Trail Section: The Shops Corridor	Laurel Greenway between Erb/Caroline Street intersection and King Street, north of the Shops at Waterloo Town Square.	Clearly define Laurel Greenway between the ION rail line and Shops at Town Square building, and through the Waterloo Public Square. Coordination required with Region for adjacent ION rail line. Coordination required with private landowners of Shops at Waterloo Town Square to review access requirements and impacts.	City Region	1	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 16,800.00
LG6.3	Trail Section: King to Regina	Laurel Greenway between King and Regina Streets, along the freight rail line.	Prioritize the Laurel Trail through this block, promoting the route with clear wayfinding and consistent trail surface. Coordination required with Region for trail adjacent to rail line. Coordination required with private landowners in adjacent commercial properties.	City Region Private	2	N/A	N/A
LG6.4	Trail Section: Regina to Erb	Laurel Greenway between Regina and Erb Streets.	Ensure minimum trail widths and pursue property easements to give space for the Greenway. Explore routing options and potential to route Laurel Greenway main trail (cyclists) to Willis Way rather than the current trail from Regina to King. Coordination required with Region for trail crossing rail line. Coordination required with private landowners in adjacent commercial properties at Erb Street. Easements to private property likely required.	City Region Private	2	N/A	N/A
LG6.5	Trail Section: Peppler to Bridgeport	Laurel Greenway between Peppler Street and Bridgeport Road.	Ensure minimum trail widths are kept consistent along entire section. Provide clear wayfinding and integrate with Greenway spaces. Coordination required with Region at regional road.	City Region	3	N/A	N/A
LG6.6	Trail Section: Bridgeport to Weber	Laurel Greenway between Bridgeport Road and Weber Street.	Ensure minimum trail widths are kept consistent along entire section. Provide clear wayfinding and integrate with Greenway spaces. Coordination required with Region at regional road.	City Region	3	N/A	N/A

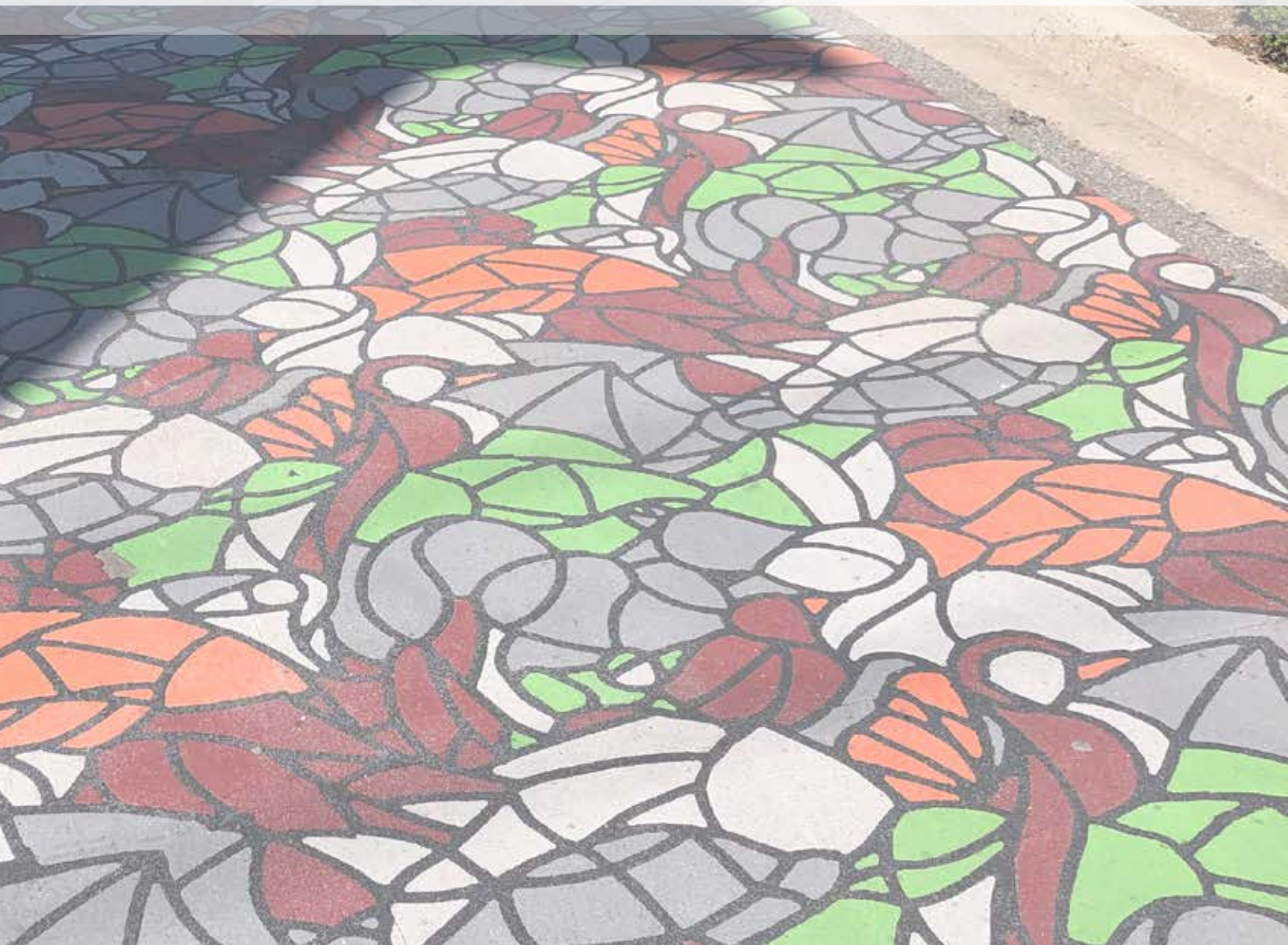


Laurel Greenway Master Plan							
PROJECT LIST							
ID	Project Name	Project Location	Potential Improvements, Description	Owners	Phase	Construction Cost Est.	Consulting, Study Cost Est.
LG6.7	Lighting: Peppler to Weber	Laurel Greenway between Peppler and Weber Streets.	Implement consistent trail lighting to promote safety and usability of the Greenway throughout the year. Coordination required with Region at regional roads, connections to servicing.	City Region	1	determined through separate project	determined through separate project
LG6.8	Creek Channel Guardrail Upgrades	Along Laurel Creek concrete channel between Regina Street and Erb Street.	Improve existing guardrails along the Laurel Creek channel to improve safety and integrate interpretive features, viewpoints and art.	City	1	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 21,600.00
LG6.9	Greenway Wayfinding Program	Applicable to the entire Laurel Greenway	Develop a wayfinding program unique to the Greenway and establish a brand that can support the Laurel Greenway identity throughout the entire Master Plan Area.	City	1	\$ -	\$ 12,000.00
LG6.10	Willis Way Redevelopment	Willis Way from Caroline Street to Regina Street (both sections).	Redevelop Willis way as a pedestrian-focused or fully-pedestrian route in the long-term. Explore the street as park-like space with active transportation options. Full scope to be part of separate visioning and master planning exercise. Coordination required with Region, private landowners throughout process.	City Region Private	3	N/A	N/A





APPENDIX #4:  
**LAUREL GREENWAY  
MATERIAL PALETTE**





# LAUREL GREENWAY MATERIAL PALETTE

The entire Greenway is intended to have a consistent identity and brand, creating a continuous experience for visitors, while still showcasing the unique attributes of individual spaces. The material palette supports a cohesive Greenway experience and recommends options for surfacing, furnishings, finishes and other elements to tie that support the overall Greenway identity outlined in the Master Plan. Materials should assist in defining the spaces through their contribution to sustainability, provenance, and reliability over their life-cycle.

Materials can be used as placemaking devices through referencing understood local forms or sourcing a local material. They should be thoughtful and integral to the final design of each Laurel Greenway space.

This palette is a starting point for discussion as some spaces may not be appropriate to use all or any of the selections shown; however, consistency will strongly support the continuity of the Greenway. Final selection will be part of detailed design.

## SURFACING

The consideration of Laurel Greenway surfaces and ground plane will be important to placemaking in a completed Laurel Greenway. The application of graphics to trail and plaza surfaces will help delineate spaces, provide helpful information, and add playfulness to the landscape. Graphics

and information applied to benches and vertical surfaces will also assist as placemaking devices combining art and information with functional surfaces.



Pedestal Wrap



Sandblasted Wayfinding



Painted Wayfinding



Painted Wayfinding



Interpretive Sign on Seating



Wayfinding on Seating

### FURNISHINGS

A cohesive suite of furnishings across the Laurel Greenway to support programming, help visitors locate themselves, and provide connection to the Laurel Creek should be considered. This includes interpretive and wayfinding elements, seating elements, bike racks, etc.

A variety of seating should be introduced at all scales. Seating needs to generally consider the comfort of users and accessibility. Views to unique and natural elements should be considered, as well. Timber benches/platforms and seatwalls allow for flexibility and repeatability, a straightforward approach to ease maintenance and create a consistent brand for the Laurel Greenway.

For some of the Laurel Greenway (primarily trail sections) may use existing City standards for

lighting, waste, and bike racks, however feature elements should be explored to heighten place value and user experience, especially at gathering areas.

Additional furnishings, such as interpretive signs, may be desired and should compliment other furnishings located at the Laurel Greenway.

All furnishings located in the regulated flood area need to allow for flood waters to freely flow under and around. Solid furniture, like timber benches, may need to be oriented to be parallel to the flow of water.



Timber Platforms



Timber Bench with Backrest



Steel and Wood Bench



Seatwall



Steel Wayfinding Sign



Steel and Printed Wayfinding



### FINISHES

A material finish palette will support a consistent experience across the Laurel Greenway. The creative and thoughtful use of materials can be used to identify “place,” heightening seasonality and supporting programming. Materials should be high quality, considering patina and wear over failure or breakdown.

Materials that should be considered are stainless and Corten steel for their longevity and workability. Sustainable or locally-sourced wood should also be considered for seating and decking. Finely-executed poured concrete can be considered for seatwalls.

Paving finishes should provide texture to better visitor experience and delineate uses. Natural materials are preferred, recognizing economic restrictions may be present. In all cases using paving material finishes to create human-scaled environments (spaces designed to be experienced at the pace of a human/human-propelled transportation) should be considered.

Certain elements may call for epoxied or powder-coated metals. In this case consider vibrant colours that provide interest in all seasons.



Wood Decking



Varied Paving with Cobble



Concrete with Unique Finish



Varied Materials



Powder-coated Metal Sign



Varied Material Finishes





APPENDIX #5

# PLANTING APPROACH

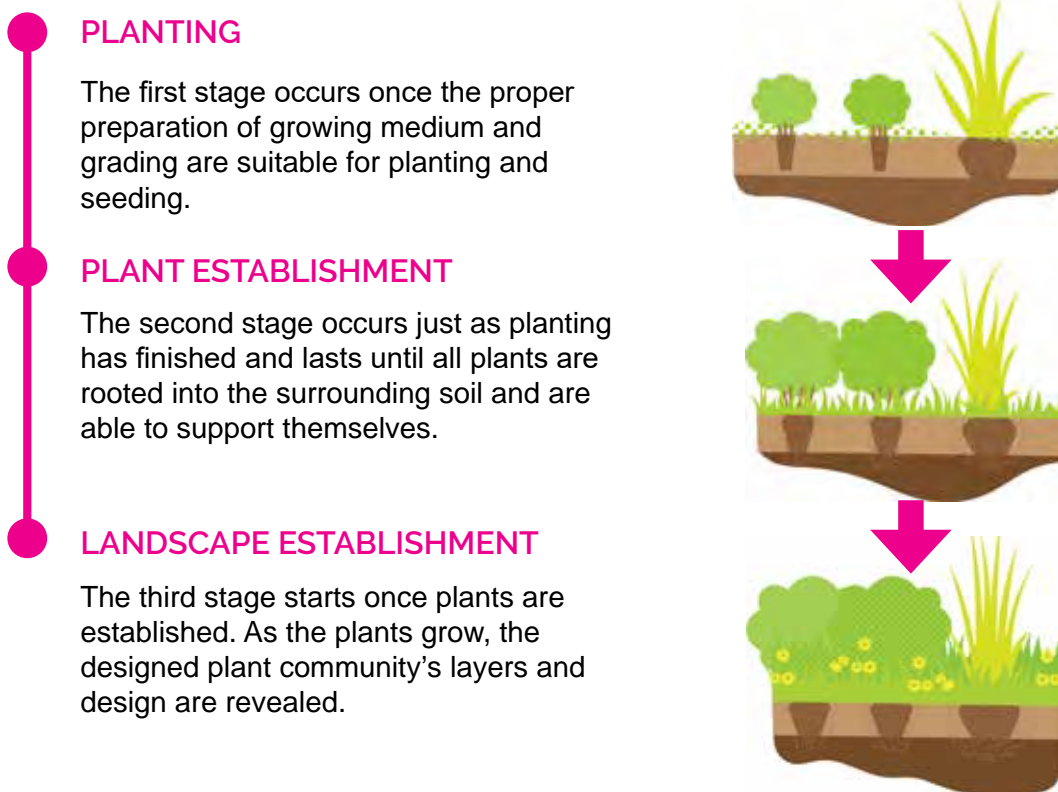




# PLANTING APPROACH + MAINTENANCE STRATEGY

Planting at the Laurel Greenway is intended to increase the quality of visitor experience, introduce restorative natural landscapes for community health and wellbeing, and increase ecological function. The strategy for achieving this is called hypernatural planting. This document is intended to guide the practical implementation of the strategy. Hypernatural planting is based on a plant community approach, occurring as small intensive pockets of natural elements with dynamic performance objectives. Planting strategies are derived from the work of Thomas Rainer and Claudia West (*Planting in a Post-Wild World*, 2015).

Maintaining a designed plant community has two overall goals: preserving the legibility of the design and ensuring the planting still functions over time in the way it was intended. There are three developmental stages identified for planting with different preparation and monitoring criteria. These stages include the planting phase, plant establishment phase, and the landscape establishment phase.



# PLANTING

The approach to hypernatural planting includes:

- 1 Proper soil preparation to optimize the success of any wildflower planting. The seedbed must be smooth and weed free.
- 2 The use of wildflower seed with nursery grown plugs and pots to achieve a naturalistic character at a more reasonable cost. Combining seed and plugs/pots will provide the benefit of a successional landscape, with plant establishment being a process. This allows the plant community to organically mature over a period of time.
- 3 Not relying on siting specific plants, but rather locating the designed plant communities of loose groupings of seed mixes and plants.



Beds shortly after planting and mulching.





# PLANT ESTABLISHMENT

In this phase, the management team should focus on:

- 1 Keeping orderly frames neat and clean. Well-tended frames (edge of planting beds) should be free of trash and other debris. Groundcover edges should be trimmed annually to the edge of the garden.
- 2 Preserving the legibility of the structural layer. The planting design will include structural themed plants, which form the visual structure of the planting through upright ornamental grasses, shrubs, and small trees. The heights of these plants create visible patterns, frame views and define the space, therefore management should focus on preserving the design as intended. At this phase, replace lost plants with the original species or another structural plant that serves the same purpose. Replacement location should be guided by the original design. As required, certain structural plants can be cut back annually.
- 3 Keeping soil densely covered with plants. The planting design will include a groundcover layer, which prevents soil erosion and provides a nectar source. Management should identify any gaps in the ground layer and replace those plants as required. This prevents undesirable plants and weeds from taking over the designed plant community. Filling open gaps within the groundcover layer will prevent weeds, requiring minimal resources in the long run. Leaf litter in the garden beds should be allowed to moderately accumulate to allow decomposition of organic matter to enhance the microbial life of the soil.



Maintain beds to support plant establishment



# LANDSCAPE ESTABLISHMENT

In this phase, the management team should focus on:

- 1 Providing periodic watering in times of drought and mulching the bare soil. These practices are beneficial to the designed plant community until all plants are established and these practices are no longer required. Coarse wood chips should be applied and their decomposition will add to the microbial life of the soil.
- 2 Weed management should be practiced until the groundcover layer has established. Weeding can often disturb soil and leave bare ground visible which goes against the principles of a designed plant community. Care should be made to carefully replace the soil and cover it with mulch until the groundcover layer is established.
- 3 Selective cutting of plants. It is often beneficial to cut a plant back in its early life as more energy the plant produces is then channeled into developing a strong crown and root system.
- 4 Winter preparation and care of plant material. In December, remove dead plant remains that were untidy, falling over, or deteriorating, but leave all other sturdy seed heads and stems. Again in March/April, remove all remaining grass and perennial seed heads and stems. This way, the plantings remain robust and tidy through the winter.



Established planting beds





## Layers Of A Plant Community

### STRUCTURAL/ FRAMEWORK

Large plants that bring vertical form to the planting

- 1 *Amelanchier canadensis*  
(Canadian Serviceberry)



- 2 *Andropogon gerardii*  
(Big Bluestem)



- 3 *Cercis canadensis*  
(Eastern Redbud)



- 4 *Cornus alternifolia*  
(Pagoda Dogwood)



- 5 *Panicum virgatum*  
(Switchgrass)



### SEASONALLY THEMED

Mid-height plants with visually dominant colours or textures

- 1 *Asclepias incarnata*  
(Swamp Milkweed)



- 2 *Aquilegia canadensis*  
(Wild columbine)



- 3 *Baptisia alba*  
(White false indigo)



- 4 *Ratibida pinnata*  
(Gray Headed Coneflower)



- 5 *Rudbeckia purpurea*  
(Purple Coneflower)



### GROUNDCOVER

Low, shade tolerant species

- 1 *Anemone canadensis*  
(Canada Anemone)



- 2 *Asarum canadense*  
(Wild Ginger)



- 3 Bunchberry Dogwood  
(*Cornus canadensis*)



- 4 *Carex pensylvanica*  
(Pennsylvania Sedge)



- 5 *Carex vulpinoidea*  
(Fox Sedge)



### FILLER

Short-lived, fast growing species

- 1 *Allium cernuum*  
(Nodding Onion)



- 2 *Clinopodium arkansanum*  
(Calamint)



- 3 *Coreopsis lanceolata*  
(Lance leaf coreopsis)



- 4 *Monarda didyma*  
(Bee Balm)



- 5 *Sporobolus heterolepis*  
(Prairie Dropseed)







