

# landscape

THE MAGAZINE OF THE

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS


9/2001 • US\$7/CAN \$9

# architecture



# Contents

SEPTEMBER 2001  
VOLUME 91  
NUMBER 9



The Blue Stick Garden by Claude Cormier caused a sensation at the avant-garde garden festival in Grand Métis, Québec, last year. See "Layers Revealed." • 98

## F E A T U R E S

### Montréal: Landscapes and Urban Form 88

*A city of islands in a majestic river, Montréal offers a rich array of cultural institutions and a rich landscape legacy.*

**By J. William Thompson, FASLA, Ron Williams, and Peter Jacobs, FASLA**

### Layers Revealed 98

*Although they varied widely, this year's CSLA award winners collectively focused on uncovering layers of natural and cultural history, from daylighting long-buried creek systems to memorializing those lost in the line of duty.* **By Kim A. O'Connell**

### Paysages Canadiens / Canadian Landscapes 104

*101 years of landscape architecture in Canada, expressed as five major phases of evolution.*

**By James R. Taylor, ASLA, and Cecelia Paine, ASLA**

ALTHOUGH THEY VARIED WIDELY, THIS YEAR'S CSLA AWARD WINNERS COLLECTIVELY FOCUSED ON UNCOVERING LAYERS OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY, FROM DAYLIGHTING LONG-BURIED CREEK SYSTEMS TO MEMORIALIZING THOSE LOST IN THE LINE OF DUTY.

BY KIM A. O'CONNELL

# Layers Revealed

In 1948's *A Sand County Almanac*, conservationist Aldo Leopold stated that the best way to illustrate man's place in the world was with a biotic pyramid—in which each layer of life, from soil to plants to large carnivores, was built on and dependent on the others. Two decades later, the late Ian McHarg evoked a similar image—urging landscape architects to analyze every layer of a site, from rocks to hydrology, when planning development.

Today, the winners of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects' 2001 Professional Awards indicate that Leopold's and McHarg's lessons have been learned. Several of this year's award winners aimed to reveal long-buried layers of natural history, usually in the form of water. A master plan for the University of Toronto, for example, will manage runoff so that it fits in with the planned

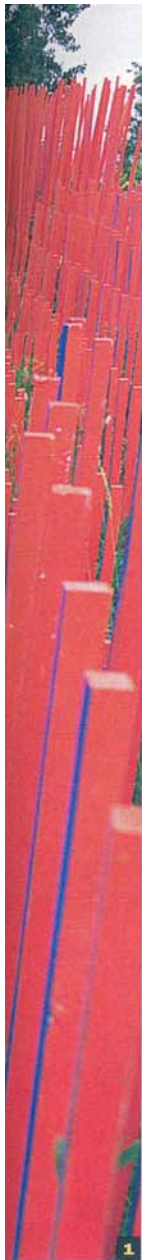
restoration of historic tributaries. Plans for a historic fort include "daylighting" an old creek system as well. Award-winning projects also sought to manage wastewater, stormwater, or floodwater in a site-specific way, while being as environmentally sound as possible.

Layers of cultural history are similarly exposed through memorials to past events. A new memorial at Parliament Hill, Canada's seat of government, honors police officers killed in the line of duty. A graceful structure in Montréal honors the 14 women killed in one of Canada's most violent episodes. And a new master plan breathes life into a neglected cemetery.

But, as one of the honor award winners shows, a garden's history can also be recognized in the most unexpected ways—in this case, with a field of painted sticks.

This year's jury consisted of Doug





Backhouse of the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects, Ed Fife of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects, Myke Hodgins of L'Association des Architectes Paysagistes du Québec (Québec's landscape architecture society), and Alan Tate of the Manitoba Association of Landscape Architects. Ian Corne, president of Cornus Landscape, served as CSLA awards chair. The jury examined 63 submissions—the highest number of submissions in the program's history, according to Corne.

"These are significant works of landscape architecture that deserve recognition for their contribution to conserving environmental quality, creating livable places for people, and enhancing beauty in the world around us," says Cecelia Paine, ASLA, former CSLA president. These projects, Paine adds, "demonstrate the relevance of the profession of landscape architecture to communities and individuals across Canada and abroad."

## NATIONAL HONOR AWARDS

### Blue Stick Garden **1**

*Métis-sur-Mer, Québec*

**FIRM:** Claude Cormier Architectes  
Paysagistes Inc.

**CLIENT:** Les Jardins de Métis

In her famous Allée Royale, garden designer Elsie Reford drew on the 19th-century tradition of Gertrude Jekyll's historic gardens, in which a high wall of color—in the form of lilacs, for example—contrasted with a backdrop of dense vegetation or perennial borders. For the recent Festival International de Jardins de

Métis—an international festival of avant-garde design at the Reford Gardens in Québec—this tradition was revived in an utterly modern way with the Blue Stick Garden.

Here, in lieu of flowers, painted sticks are planted in dense rows, creating a pointillist effect of intense color. Claude Cormier chose the blue paint to pay homage to the Himalayan blue poppy, the signature flower of Reford's gardens. A variety of pathways move one through the garden, including a corridor, labyrinth, and turnaround, with the varying height of the sticks adding elements of mystery and surprise. The backs of the sticks are painted orange—like the poppy's center—presenting an unexpected contrast.

"The Blue Stick Garden traces, in a bold manner, the evolution of our visual culture, from impressionistic brushstrokes to digital outputs," says Cormier. "Few visitors [to the festival] were unmoved; they either loved it or hated it. It is nonetheless an experience they will remember, adding to their idea of what a garden is, or is not." In fact, some visitors to the festival, expecting conventional gardens, became angry when confronted with such abstract installations as the Blue Stick Garden, according to the festival's organizers.

Cormier is no stranger to the premise that art and design are



meant to challenge. Holding a master's in design studies for history and theory from Harvard, Cormier has worked in the United States with Martha Schwartz—the grande dame of controversial landscapes.

"We set out to show how landscape architects are active participants in our cultural landscape," says Cormier, and "that we are active in shaping people's perceptions of the world around them, instead of providing a service that simply caters to convention."

### Burnaby Mountain North East Secondary School **2**

*Burnaby, British Columbia*

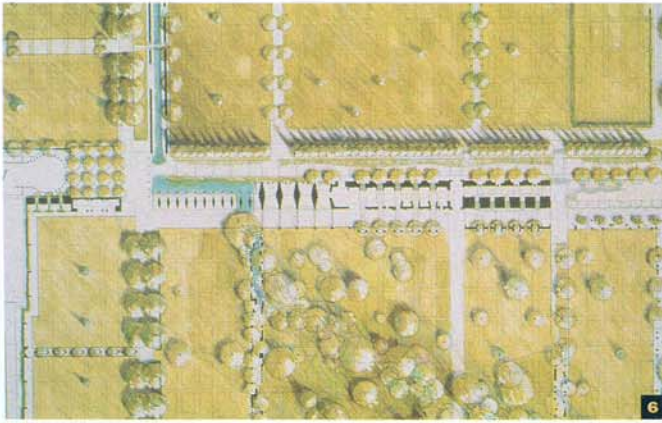
**FIRM:** Durante Kreuk Ltd.

**CLIENT:** Ministry of Education—School District #41

Designing the grounds of a secondary school on an undersized lot—with varying topography and several ecological challenges—is like fitting a square peg into a round hole. Yet this was what faced Durante Kreuk Ltd. at the Burnaby Mountain North East Secondary School. The designers were charged with creating recreational spaces for the school while carefully managing stormwater runoff and revitalizing the habitat of Stoney Creek, a moribund fish stream that traverses the site.

To do this, the landscape architects created biofiltration swales (shown in photo on p. 98) and ponds, where emergent plant species, including grasses and reeds, help to clean stormwater before it is released into Stoney Creek. In addition, native shrubs and trees were planted in areas of minimal vegetation to provide wildlife habitat for birds and small mammals. In the plaza area, which contains playing courts covered with concrete and asphalt, trees were planted in a structural soil made from noncompacting aggregate material mixed with organic soil and a binding agent. Particularly novel is a geothermal heating and cooling system that was incorporated into the playing field. For this, a series of pipes draws on the ground temperature to release and absorb heat as a means to control the temperature of the school.





But the mandate at the school was not completely ecological. The design team also had to create sports areas with adequate and comfortable seating. For example, the basketball and sports courts include modular sitting blocks and built-in concrete viewing stands, which are softened by landscape strips along the walls of the building. The soccer field at the south end of the site was reduced slightly from full size to allow for environmental setbacks from Stoney Creek.

In addition to providing an environmental resource, the school has enjoyed reduced maintenance costs through the use of native plants, a reduction in the amount of manicured landscape, and the adoption of a “no-mow” maintenance plan.

## NATIONAL MERIT AWARDS

### Fort York: Setting it Right 3

Toronto, Ontario

**FIRM:** du Toit Allsopp Hillier

**CLIENT:** The Friends of Fort York & Garrison Common and The Fort York Management Board

Since a garrison was first established there in 1793, Fort York has been considered the birthplace of Toronto. Today, the humble British military outpost has been altered and encroached upon by layers of industrial development and railways. *Fort York: Setting it Right*, published by an all-volunteer study group, outlines an action plan to restore and interpret the fort as a vital part of the urban landscape. Landscape architects served as the primary contributors, editors, and designers of the report. The opportunity to interpret the fort’s cultural landscape, according to du



Toit Allsopp Hillier, also underscores the potential for a more extensive park system, which would include the “daylighting” of an old creek system and the reconstruction of early trails. The report now awaits recognition by the city as the foundation for a comprehensive master plan for the Fort York area.

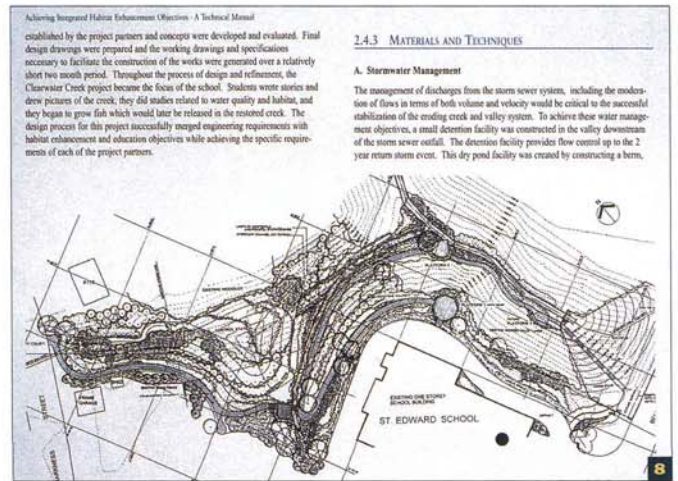
### Greenwich Day Use Facility 4

Greenwich, Prince Edward Island

**FIRM:** BDA Ltd.

**CLIENT:** Parks Canada

Although many projects claim they are sustainable, few go so far as to manage human waste in an environmentally sensitive way. The Greenwich Day Use Facility is an exception. This new park facility is the most recent addition to Prince Edward National Park, a coastal landscape of dunes, wetlands, freshwater ponds, and fields. Normally, in the island’s densest coastal areas, groundwater is extracted from aquifers and converted into sewage, with the effluent discharged into the ocean. For the Greenwich facility, a composting toilet system was designed so that 95 percent of toilet wastes



are converted into water vapor and carbon dioxide, with the remnant turned into stabilized compost that can be used as a soil amendment. In addition, the facility employs a raised deck and boardwalk that will minimize trampling of the fragile dune landscape. The design team also made a point to remove exotic plant species and save native plants disturbed during construction.

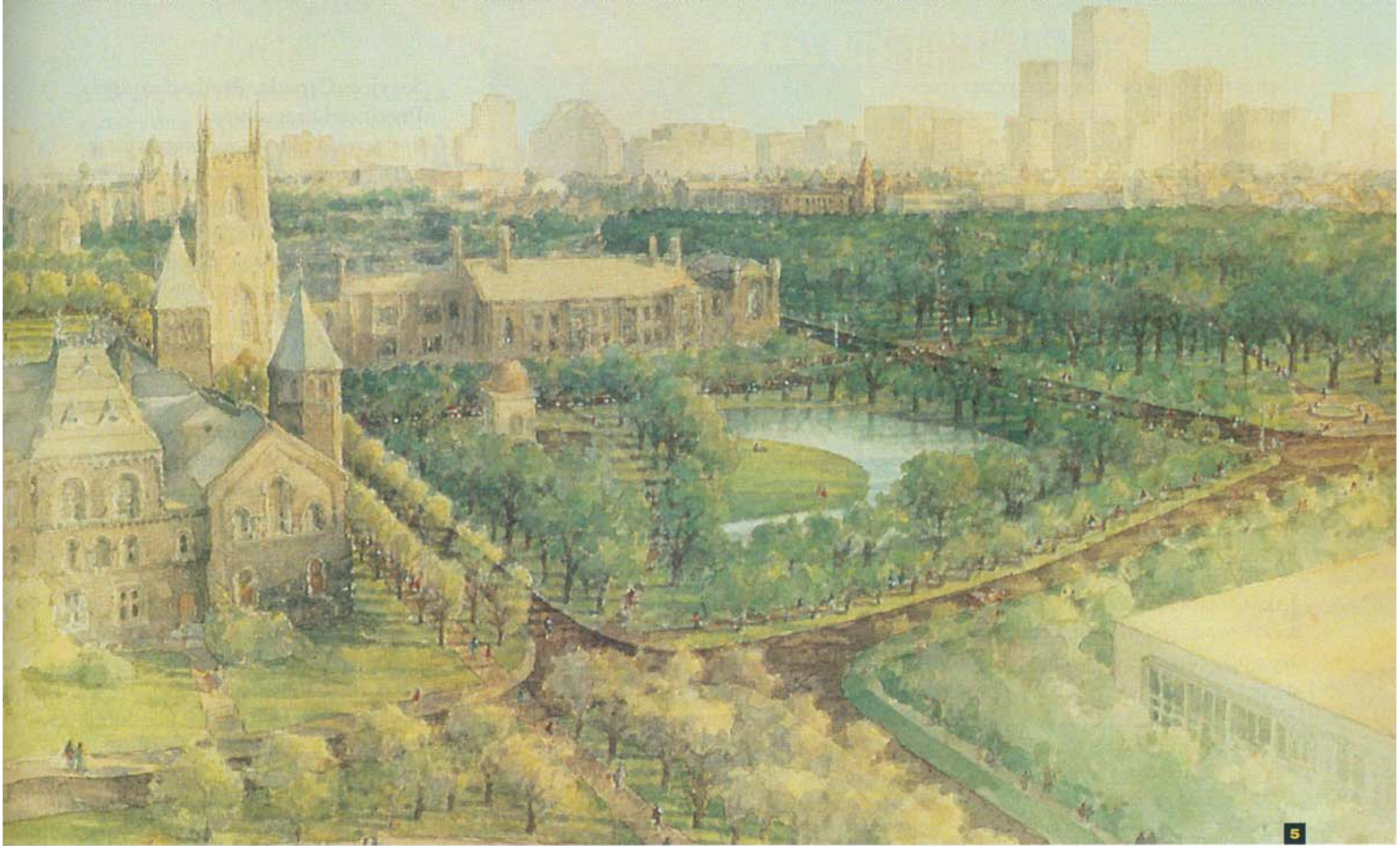
### Investing in the Landscape: University of Toronto St. George Campus Open Space Master Plan 5

Toronto, Ontario

**FIRM:** Urban Strategies Inc.

**CLIENT:** University of Toronto

It is common to find new ways to route people through a campus landscape—but not so common to do so with water. Yet water is the lifeblood of the open space master plan for the University of Toronto’s St. George Campus. In addition to creating a hierarchy of circulation routes, with pedestrian zones taking precedence, the master plan responds to local initiatives to restore the city’s historic



Taddle Creek tributaries, some of which were once routed through the campus landscape. Working with environmental and community groups, Urban Strategies explored ways to manage stormwater on campus while restoring the Taddle Creek watershed. One possible solution posited by the design team is a large water feature reminiscent of a pond that once existed on the site. Design development has already begun for the revitalization of King's College Circle and King's College Road, the campus's most ceremonial landscapes, including the removal of parking.

## Mountain View Cemetery Master Plan **6**

*Vancouver, British Columbia*

**FIRM:** Philips Wuori Long Inc.

**CLIENT:** City of Vancouver

[See Planning in this issue.]

One of the most remarkable aspects of many cemeteries is that they are not dead places. The best burial grounds are like mysteries unfolding—fonts of history amid bucolic natural settings. The Mountain View Cemetery, however, is quite the opposite. Its unadorned appearance includes thousands of formerly upright monuments that were flattened to allow for easy mowing. The cemetery also suffers from deferred maintenance, which has rendered it desolate and uninviting. To combat this deterioration, Philips Wuori Long has crafted a master

plan that includes features both to enhance the landscape and to increase interment options—including ash-scattering ponds, columbaria gardens, mausoleums, and feature memorials. Thousands of trees will be planted, which will frame new pedestrian connections at the site. Stories of the dead will be told in interpretive signs. For this project, landscape architects led a multidisciplinary team that included architects and economics experts.

## Richmond City Hall **7**

*Richmond, British Columbia*

**FIRM:** Phillips.Farevaag.Smallenberg

**CLIENT:** City of Richmond

Rarely does the construction of a mundane municipal building—such as a city hall—inspire civic pride and evoke a sense of place. Yet this was precisely the objective of the designers of the new Richmond City Hall in British Columbia. The site is designed along modern lines to symbolize the city's blossoming from postwar suburb in the 1950s and 1960s to the urban site it is today. Because the city is actually an island surrounded by the Fraser River, the design team abstracted this geography with an island in the site's pond, which is fed by a waterfall. Furthermore, the city itself is protected from flooding by distinctive dykes. On the city hall site, berms echo these landforms, while serving functional objectives



such as screening garbage, storage, and parking areas. Native plants are showcased in a remnant forest of birch and shore pine, but exotics have their place here as well. One of Richmond's sister cities is Wakayama City, Japan, and this relationship is honored with massed plantings of Asian flowering azaleas.

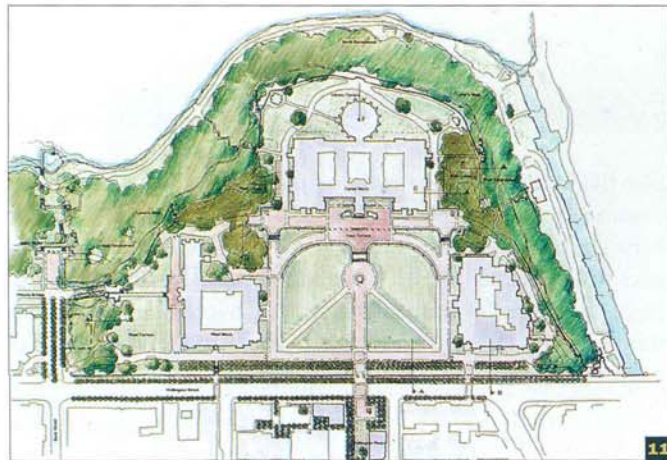
## “Achieving Integrated Habitat Enhancement Objectives”— A Technical Manual **8**

*Lake Superior Drainage Basin*

**FIRM:** Schollen & Company Inc.

**CLIENT:** North Shore of Lake Superior Remedial Action Plans, Environment Canada

Like the other Great Lakes, Lake Superior is experiencing a multitude of environmental problems, including water contamination and habitat destruction due to increasing development and use. Although several municipal and private



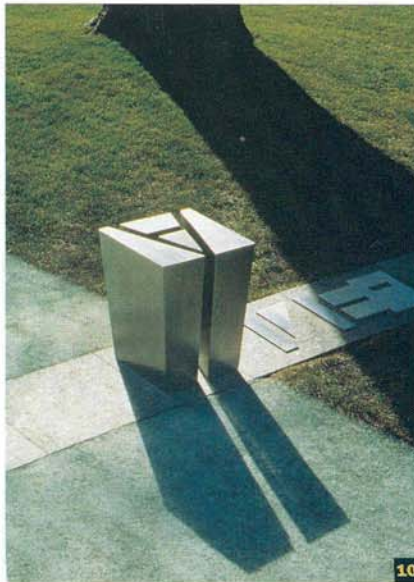
environmental organizations in both Canada and the United States have worked to protect the lake, no common program has existed for an integrated approach to the Lake Superior ecosystem. Today, landscape architects have served as project managers for a new technical manual that synthesizes various techniques used successfully in lake enhancement projects, including watercourse rehabilitation, shoreline stabilization, and the design of marinas. Among several challenges, the team had to standardize images from different sources and projects.

## Canadian Police and Peace Officer's Memorial **9**

*Ottawa, Ontario*

**FIRM:** Phillips.Farevaag.Smallenberg

**CLIENT:** Public Works Government



the names of officers who have died in the line of duty in the past century, leaving space for names that are unfortunately sure to follow. Set away from the pavilion, the stainless steel panels are set on a cut stone base, conveying strength, with etched glass units designed not to impede the dramatic views from Parliament Hill.

## Nef Pour Quatorze Reines **10**

*Montréal, Québec*

**FIRM:** Rose-Marie Goulet/Marie-Claude Robert

**CLIENT:** Ville de Montréal

Twelve years ago, 14 women were massacred simply because they dared to excel in a field dominated by men. On December 6, 1989, a gunman who had failed to get into the École Polytechnic engineering program in Montréal took out his rage on 13 female engineering students and one secretary. Nef Pour Quatorze Reines—Nave for 14 Queens—is a stainless steel and granite memorial engraved with the names of the victims. In addition to commemorating the lives lost, the design is meant to evoke a spirit of nonviolence while breaking down barriers between men and women, and among design professionals. A public artist and a landscape architect collaborated on the memorial design. The distinction between monument and installation no longer exists, the designers say: “The site is the work; the work is the site.” The result is a memorial that is extremely accessible to the public, while allowing for quiet meditation as well.



## Parliament Hill Landscape Plan **11**

*Ottawa, Ontario*

**FIRM:** Phillips.Farevaag.Smallenberg

**CLIENT:** Public Works Government Services Canada, Parliamentary Precinct Directorate

The buildings of Parliament Hill, the seat of Canada's government, are in the process

# CSLA REGIONAL AWARDS

## REGIONAL HONOR

### Starward Brochure

*Hamilton, Ontario*

**FIRM:** G. O'Connor Consultants, Inc.

**CLIENT:** Starward Homes

## REGIONAL MERIT

### Bayshore

*Vancouver, British Columbia*

**FIRM:** Durante Kreuk Ltd.

**CLIENT:** Bayshore Gardens Developments Ltd.

### Benny Farm Housing Project

*Montréal, Québec*

**FIRM:** Claude Cormier Architectes

Paysagistes Inc./Le Groupe Seguin Lacasse Inc.

**CLIENT:** Canada Lands Company Limited

### Downtown Edmonton Design Guidelines Manual

*Edmonton, Alberta*

**FIRM:** Carlyle + Associates

**CLIENT:** City of Edmonton, Planning and Development, Urban Design Review Panel, Downtown Advisory Committee

### Millennium Design Icons and Retrospective

*Mississauga, Ontario*

**FIRM:** City of Mississauga, Planning and Building, Development and Design Division

**CLIENT:** Planning and Building Department—Development and Design Division

### Nature of Bowen

*Bowen Island, British Columbia*

**FIRM:** Katherine Dunster

**CLIENT:** The Island News

### Place Hydro—Québec

*Montréal, Québec*

**FIRM:** Arbour, Bethiaume & Beauregard

**CLIENT:** Hydro—Québec

### Plan de Gestion; Bassin Du Ruisseau Bertrand

*Ville de St. Laurent, Québec*

**FIRM:** Parent Latreille et Associés

**CLIENT:** Communauté Urbaine de Montréal

### Plan de Mise en Valeur Parcours Agrotouristique de La Route des Fleurs

*Laval, Québec*

of being carefully restored. At first glance, they appear ideally situated in a historic setting—grounds that were designed in part by the revered landscape architect and Olmsted collaborator Calvert Vaux. Closer inspection, however, reveals a landscape in as much need of restoration as the buildings—including eroded areas, unruly vegetation, and evidence of heavy wear and tear by the untold numbers of people (and cars) that visit Parliament Hill each year. This new plan will honor the Vaux landscape while incorporating the modern goal of sustainability. Soft plantings are favored over paved surfaces, tree cover will define the perimeter of the site, and a clearer connection will be made between Parliament Hill and the nearby Ottawa River.

## Seine River Greenway Study 12

*Winnipeg, Manitoba*

**FIRM:** Jim Paterson

**CLIENT:** City of Winnipeg

Although the main goal of the Seine Riverway Greenway Study was to manage the Winnipeg waterway as a series of connected green spaces, the project also included a comprehensive hydraulic modeling aspect that will enhance recreational and ecological values on the river for years to come. Modeling of this kind is normally performed for flood planning, but because the Seine is protected from flooding by a siphon-and-channel system, the hydrologic study focused instead on improving low-flow conditions on the river. Computer modeling determined the minimum flows required for the Seine to support recreational canoeing—a favorite local pastime—as well as a healthy ecosystem. Various systems to increase flows, such as riffle structures, were considered in the study. As chairs of a multidisciplinary task force, landscape architects worked to assuage local landowners' concerns about safety, vandalism, and trespassing—concerns that, while common among people who live near proposed greenways, are usually unfounded. **LA**

*Kim A. O'Connell is a freelance environmental writer based in Arlington, Virginia, and a former managing editor of Landscape Architecture.*

**FIRM:** Rousseau Lefebvre

**CLIENT:** Laval Technopole

### Rouge Park Interpretive Plan

*Toronto, Ontario*

**FIRM:** Schollen & Company, Inc.

**CLIENT:** Rouge Park Alliance

### Valleys 2000, Bowmanville Valleys Millennium Project

*Bowmanville, Ontario*

**FIRM:** Schollen & Company

**CLIENT:** Valleys 2000

## REGIONAL CITATION

### A Mount Royal Garden

*Calgary, Alberta*

**FIRM:** Carlyle + Associates

**CLIENT:** John and Mary Lou Halliwell

### Boffins Garden

*Saskatoon, Saskatchewan*

**FIRM:** Crosby Hanna & Associates

**CLIENT:** Innovation Place

### Bow Valley Centre Redevelopment Concept Plan

*Calgary, Alberta*

**FIRM:** Carlyle + Associates

**CLIENT:** City of Calgary, Planning and Development, Corporate Properties

### Calgary Cultural District Initiative

*Calgary, Alberta*

**FIRM:** Beverly A. Sandalack & Andrei Nicolai

**CLIENT:** The Calgary Cultural District Partnership

### Huangdo Cultural Precinct Central Open Space Urban Design Study

*City of Huangdao, China*

**FIRM:** Phillips.Farevaag.Smallenberg

**CLIENT:** City of Huangdao, China

### Nortel Networks Ottawa Expansion/Carling Campus

*Ottawa, Ontario*

**FIRM:** Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum Inc./Corush Sunderland Wright Ltd.

**CLIENT:** Nortel Networks

### SMED Falkridge

*Priddis, Alberta*

**FIRM:** Landplan Associates Ltd.

**CLIENT:** SMED International