

**DE – frag**  
**Megan Esopenko**

DE-frag seeks to answer the question: *How can we restore the ecology of High Park without jeopardizing its functionality and programmatic use in order to create a resilient landscape capable of adapting to urban life over time?*

High Park's ecology has been greatly affected by urban development occurring inside and outside of the park. Great expanses of wetlands have been lost to road development, shoreline alteration, and siltation from stormwater runoff. This has resulted in the fragmentation of natural areas, which are now in decline throughout the park. In addition, the programmatic elements existing in High Park are separated throughout the landscape with no clear connecting agents between one program and another. The design of DE-frag absorbs and concentrates all park programs down a central spine which will allow the surrounding ecosystems to be restored, while also allowing a straight connection to the waterfront. The spine will be highly programmed, very active and highly maintained, while surrounding ecological areas will be allowed to rest, therefore decreasing maintenance inputs over time and leading to an overall healthier ecosystem.

De-frag will be achieved through a phased approach. All programs will be [concentrate]d down a central corridor in specified programmatic zones. This will lead to the [establish]ment of new and healthier ecologies in the surrounding areas that will be able to thrive and adapt over time. The water systems in the park will then be [expand]ed in order to connect Grenadier Pond and Spring Creek to Lake Ontario. Finally, due to the grand topography on site, [bridge]s will be added to create a clear and straight connection from the northernmost regions of the park to the waterfront.

**KEELEDAL PARK**

33 acres



**EGLINGTON FLATS/SPORTS FACILITIES**

120 acres



**LAMBTON PARK**

86 acres



**HIGH PARK**

400 acres



**EARL BALES PARK**

180 acres

**DOWNSVIEW PARK**

572 acres

**SUNNYBROOK PARK**

150 acres

**ERNEST THOMPSON SETON PARK**

125 acres

**DON VALLEY BRICKWORKS**

100 acres

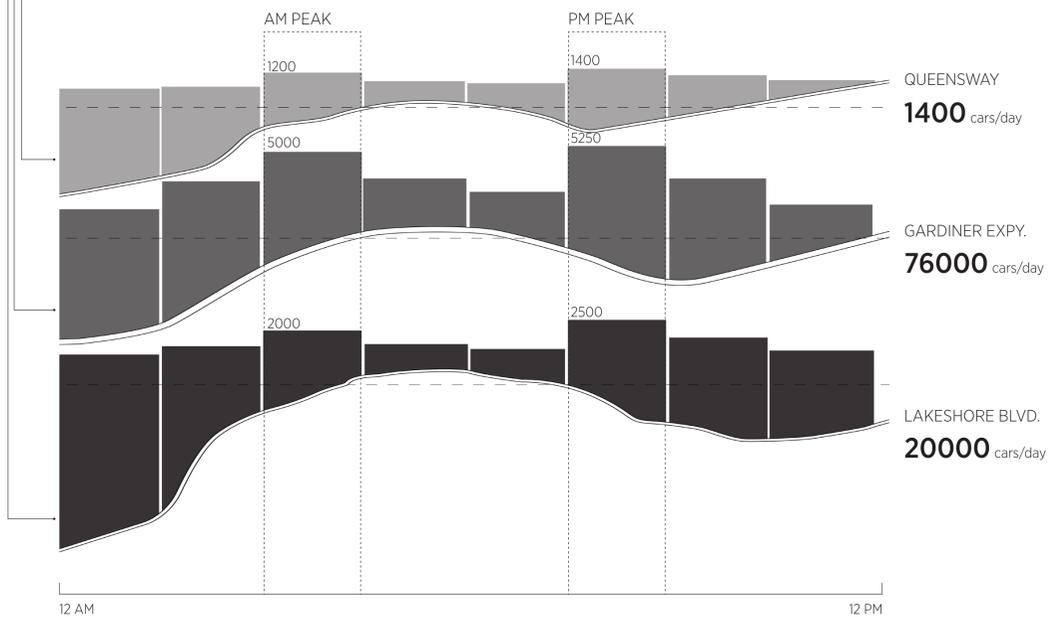
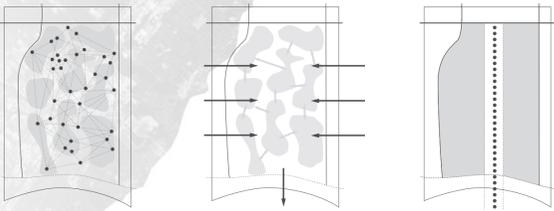
High Park must not be understood in isolation as its central location is critical to the parks overall function and aesthetic. Toronto's west side has no other urban park that compares with relation to size and program. It is one of the largest urban parks in Toronto and offers the greatest diversity of program balanced with large open, natural space for recreation and leisure. High Park is also located just north of the Waterfront and is in very close proximity to the Humber River Watershed.

Currently, High park has little to no connection to the waterfront as there are three major road barriers that lie between: The Queensway, Gardiner Expressway, and Lakeshore Boulevard.

**[DE] - frag**

DE- frag seeks to answer the questions: How can we restore the ecology of High Park without jeopardizing the functionality and programmatic use while creating a resilient landscape capable of adapting to the urban life over time?

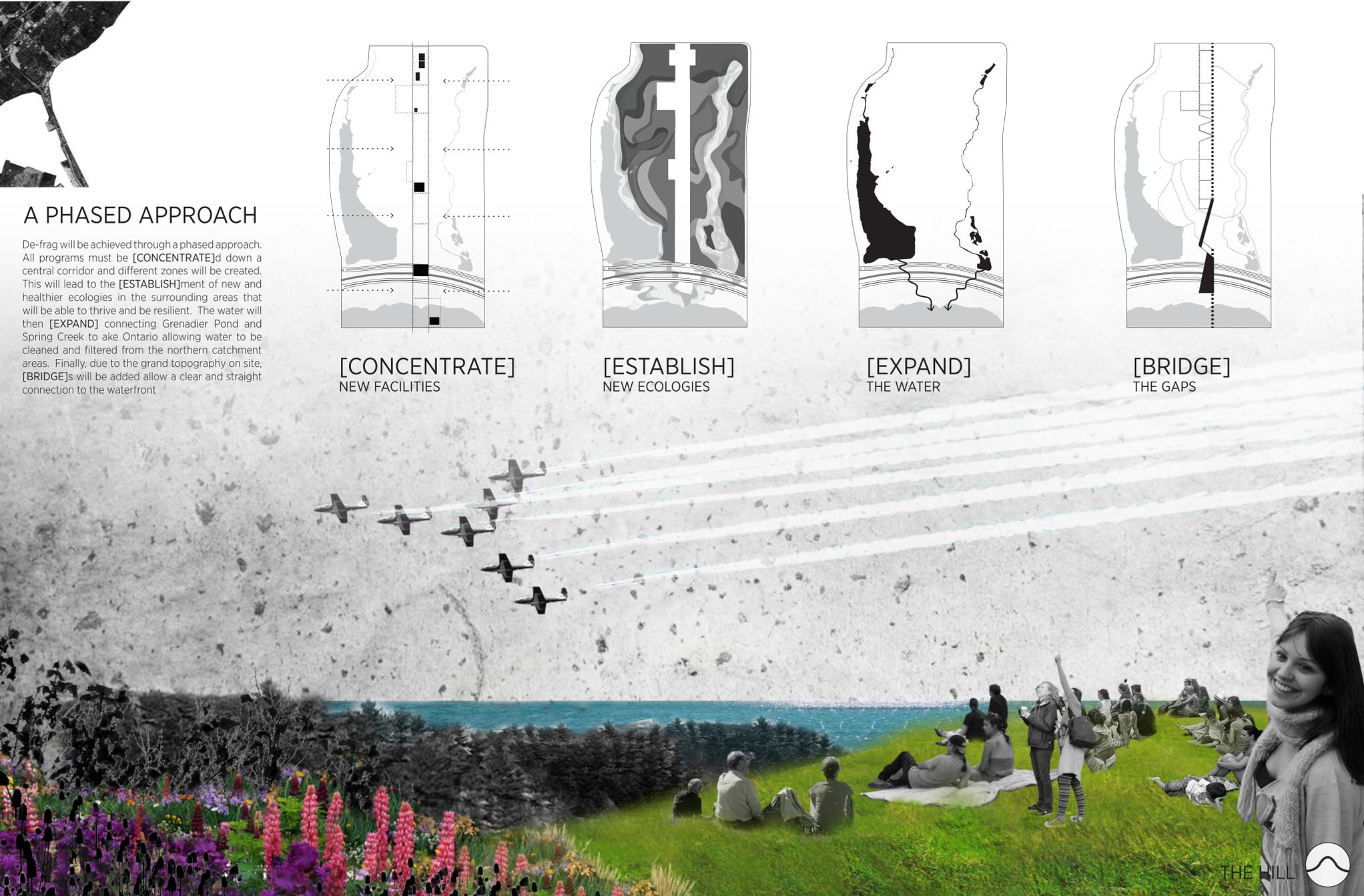
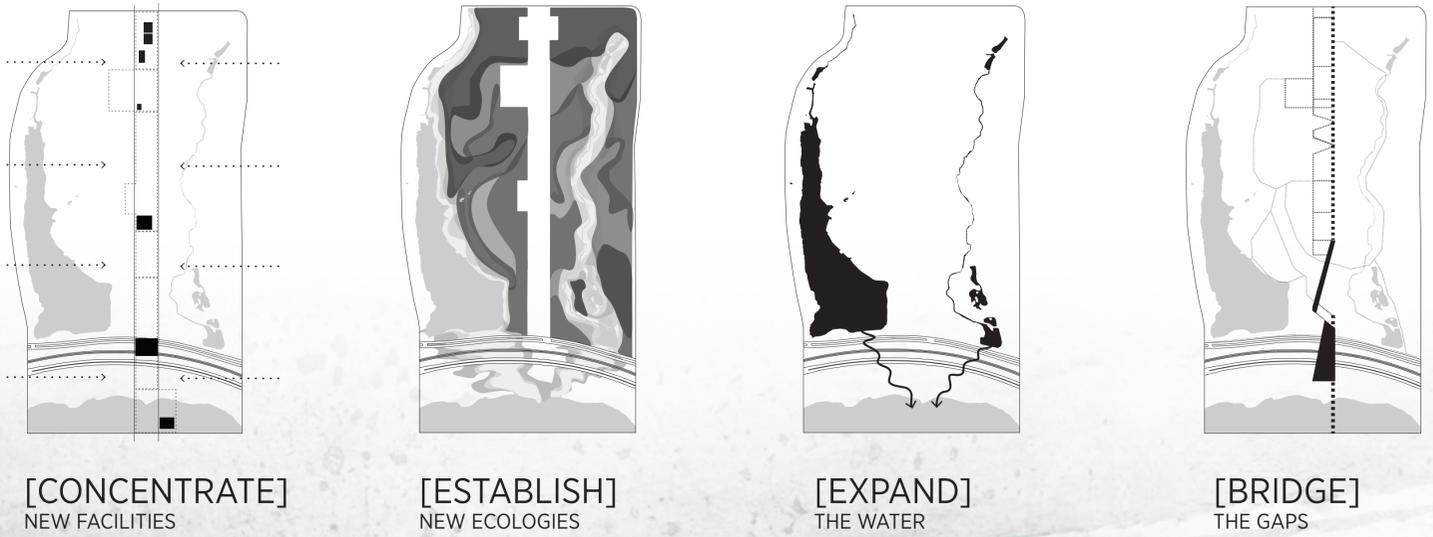
High Park's ecology has been greatly affected due to the development inside and outside of the park. Great expanses of wetlands were lost through road development, shoreline alteration, and silt from stormwater runoff. This has led to fragmentation of natural areas that are in decline. As well, the programmatic elements in High Park are separated throughout the landscape with no simple connections from one program to the other. The idea behind DE-frag is to concentrate all programs down a central spine which will allow the surrounding ecosystems to be restored, maintenance will decrease over time, while allowing a straight connection to the waterfront. The spine will be very programmatic, highly active and highly maintained, while the surrounding ecological areas will be less active, and less maintained leading to an overall healthier ecosystem.



TRAFFIC VOLUME ANALYSIS

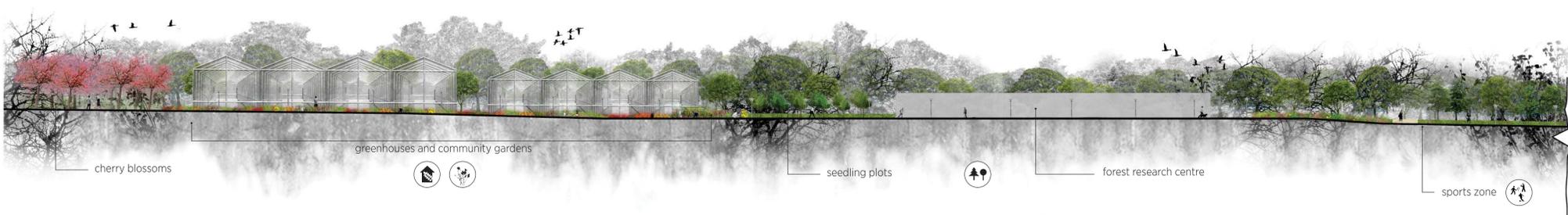
**A PHASED APPROACH**

De-frag will be achieved through a phased approach. All programs must be [CONCENTRATE]d down a central corridor and different zones will be created. This will lead to the [ESTABLISH]ment of new and healthier ecologies in the surrounding areas that will be able to thrive and be resilient. The water will then [EXPAND] connecting Grenadier Pond and Spring Creek to Lake Ontario allowing water to be cleaned and filtered from the northern catchment areas. Finally, due to the grand topography on site, [BRIDGE]s will be added allow a clear and straight connection to the waterfront.



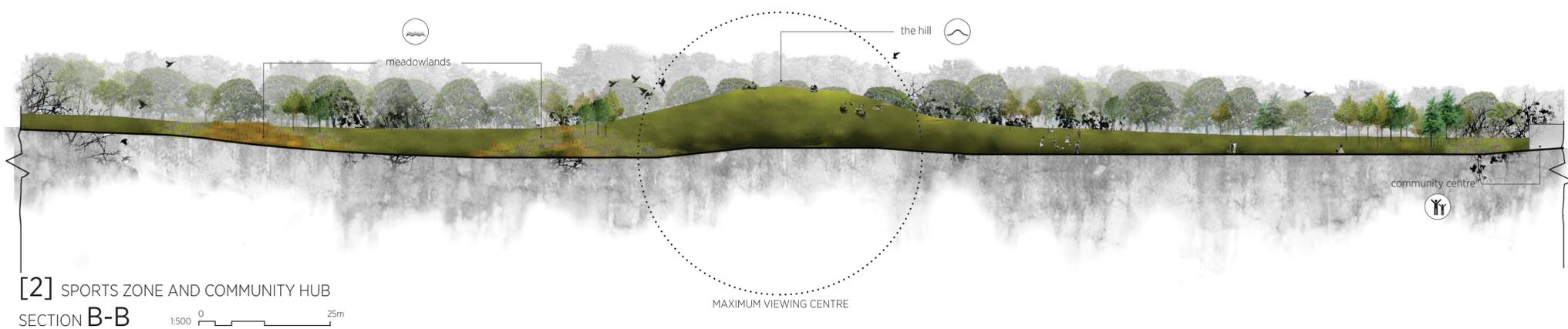
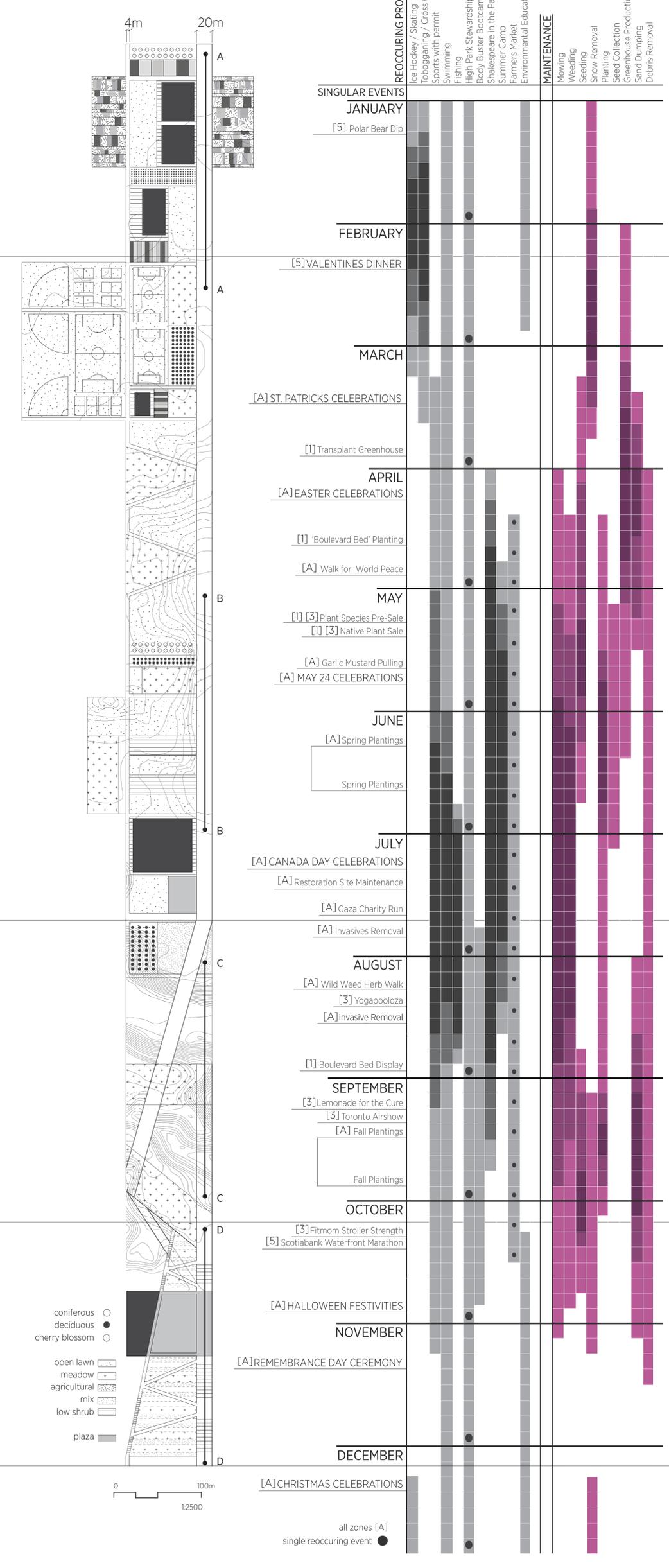


- [1] ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE
- [2] SPORTS ZONE AND COMMUNITY HUB
- [3] BRIDGING THE GAPS
- [4] LANDBRIDGE AND TRANSIT LINKAGE
- [5] HIGH ACTIVITY PIERS



[1] ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE  
SECTION A-A 1:500

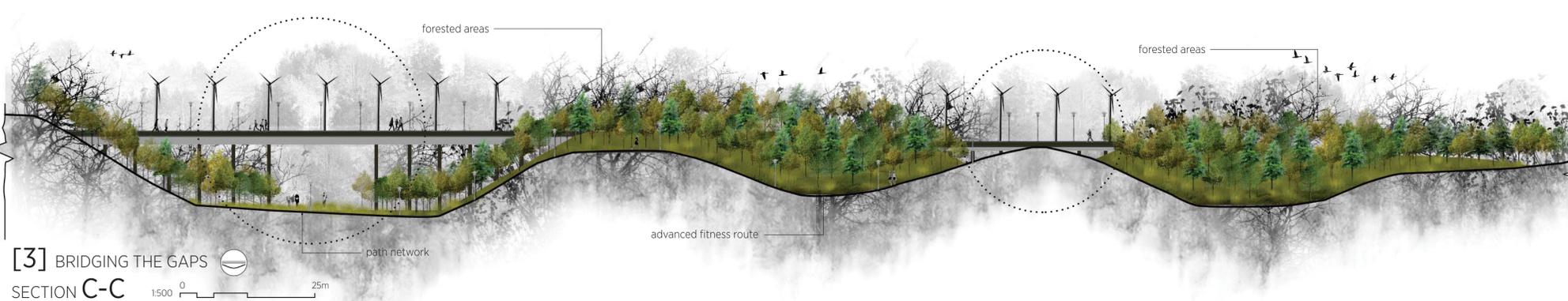
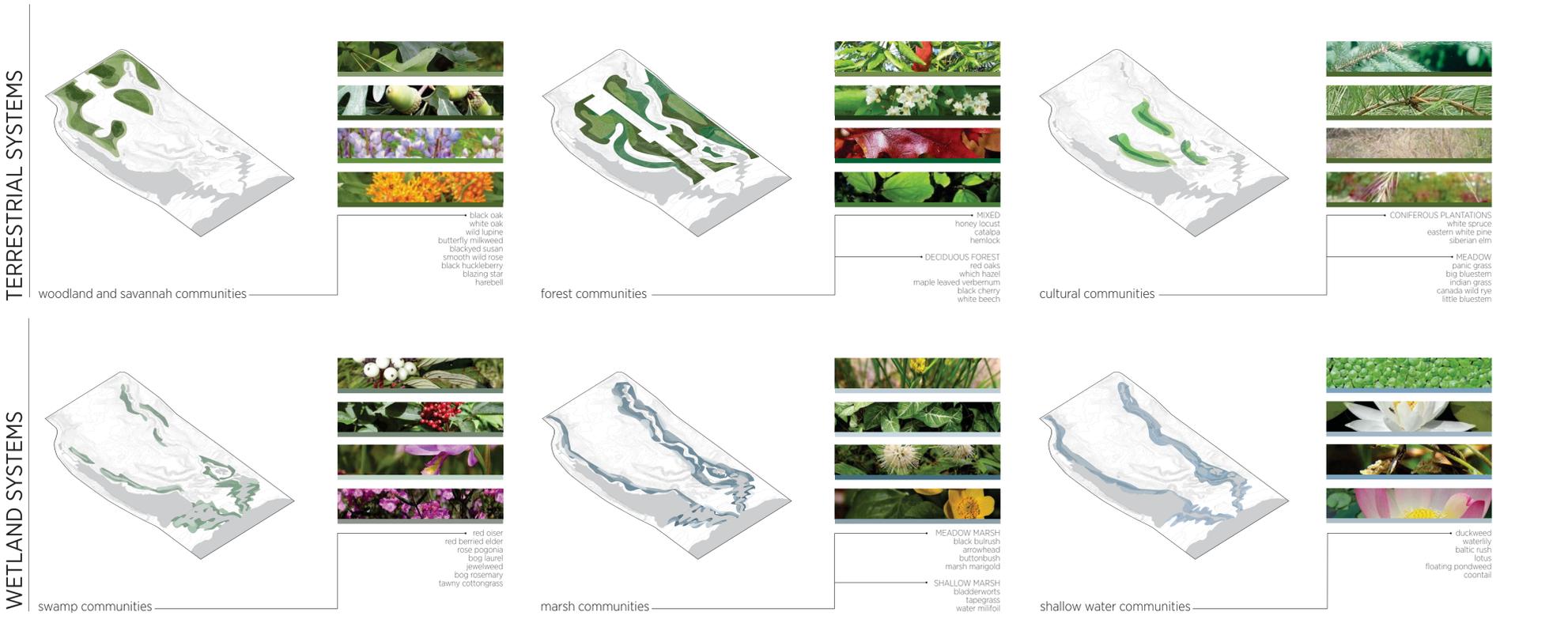
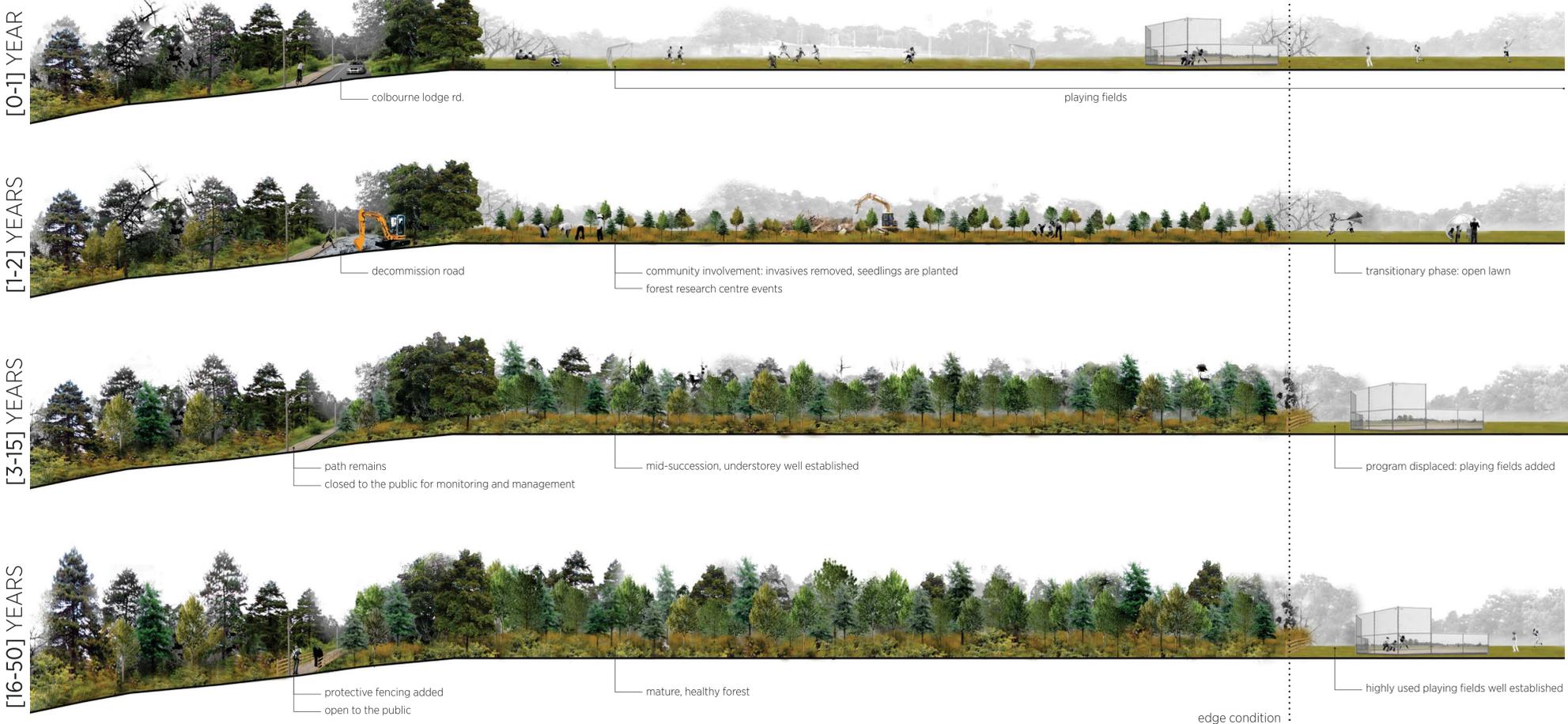
# [ PROGRAMMATIC ] spine



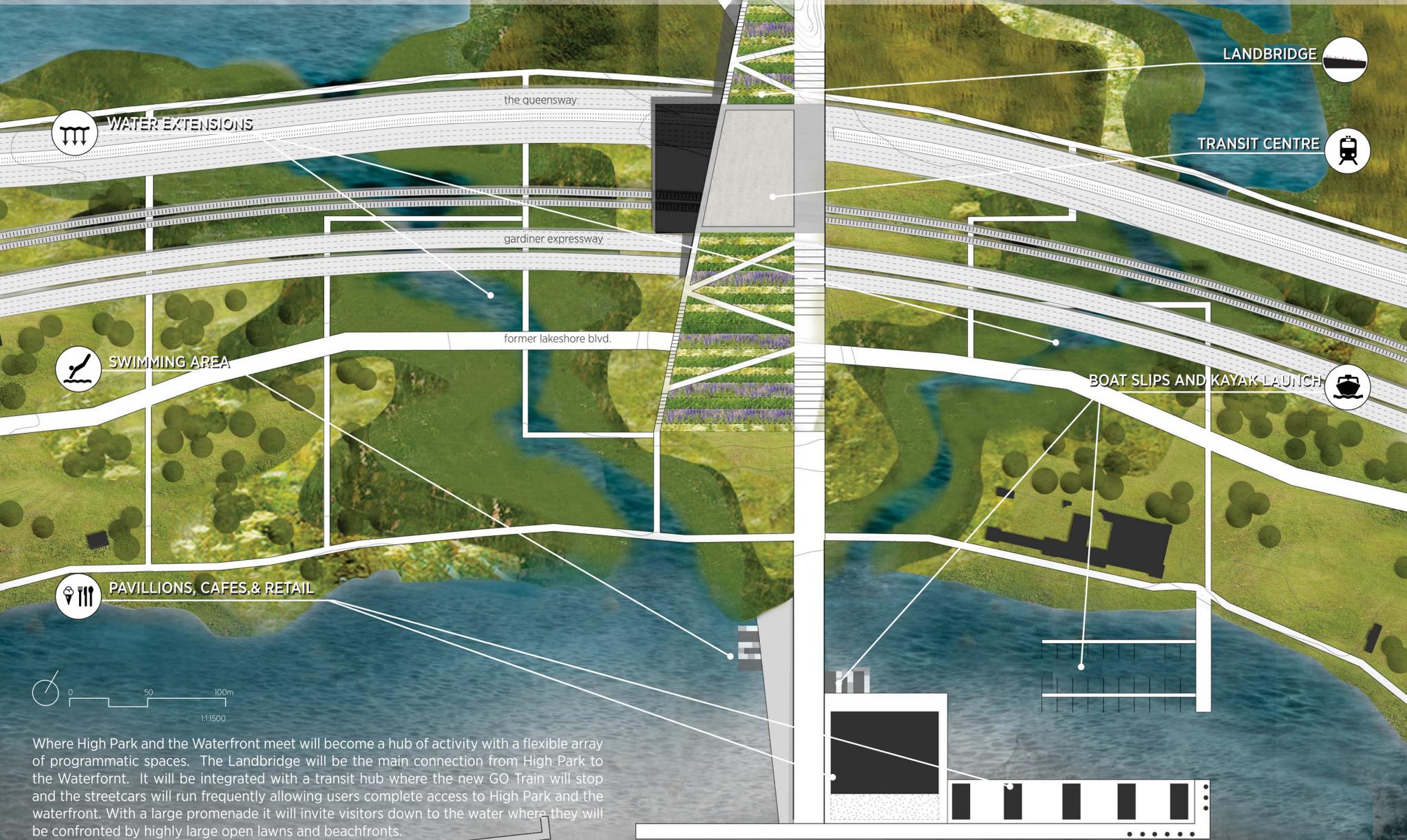
# ECOLOGICAL rehabilitation



**ECOLOGICAL ZONE**  
 In opposition to the central spine, the ecological zones will be much less open. The large trees will create a canopy and the understoreys will thrive in this rehabilitated area. The paths will be fenced in so there is little human disturbance to these newly created ecologies.



# [ WATERFRONT ] connection



Where High Park and the Waterfront meet will become a hub of activity with a flexible array of programmatic spaces. The Landbridge will be the main connection from High Park to the Waterfront. It will be integrated with a transit hub where the new GO Train will stop and the streetcars will run frequently allowing users complete access to High Park and the waterfront. With a large promenade it will invite visitors down to the water where they will be confronted by highly large open lawns and beachfronts.

There will be an integration through a series of pathways and open lawns connecting to the beachfront, new cafes, retail spaces, boat slips, the kayak launch and open plazas. The water extensions will replace the prototype wetlands that are currently just south of the Gardiner Expressway. They will create a dense planted sponge that will allow filtration of the water before it reaches Lake Ontario. This will allow people to be able to swim and allow for water recreation in the filtrated areas.

Lakeshore will be redirected to the Queensway where lanes are extended to allow for automobile flow. The decommissioned road will now become a large pedestrian promenade to accomodate large volumes of pedestrian movement. Recognizing this will be a piece of a much larger waterfront picture, it will serve as a connection to the neighbourhoods with interconnected circulation pathways of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists that will expand across the entire downtown waterfront.

