

# Glen Cairn Neighbourhood Case Study

Promoting Low Impact Development in a Residential Neighbourhood

Initiated: 2015



## What is LID

LID is an urban stormwater management approach that uses small, simple designs and landscape features at the lot level to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate and detain runoff close to its source. The goal is to reduce the rate and amount of water running off of a property. Less water goes into local streams and rivers from storm sewers, helping to minimize flooding and stream bank erosion, and reducing the impact on water quality.



# Project Overview

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) has partnered with the City of London, local businesses, organizations and residents to promote low impact development (LID) in the Glen Cairn neighbourhood. This neighbourhood is situated within the Forks subwatershed, in the City of London. The UTRCA's 2012 Watershed Report Cards identified this subwatershed as a priority area for improving water quality and forest conditions.

### The project involved:

- Engaging residents through community outreach,
- Identifying and engaging key stakeholders that directly influence the attitudes and practices of homeowners,
- Implementing LID marketing and demonstration projects to build interest in using alternative landscapes (i.e., LID features) that will improve stormwater management and conserve storm water, ultimately creating a trend, and
- Partnering with the City of London to share lessons learned and facilitate a broader rollout of the program.





This project is about motivating and supporting sustainable behaviours regarding stormwater, and facilitating the community's capacity to act sustainably.

## The Approach

The UTRCA implemented the Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Plan (SNAP) approach, which was developed by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. SNAP is a comprehensive environmental improvement plan that demonstrates LID and integrates local community interests and ideas for neighbourhood transformation. This project is about motivating and supporting sustainable behaviours regarding stormwater, and facilitating the community's capacity to act sustainably.

The UTRCA has led community-based watershed strategy development and implementation in the past and has had success working with environmental groups. SNAP requires a broader and more inclusive approach. The goal is to motivate homeowners in the Glen Cairn neighbourhood to use LID techniques in their landscaping choices. Implementing LID on residential properties protects stream health by treating and reducing stormwater runoff flowing into the Thames River. LID can be used in new development, urban retrofits and redevelopment projects, on lawns, streets, medians, roofs and in parking lots.

# The Glen Cairn Neighbourhood

The Glen Cairn neighbourhood is one of London's older communities. The community is mostly residential with limited commercial lands.

According to the 2011 Statistics Canada Census, the neighbourhood's population was 15,745, including 3,765 individuals who identified themselves as immigrants. The majority of residents speak English or French as a primary or home language; however, 3,545 individuals reported speaking a non-official language. Appendix 1 provides a demographic profile of the neighbourhood.

The community's rich cultural diversity, ageing infrastructure and proximity to the Thames River South Branch make it an ideal neighbourhood for an LID program. Furthermore, four local businesses had recently come together to create "Adopt the Glen Cairn Park North and East," and were eager to do more for their community. These original partners were Community Living London, London Training Centre, Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre, and YFC London.

### Understanding the Community

Before launching an LID program in the Glen Cairn neighbourhood, the UTRCA met with key local stakeholders, including:

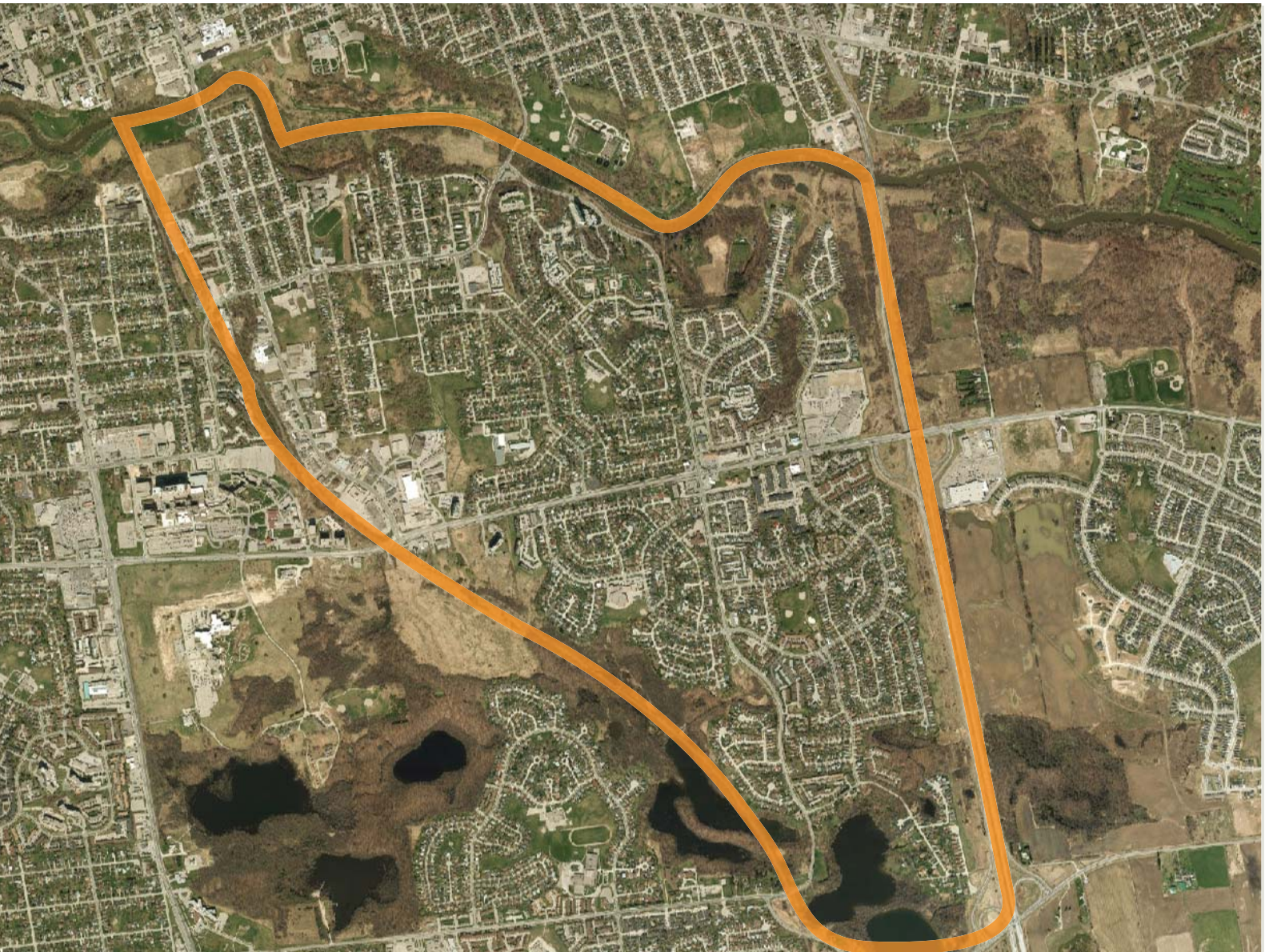
- Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre
- Forest City Fire Protection Limited
- London Training Centre
- YFC London
- Local residents
- Community Living London
- City of London

These stakeholders provided valuable insights and ideas. This group, now called the Glen Cairn Community Partners, continues to meet regularly to discuss LID projects and provide feedback on marketing material and other topics.

With limited resources to conduct a full marketing research project, the UTRCA relied on the knowledge and expertise of the local organizations. Online surveys (Survey Monkey), printed surveys, community meetings with break-out sessions, interviews and casual conversations were all used to ask residents what they wanted to see in their neighbourhood. Their feedback included:

- Gardens so kids know where their food comes from.
- Start a website to collect ideas over the winter.
- Create education possibilities for kids. The schools are handy and hands-on definitely works.
- Path through park to Chesterfield without walking over private property.
- Trees planted along Chesterfield.
- Road closed off at the end of Chesterfield.
- Community yard sale and potluck.
- Make North Park entrance from Thompson less cavernous – it's a bit sketchy for women and children to enter park.
- Benches along walkway and bathrooms.
- Beautiful playground for all ages and washrooms, water fountains.
- Change the play equipment for a safer one! Too scary.
- Entrance to park from Thompson Road is not open enough.
- Angle parking along Shirl Street.
- Beach volleyball court (no cement needed!!).
- Thompson Road entrance should be more open and indicate signage for most people that have no idea where path leads into rest of park.
- Wider paths that allow for walking with second person.
- Available garbage units for all sides of park.
- Washroom facilities are crucial.
- Washroom please! And non-smoking signs all over! Please and thank you.





Research conducted by Environics Analytics for the City of London was also valuable. This research looked at social values to help the City understand the key motivators for Glen Cairn residents. This information led to communication strategies tailored to the various demographics in the community. In this neighbourhood, research showed that it was best to communicate through both the television and the newspaper. The target market household percentages are outlined below:

1. Multi-ethnic Green Consumers (27%)
2. Price Conscious Families (20%)
3. Older Singles and Couples (24%)
4. Urban Eco-Singles and Couples (20%)
5. Older Outdoor Enthusiasts (3%)
6. Other (6%)

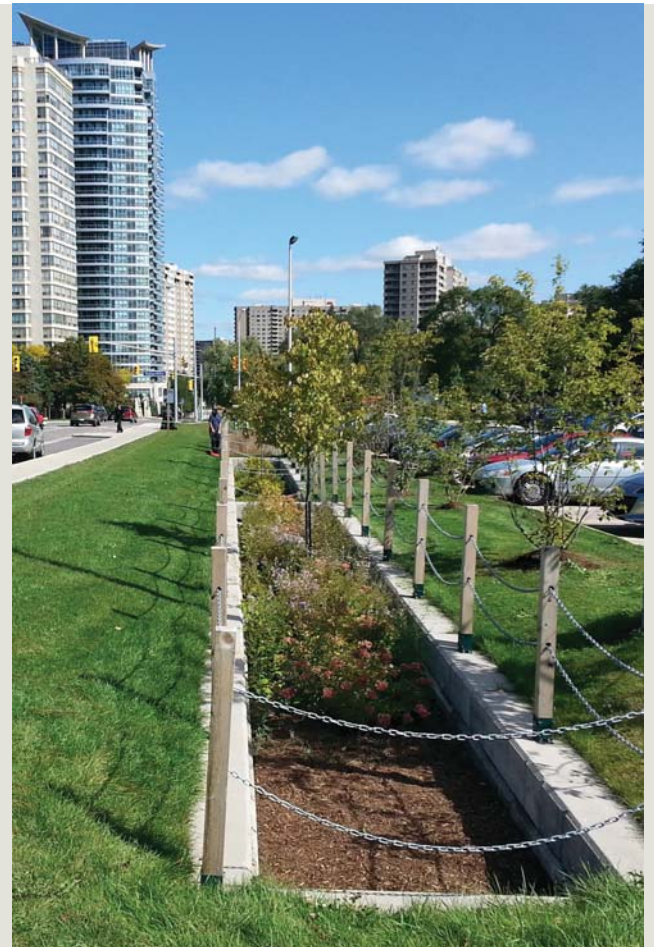


# Developing an LID Marketing Strategy

The City of Mississauga and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority provided marketing research that had been conducted in communities with similar demographics as the Glen Cairn neighbourhood. The research indicated that homeowners asked about how they valued their landscaping consistently expressed that it was important for it to be beautiful, well-kept and provide “curb appeal.” Furthermore, they described their home landscape as a source of pride, a place to entertain family and friends, and an “oasis” away from their busy lives.

With consideration to homeowners’ motivations for designing and maintaining their homes’ landscape, the Glen Cairn LID marketing strategy focused first on the aesthetic value of alternative landscapes and, second, on the environmental benefits. Before homeowners make the necessary changes to their landscape, they must want what is being offered. Creating the ‘want’ was the main goal of the strategy.

The Credit Valley Conservation Authority is a leader in this field. They use a four-pronged approach to promote LID comprised of a community engagement initiative, retailer partnerships, visually based outreach, and residential front yard demonstration projects.



### LID Project Ground Truthing

Ground truthing is a critical component of any LID project. During the initial stages of the Glen Cairn neighbourhood project, UTRCA staff walked the streets of this area and photographed potential sites for future LID features. Initially, the sites we looked at were properties of all the partners who have collaborated on this project. All these organizations are in high visibility locations with large property. It was noted that some of the buildings were older and had the downspouts feeding directly into the building infrastructure instead of outside, which is not conducive to certain LID features. UTRCA staff used photographs of the existing landscapes and buildings, with a rendered picture of an LID feature overlaid on the front lawn, to give a visual of what it could look like. These images were used in marketing material.





### LID Demonstration Projects

Three LID demonstration sites have been built to date in the Glen Cairn neighbourhood and more are planned. The first LID project saw two bioswales installed behind the YFC London Centre off of Adelaide Street. The other projects are rain gardens on residential properties.

Creating living examples of beautiful, desirable landscapes in high-traffic neighbourhood areas is a very effective means of showcasing these types of projects. The intent is that the projects will motivate uptake by neighbouring residents and businesses.

The Clarkson neighbourhood in the City of Mississauga recently employed a similar approach with significant success (see Region of Peel's Fusion Landscaping Case Study at [www.bealeader.ca](http://www.bealeader.ca)). A photographic catalogue of homes in the Clarkson community clearly shows that residents are beginning to recreate the Fusion Landscape demonstrations.

### Monitoring

The goal of the program is to encourage uptake of LID practices in front yard landscapes. The Glen Cairn neighbourhood is small enough to allow us to track these changes over time. Ongoing monitoring of front yard landscapes will track the effectiveness of the marketing strategy in years to come.







## Other Activities

### Glen Cairn Park

The community has been engaged through park events such as tree planting, garbage clean ups, bbqs, demonstrations from Salthaven Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre and Birds of Prey, displays, face painting and more. The partners also held community meetings to learn about what the community wants for their park. As a result, the park now has two new playgrounds, benches along the walking trails, large shade trees, garbage barrels and a basketball court.

### Stream of Dreams

The partners implemented the “Stream of Dreams” program at three of the four schools in this neighbourhood. The fourth will be completed in June 2017. This program teaches every student about stormwater and why it’s important we care about where our water goes. Each student paints a wooden fish, and all the fish are then mounted on the schoolyard fence to create a visual reminder of what the students learned.

Outreach through the Stream of Dreams also provided opportunities to identify potential LID sites and build relationships with teachers, parents, students and the Thames Valley District School Board.





### Project Funding

The UTRCA acquired project funding from the London Community Foundation and the RBC Blue Water Project. Additional funding came from the City of London for projects in Glen Cairn Park. The Thames Valley District School Board assisted with funding a Stream of Dreams program.

### Lessons Learned

- Projects in residential areas require open dialogue with all key stakeholders and building positive word-of-mouth in the community.
- Ensure that all demographics are reached for feedback. Families with young children will not be interested in attending evening community meetings. Create other opportunities instead, such as weekend afternoon bbqs.
- Partner with organizations that are already active in the community to tap into existing knowledge and expertise.
- Invite key local residents to committee meetings so they can be the champions in their neighbourhoods and help promote the project.

### Additional Resources

Market Research and Marketing Strategy: Lot-Level Stormwater Control in the Residential Sector:  
[www.creditvalleyca.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Residential-Mrkt-Research-Study-July-08.pdf](http://www.creditvalleyca.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Residential-Mrkt-Research-Study-July-08.pdf)

### Acknowledgments

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- Danielle Mooder, Resident
- Starbucks
- Kristie Balatsoukas, London Training Centre
- Oxford Dodge
- Beth Landowsky, City of London
- Cheryl McKeever, Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre
- Michelle Palmer, Community Living London
- Sally Thomson, City of London
- Kris Usher, Community Living London



## Appendix 1. Glen Cairn Neighbourhood Profile

	GLEN CAIRN	CITY OF LONDON
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>% of Total Population</b>	
0 to 6 years	9.1%	7.5%
7-12 years	8.9%	7.2%
13-17 years	7.3%	6.9%
18-24 years	9.6%	10.9%
25-44 years	29.9%	28.6%
45 to 64 years	24.5%	25.9%
65 + years	10.7%	13.0%
<b>Total Economic Families</b>	<b>% of Economic Families</b>	
Couples with children under 18	40.5%	32.8%
Couples without children	31.8%	48.4%
One parent with children under 18	16.8%	9.9%
Other	10.9%	9.0%
<b>Population Groups</b>	<b>% of Total Population</b>	
Aboriginal	2.4%	1.4%
Visible Minority	15.6%	18.2%
With activity limitation	19.5%	20.8%
Immigrants, total	26.4%	21.8%
Immigrants, recent	3.2%	3.5%
Non-permanent resident	1.2%	1.2%
<b>Home Language</b>	<b>% of Total Population</b>	
English	83.4%	87.3%
French	0.2%	0.0%
Non-official	14.9%	8.6%
<b>Countries of Birth, Recent Immigrant</b>	<b>% of Recent Immigrants</b>	
Africa	25.2%	11.7%
Asia and the Middle East	19.6%	46.5%
Caribbean and Bermuda	3.7%	1.6%
Central America	1.9%	1.8%
Europe	32.7%	14.3%
Oceania and other	1.9%	1.3%
South America	8.4%	17.9%
United States	8.4%	4.8%



	GLEN CAIRN	CITY OF LONDON
<b>Households with Private Dwellings</b>	<b>% of Households</b>	
<b>Renters</b>	36.9%	37.6%
Renters paying 30% or more of income on housing	39.6%	44.7%
Renters paying 50% or more of income on housing	17.6%	20.0%
<b>Owners</b>	63.1%	62.4%
Owners paying 30% or more of income on housing	20.2%	16.7%
Owners paying 50% or more of income on housing	6.6%	5.8%
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$</b>	
Average income (all people age 15+)	\$29,097	\$36,549
Average family income	\$62,176	\$84,593
<b>Education Level Obtained (20-64 Year Olds)</b>	<b>% of 20-64 year olds</b>	
No certificate, degree or diploma	17.1%	12.2%
High school	31.7%	28.5%
Apprenticeship/trade	9.4%	7.6%
College, CEGEP or other	27.6%	24.0%
University degree	14.3%	27.7%
<b>Labour Force Activity</b>	<b>Rate</b>	
In the labour force/participation rate	67.0%	66.5%
Employed/employment rate	62.0%	62.2%
Unemployed/unemployment rate	7.5%	6.5%



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