

The Prudhommes Project Year in Review 2023

Partnership Overview

The Town of Lincoln (ToL), Vineland Research and Innovation Centre (Vineland), and the Environmental Sustainability Research Centre (ESRC) at Brock University share a strong interest in green infrastructure. This shared interest gave rise of a tri-party Memorandum of Understanding and partnership which seeks to understand and enhance the resilience of green infrastructure in the ToL. As such, the ToL serves as a physical context for the project, symbolizing the diverse challenges faced by communities in their pursuit of sustainability. By adopting a social-ecological systems perspective, our focus is on the connections between humans and nature in urban settings. This involves examining specific locations within the Town and leveraging the expertise of natural scientists, social scientists, municipal staff, and other stakeholders.

The MOU for this partnership was executed in 2019. Since then, substantial progress has been made towards understanding the state-of-the-art in both theory and practice, along with gathering valuable insights from individuals within the Town. Currently, ongoing research is focused towards reflecting on past developments in the Town to identify the possible pathways and mechanisms to situate recommendations, specifications, policy, etc., to ultimately improve the incorporation on multifunctional landscapes in different types of developments in the ToL.

Reflecting on Past Development Projects

In April 2023, an in-person postmortem workshop was designed to collect reflective information on past development projects in the Town. A postmortem workshop (also referred to as a reflection or project debrief) is a process for evaluating the success and failures or areas of improvement related to a project's goals. The main goal is to reflect on the things that happened during the project and identify what can be changed moving forward (for the next phase or a new project), to create a more streamlined or efficient process.

This postmortem workshop focused on reflecting on three different developments in the ToL: Jordan Village Improvement Project, Ashby Drive Park Enhancements, and the Prudhommes Development. The workshop was designed to gain information on successes and failures that occurred throughout the lifecycle of each project, with particular attention to the key actors involved, standards, and policy mechanisms related to multifunctional landscapes. This reflective feedback can then be used to inform plans for future development projects, while helping improve efficiencies, prevent mistakes, and mitigate risk.

The workshop, scheduled to occur at Vineland, was to be facilitated by Brock Faculty and Staff, with participants from ToL staff. The results of the workshop would illuminate gaps in possible pathways/mechanisms for enhancing development projects in multifunctional landscapes. Unfortunately, the event was ultimately canceled due to changes in participant availability and adapted utilizing a reflective questionnaire.



Pivot to Reflective Questionnaire

As mentioned, an in-person workshop was set to take place but given several constraints, the decision was collectively taken to utilize a different method to collect this important information. The team developed a post-mortem questionnaire, which focuses on reflecting on past experiences of two development projects within ToL (Jordan Village and Ashby Park). The goal is to gather information related to the successes and areas of improvement in order to improve the incorporation of multifunctional landscapes in different types of developments in the ToL, such as the Prudhommes Project. Our team's novel approach to the postmortem reflection through the use of a questionnaire offers several advantages, such as providing ToL staff with the flexibility to articulate their thoughts at their own pace. The questionnaire format also ensures that every team member's perspective is thoroughly captured, fostering a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of the projects' strengths and areas for improvement.

The questionnaire was sent to a list of key individuals identified as being closely involved with the development projects of focus. Due to the reflective nature of the postmortem activity, requiring careful consideration and detailed description, the participants were provided with three weeks to complete the questionnaire. A total of six out of seven responses were received.



Next Steps & Goals for 2024

Overall, the questionnaire was a successful and constructive way to collect reflective information from a variety of perspectives. The findings from the questionnaire will provide a context specific pathway to situate recommendations for mechanisms, policy, standards, etc., to improve development projects in the ToL.

The team is now focused on analyzing questionnaire data, which will occur throughout the remainder of 2023. These results will inform one key deliverable of this project, which is a summary report of questionnaire findings.

In addition to this final report, the results of the questionnaire will be used to inform a presentation that summarizes the Prudhommes Partnership efforts over the last five years, and situates project recommendations within the policy and procedural landscape for multifunctional landscape developments.

For more information visit: brocku.ca/esrc/the-prudhommes-project