



The Verdant Walk connects Cleveland's industrial heritage to its new green agenda. In summer, the aluminum frames are covered with fabric and lit from within by integrated solar panels and LEDs. In winter, the covers are removed, and only the sculptural skeletons remain.

GLOWING GREEN

In downtown Cleveland, a herd of what appear to be pale, futuristic bison graze among orderly strips of tall native grasses. These unusual creatures are the result of a competition-winning proposal, by Toronto architecture and design firm North Design Office, that is set to reactivate a central park near the shore of Lake Erie. Titled the Verdant Walk, the project features seven aluminum pods tightly encased in translucent, UV-rated outdoor fabric jackets. These frames, ranging from two to five metres high, are inset with solar-powered strips and LED floodlights that glow at night. In winter, the pods shed their covers, casting long, treelike shadows across the snow. For NDO partner Pete North, it was essential to link Cleveland's industrial heritage with its vision for an environmentally responsible future. "The native grasses reference the landscape and strengthen the connection to the site's history," he says. "And the use of new technologies indicates Cleveland's green agenda." The Verdant Walk will remain in the park for two years as part of the city's public art program.

ANDREA CARSON

ROCK SOLID

Most businesses like to present themselves as rock solid, but Toronto's Agnico-Eagle actually works with rock, mining gold in North America and Finland. Commissioned to renovate the firm's office interior, Taylor Smyth Architects took full advantage of the metaphor. "When you get a mining company, your imagination starts to really fly," says partner-in-charge Michael Taylor. "They wanted something that was dignified and spoke to their permanence." The result is a subtle use of stone and other materials throughout the two-storey, 650-square-metre space. On a wall in the reception area, horizontal strips of travertine (intercut with bands of gold-coloured aluminum) evoke the layers of minerals in a mine shaft. In the same space, folding planes of cherry millwork and limestone wrap around each other like deposits in the earth. But the showpiece is a display wall of long, tubular core samples drawn from the earth at mine sites – raw geology as pure visual poetry.

ALEX BOZIKOVIC



Above: Visible from the reception area is a display wall of split stone cores, extracted from bore holes at Agnico-Eagle's mine sites. **Right:** A palette of natural materials was used for the 650-square-metre headquarters. The reception desk features folding planes of limestone wrapped around cherry millwork.

