



HATS OFF TO FLYNN CANADA

Flynn Canada earns CRCAs top award for the green roof on Calgary's Bow Valley College

By/par Matthew Bradford

CHAPEAU À FLYNN CANADA!

Flynn Canada gagne le premier prix de l'ACEC pour le toit vert du collège Bow Valley de Calgary

Flynn Canada received one of CRCAs top honours last spring during the association's Annual General Meeting in Vancouver, B.C. The North American roofing company was presented with CRCAs Roofing Canada Award for the installation of Calgary's Bow Valley College's green roof as well as the following two-year maintenance work.

Flynn Canada a reçu l'un des plus grands honneurs de l'ACEC le printemps dernier, à Vancouver, lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle de l'association. La firme nord-américaine a alors reçu le Prix Couvertures Canada pour la pose et l'entretien du toit vert du collège Bow Valley à Calgary.

Flynn worked alongside general contractor Stuart Olson and GEC Architecture to install 500 squares of roofing on the fourth-floor covering, 200 of which were vegetated, and 15 LEED reflective and balance concrete pavers on pedestals. The project also included the installation of tapered insulation and a Soprema membrane system, as well as over 4,000 plant plugs and seeding of various grasses to produce an environment similar to the province's prairie-style meadows.

The roof was constructed on the college's fourth floor over a combined period of six months from 2012 to 2014. Its intent was to give Bow Valley College students a walkable green space, complete with lounging spaces.

"It's a very accessible roof with tables and chairs for public interaction," explains Stephen Teal, manager with Flynn Canada Ltd. "Because the students and faculty can go out there and enjoy it, this was a little bit more 'in your face' than a typical roofing job."

Installing a green roof in Calgary was an atypical task to begin with. Prior to Bow Valley College, a number of developers had tried – and several ultimately failed – to sustain a green roof within the city, due in part to the region's ever-changing weather conditions, their selection of plants, and the lack of maintenance.

Flynn, however, was no stranger to green roof development when it accepted the contract in 2012. As one of the only roofing companies in Canada to specialize in complete green roof developments, it had accrued years of green thumb experience with high-profile projects. These included the top of Edmonton's Federal Building and Toronto's City Hall – the latter received the Canadian National Nursery Award. As well, Teal has been a member of Green Roofs for Healthy Cities for 11 years, and was paired with Flynn Canada green roof consultants throughout the build.

Skill & experience

According to Terry McGlade, a green roof specialist with Flynn Canada, it was the combined experience that prepared Flynn to overcome past challenges. They

Flynn a travaillé aux côtés de l'entrepreneur général Stuart Olson et de GEC Architecture pour poser 500 carrés de toiture sur le toit du quatrième étage, dont 200 unités végétalisées et 15 unités réfléchissantes aux normes LEED. Le projet comprenait également la pose de l'isolant et d'une membrane Soprema, ainsi que la transplantation de plus de 4 000 plants et l'ensemencement de divers herbagages représentatifs des Prairies. Ce toit vert a été aménagé au quatrième étage du collège pendant une période combinée de six mois entre 2012 et 2014. Le but était de permettre aux étudiants de se prélasser dans la verdure.

« C'est un toit très accessible avec des tables et des chaises pour le public », explique Stephen Teal, directeur de Flynn Canada Ltd. « Comme les étudiants et professeurs peuvent s'y rendre et profiter des lieux, le projet était un peu moins évident à planifier qu'un projet typique. »

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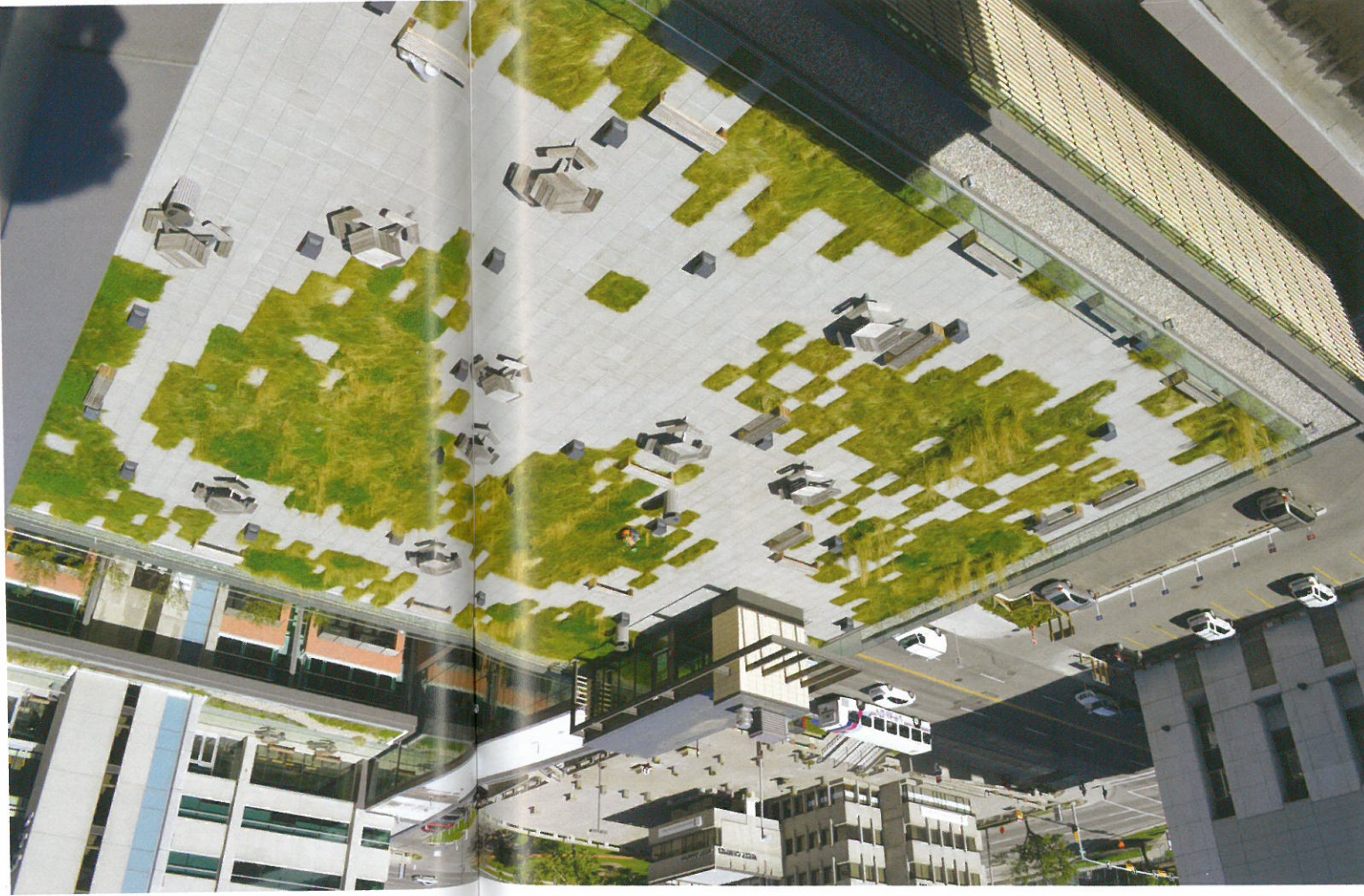
Its aim of the new roof was to give students a walkable green space, complete with lounging areas

“Within the last 10 years, there were a lot of green roofs that were put in and failed, because everybody was simply taking what central Canada was doing and we realized that you just can't do that,” notes McGlade.

In Alberta – and especially Calgary – McGlade says there are a number of temperature fluctuations during the winter, with jumps from -10°C to +15°C in a single day because of Chinook winds. Thanks to these fluctuations, plants in Calgary can break dormancy during abnormally warm temperatures during the winter if they are not planted deep enough, leading them to blossom prematurely and become vulnerable to subsequent sub-zero conditions.

As such, it was recently determined that soil depth was a critical factor to a plant's success. “The deeper a plant is buried in the soil, the more frozen it gets. It also stays frozen, so it doesn't really matter if the first couple of centimetres opens up. It just matters that the rest of it stays cold so the plant doesn't get the idea to suddenly start growing,” explains McGlade.

Understanding this, Flynn planted its seeds up to depths of 12 inches. They also selected resilient prairie-style plants for the roof due to their chances of survival both within the region and under already abnormal conditions. “A roof represents a different ecology than on the ground,” says McGlade. “You get higher winds and you get all different kinds of extreme temperatures from really hot to really cold. Certain plants do really well while other plants don't, so we knew prairie grasses were much harder than anything else going.”

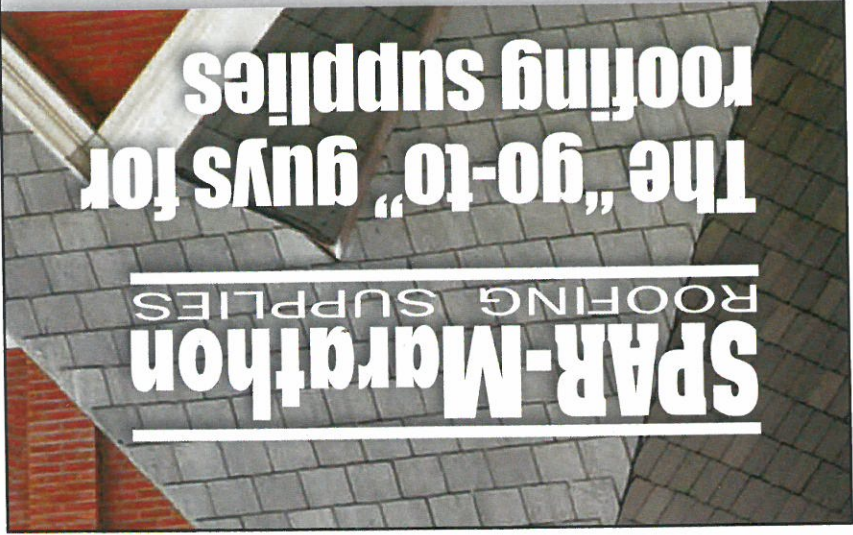


Le but de la nouvelle toiture était de donner aux étudiants un espace vert accessible à pied, avec des aires de détente.

en raison des vents Chinook. Les températures anormalement chaudes risquent de réveiller les plantes en hibernation si elles ne sont pas plantées assez profond, ce qui les fait bourgeonner prématurément et les rend vulnérables aux gels ultérieurs.

On a donc déterminé que la profondeur du terrain était un facteur essentiel à la survie des plantes. « Plus la plante est enterrée profond, plus elle gèle, explique M. McGlade. Surtout, elle reste gelée même si les deux premiers centimètres de la surface dégèlent. De cette façon, la plante n'a pas l'idée de se remettre à pousser en plein hiver. »

Flynn a donc planté ses pousses à une profondeur de 12 pouces. Elle a également choisi des plantes résistantes et adaptées aux Prairies, plus aptes à survivre aux conditions anormales de la région. « Un toit n'a pas la même écologie



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Challenges included working next to a busy city corner

Parmi les défis, il y avait celui de travailler à proximité d'un carrefour achalandé.

Even with the odds in their favour, however, Teal says Flynn was challenged to keep its plants alive and flourishing throughout the seasons. As he explains: "Just because a plant survives on the ground in Calgary doesn't mean it will survive on the roof, and that's something we found out along the way with some of our plants. It can be a challenge for anyone doing green roofs, so we conducted research with the architect to test which plants work and which don't. And then, even when you're dealing with exposure to high winds and temperatures, it can still be a bit of a learning curve.

Further challenges presented themselves during the project. While dealing with the logistics of working next to a busy corner, crews also faced delays due to massive flooding within the region. This alone set Flynn back by nearly six weeks, and required crews to revive the plants to get back on track.

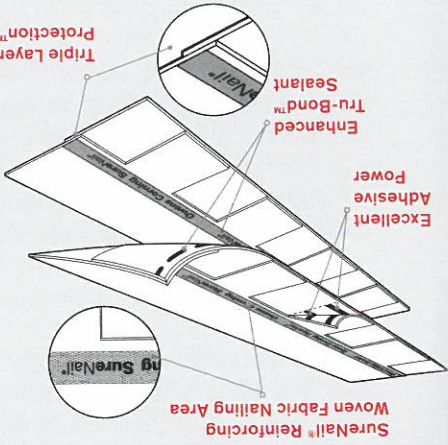
In the end, pre-planning and experience prevailed, creating one of the city's most successful green roof projects to date. Yet in addition to setting the green roof bar, the Bow Valley College roof has also become a source of inspiration for the school's students.

"It's an exciting project in that we've put this interactive green space in a building as opposed to having something where students just look at patio slabs," says McGlade. "Research has actively shown that we have a biophilic relationship with green environments because they help us activate certain parts of our hypothalamuses. It's been proven that the dopamine you'd normally get through exercising can be created by being close to tranquil spaces, and nothing gives you more tranquility than green spaces; they really help you study and get your brain to relax. Those are all side benefits to being around nature, and they're very important benefits of this green roof.

The Bow Valley Green Roof represents Flynn Canada's second consecutive Roofing Canada Award. In 2014, it won the top honour for completing six light rail transit (LRT) stations along Calgary's West LRT Extension. The winning streak represents both an honour for the company and stands as a testament to its broad skillset. As noted by Teal: "Winning the award two years in a row was indeed an honour. These awards are for very different types of projects, and that reflects the diversity of Flynn's projects."

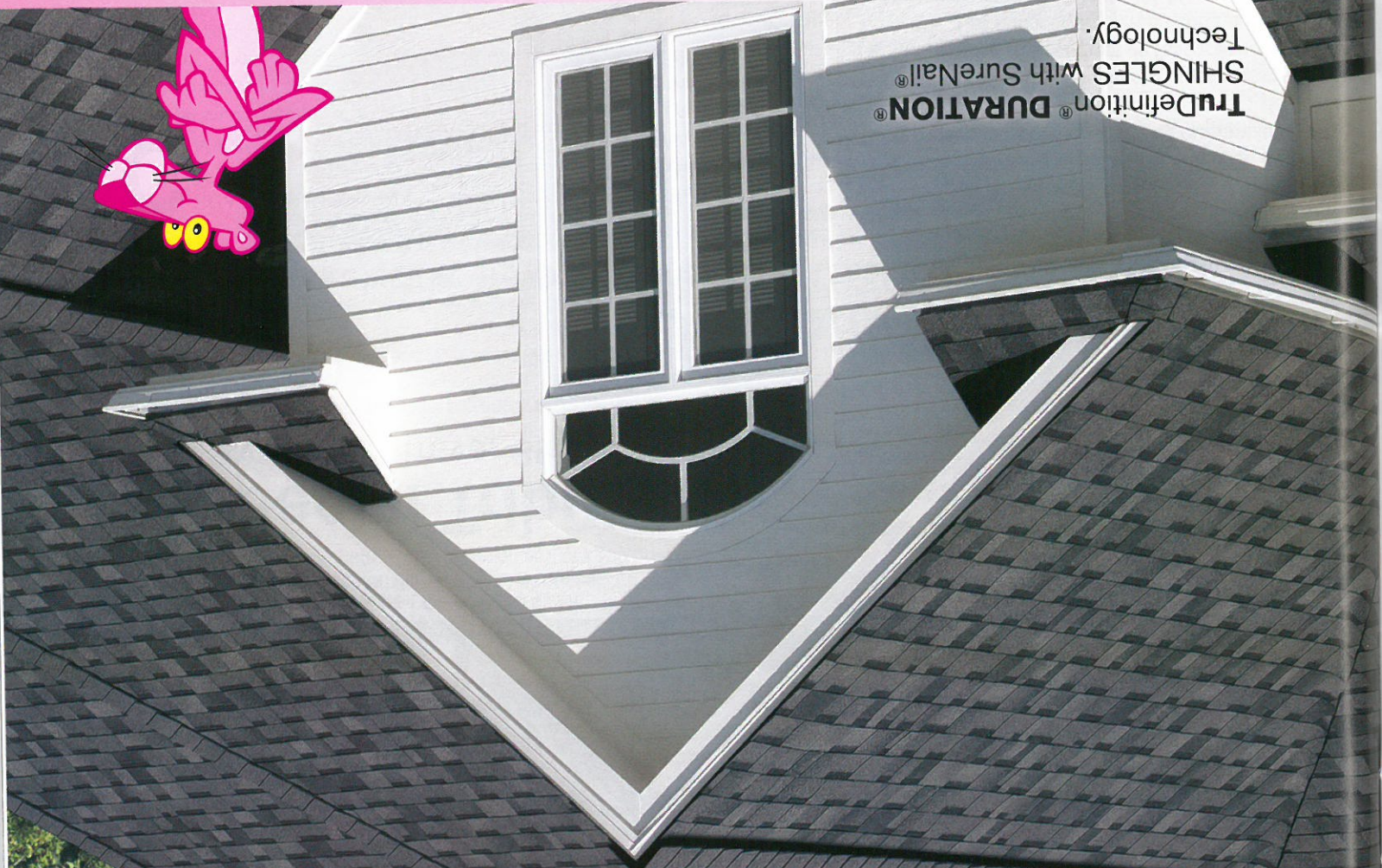
« C'est un projet passionnant parce que nous avons créé un îlot de verdure plutôt qu'une zone de grisaille, poursuit M. McGlade. La recherche a montré que nous avons une relation biologique avec les environnements verts. Ceux-ci nous aident à activer certaines parties de notre hypothalamus. Il a été prouvé que la dopamine qui serait normalement produite par une séance d'exercice peut aussi être produite par la présence d'un espace paisible, or rien ne vous procure plus de paix que les espaces verts. Ils vous aident à étudier et à détendre votre cerveau. »

Le toit vert du collège Bow Valley Green Roof a valu à Flynn son deuxième Prix Couvertures Canada consécutif. Elle a remporté en 2014 la plus haute distinction pour les six nouvelles gares de train léger de l'ouest de Calgary. Cette série de victoires représente à la fois un honneur pour l'entreprise et un témoignage de sa gamme de compétences. M. Teal conclut : « Gagner deux années de suite était tout un honneur. Ces prix récompensent des types de projets très différents, et ça reflète la diversité du savoir-faire de Flynn. »



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