

# 2014 Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

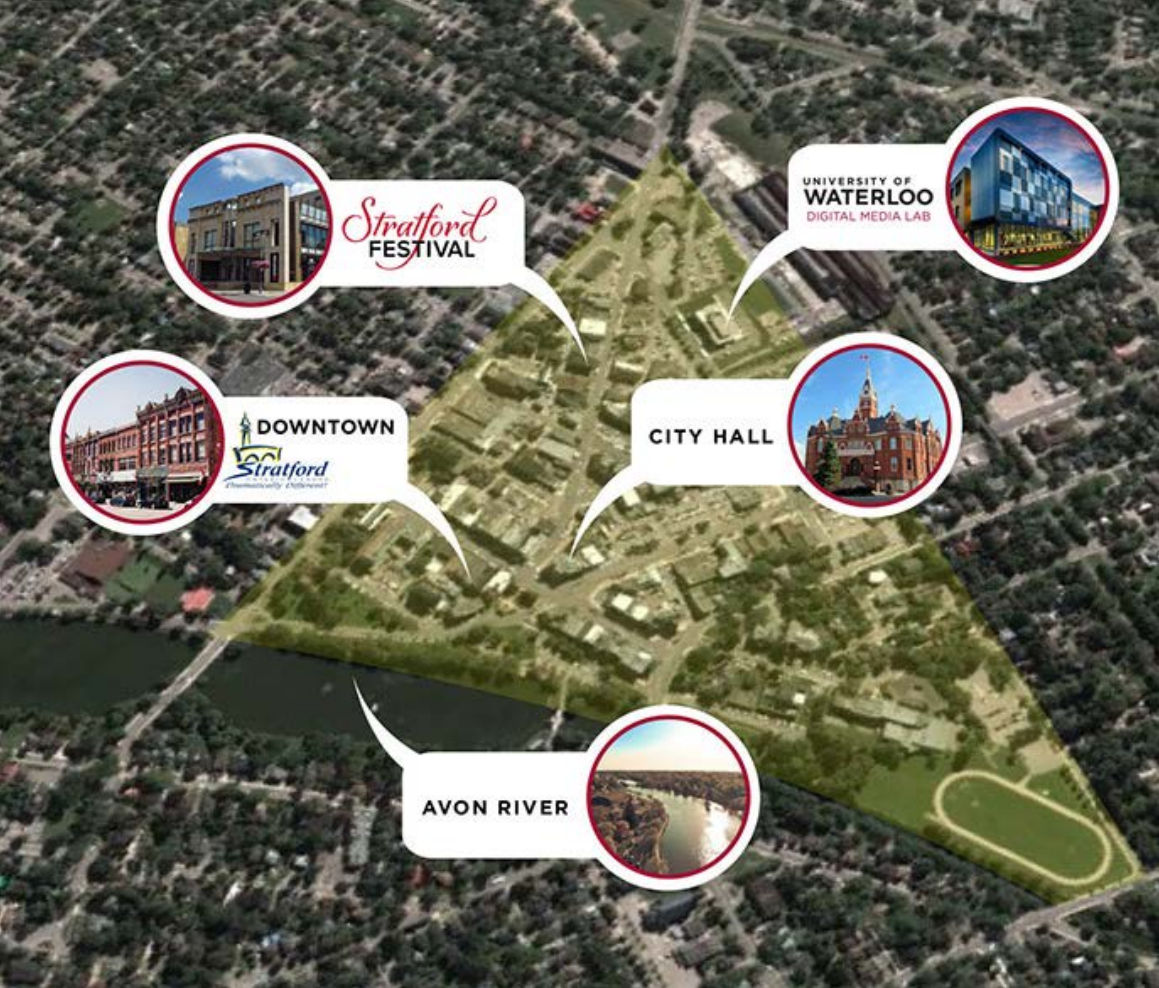
Digital Media Lab  
Stratford Campus

University of Waterloo  
Stratford, Ontario, Canada

# Digital Media Lab







The first phase of the new Stratford Campus is the Digital Media Lab project, and being the first building it was essential to make a striking design statement and one that powerfully asserts itself to the community. Located on the edge of the downtown core and on the former site of a large railway hub, this new building successfully builds new links between downtown and its brownfield site. It is an urban building and its site planning prioritizes pedestrians, the first step in developing a vibrant public realm. Using the transparency of its architecture to create a street gallery, programming is visible and inviting to students and community.





## Community Environment

The Digital Media Lab building is the first phase in the creation of a new satellite campus for the prestigious University of Waterloo. The University chose the City of Stratford to be the location for the campus based on the City's accomplishments and history. Stratford has been internationally recognized as a digital technology centre and a "smart city". and has placed in the Top 7 Intelligent Communities world-wide. It is known to be a vibrant, creative community, and is home to the world-renowned Stratford Festival and a growing digital media and technology industry. This created the perfect conditions for this project to dovetail into the community and a driving idea for the University and the design team. It also delivers a unique blend of creativity and commerce that's the perfect setting for students to capitalize on emerging technologies at one of the most exciting, dynamic educational environments in North America.





## Community Environment

September 2012 marked the official opening of the Stratford campus of the University of Waterloo. The campus offers undergraduate, graduate and advanced education programs and research opportunities. It is a forward-looking research, education and convergence centre that drives the next generation of digital media applications and content models. Using a collaborative education style, the campus brings students, leading researchers, businesses and entrepreneurs together to create, examine and commercialize opportunities in the digital media space. It is envisioned to quickly become a centrepiece for collaboration, learning and sharing through conferences and workshops. With this emphasis, the school has quickly attracted the interest of several technology companies including Christie Digital Tiles who have created a learning lab for students and testing ground for new and emerging products they are developing.

## Learning Environment

The building is organized around the Event Space, a multi-purpose, multi-storey room that becomes brings together students and the community. Internally, the collaboration areas open onto it or look over it creating a learning and social importance to it.

The space can be used as a comfortable social space, assembly space or window onto the global world of Digital Media. The feature of this space is undoubtedly the digital screen wall, North America's tallest and an impressive partnership with private industry.

Sectionally, the building design uses the collaboration spaces to create a stepped back configuration of openness and overlook on all three levels connected by an open convenience stair.





## Learning Environment

The unique planning of this new school is premised on the idea of creating project based learning spaces similar to the notion of “makerspace”. Collaboration areas are then inserted into key zones in support of bringing students, faculty and private sector business together to create and innovate.

Classrooms, labs and seminar rooms of all sizes and arranged to maximize flexibility. Transparency is important, finishes similar to corporate sector. Collaboration commons on each floor are centralized and complete with lounge furniture, café kitchenettes. Every space in the school was considered a learning space.

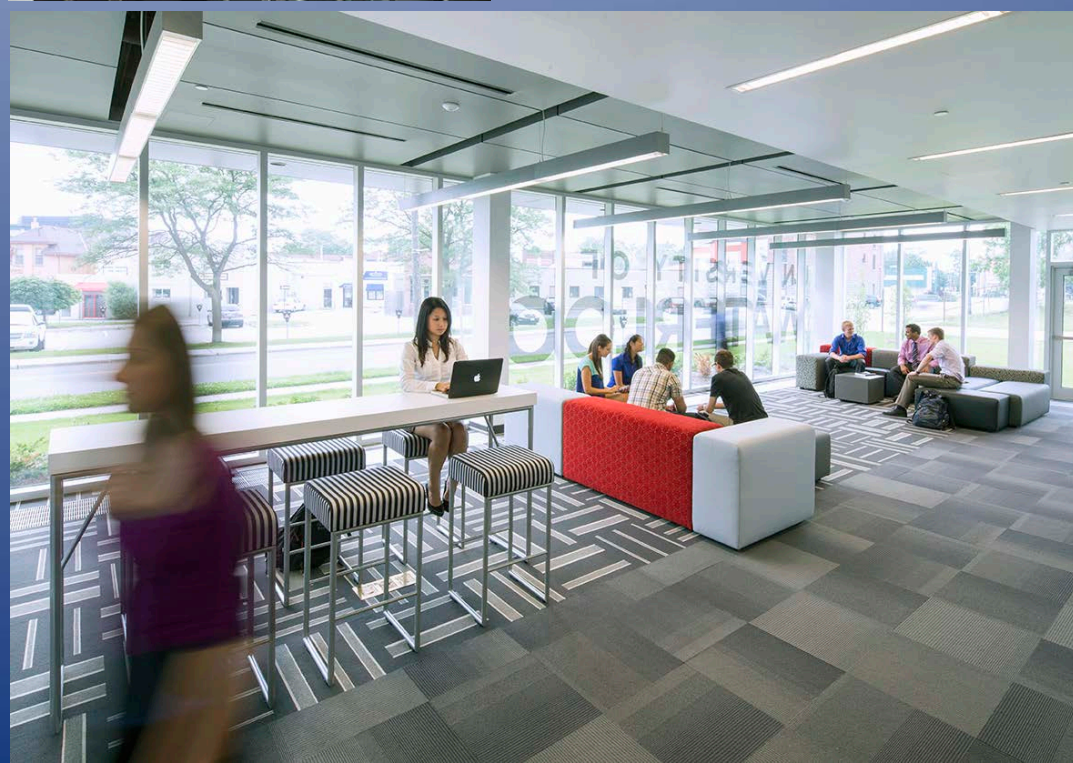




## Physical Environment

The design planning was driven by the desire to create a flexible, collaborative learning environment - a veritable hub of creative entrepreneurial technology. To achieve this, our design links the building horizontally and vertically, using the Event Space and collaboration spaces as the convergence spaces from classrooms and project rooms.

The learning environs of the building are impressive, with it's 7 fully wired classrooms, 12 project rooms, three video editing suites and an audio editing suite of commercial calibre. There's also plenty of space for students to meet, mingle and collaborate in bright, open-concept outer rooms. The result is a pioneering facility that puts the human back in technology with major consideration towards creating quality learning spaces that are flexible, adaptable, bright and sustainable.





## Physical Environment

Within the Event Space, a digital screen tile wall was created - the tallest in the world - as an expressive element within that can grow vertically into a multi-level “Monolith” connecting all levels of the building and outwards to the City.

Externally, the building is a gallery onto the street, where transparency is capitalized upon and where the digital tile wall becomes a screen to the community and beyond. In 2013, the wall was used to show a webcast of Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield speaking from the International Space Station.





## Planning Process

The University undertook an open invitation to architects to participate in a design competition, and five excellent design teams undertook the assignment of designing to a detailed brief. The results of the competition yielded a design that was unanimously chosen by the University's Planning Team and interestingly was very close to the final design.

With very limited building precedents to choose from, the Planning Team worked closely with the design team looking at exceptional learning spaces both in education and the workplace to develop detailed layouts. The team remained in place until occupancy was achieved to ensure that all of the technical goals of the project were met.





# Planning Process

Throughout the process, Building Information Modeling was used to illustrate, communicate and analyze the emerging design. In particular, detailed animations were generated to test the Vision of the project and ensuring that the visionary and technical goals of the design would be achieved.

“The programs have proven to be more popular than anyone ever predicted. I’ve been in a number of educational institutions and I can’t remember seeing the level of popular public support for a building. It’s humbling in many ways”.

*Douglas Peers,  
Dean, Faculty of Arts  
University of Waterloo*



# Floor Plan



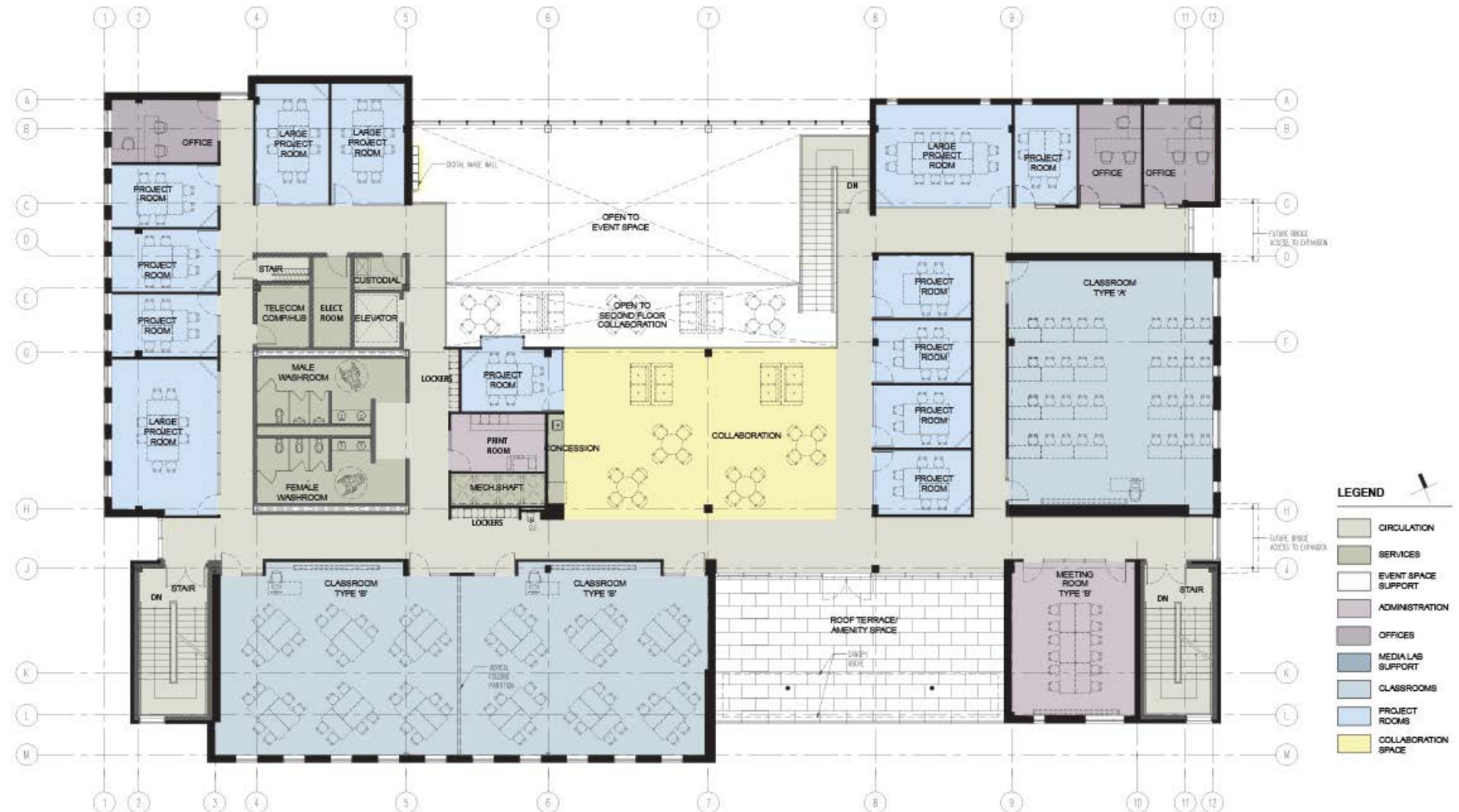
Ground Floor Plan





## Second Floor Plan

# Floor Plan



Third Floor Plan



# Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

## Project Data

Submitting Firm :	ZAS Architects + Interiors Inc.
Project Role	Architecture and Interior Design
Project Contact	Paul Stevens
Title	Sr. Principal
Address	517 Wellington St. W., Suite 404
City, State or Province, Country	Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 1G1
Phone	416-979-9834

Joint Partner Firm:	Not Applicable
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
Address	
City, State or Province, Country	
Phone	

Other Firm:	
Project Role	
Project Contact	
Title	
Address	
City, State or Province, Country	
Phone	

Construction Firm:	Bondfield Construction Co. Ltd.
Project Role	Design-Builder
Project Contact	Steven Aquino
Title	Vice-President - Operations
Address	407 Basaltic Road
City, State or Province, Country	Concord, Ontario, Canada L4K 4W8
Phone	(416) 667-8422

# Exhibition of School Planning and Architecture

## Project Details

<b>Project Name</b>	University of Waterloo Digital Media Campus
<b>City</b>	Stratford
<b>State</b>	Ontario, Canada
<b>District Name</b>	University of Waterloo
<b>Supt/President</b>	Ms. Ginny Dybenko, Executive Director Stratford Campus
<b>Occupancy Date</b>	September 2012
<b>Grades Housed</b>	University
<b>Capacity(Students)</b>	350
<b>Site Size (acres)</b>	1.38
<b>Gross Area (sq. ft.)</b>	45,000
<b>Per Occupant(pupil)</b>	128
<b>gross/net please indicate</b>	Gross
<b>Design and Build?</b>	Yes
<b>If yes, Total Cost:</b>	\$13,500,000
<b>Includes:</b>	Site Development, Building Construction, Fixed Equip
<b>If no,</b>	
<b>Site Development:</b>	
<b>Building Construction:</b>	
<b>Fixed Equipment:</b>	
<b>Other:</b>	
<b>Total:</b>	\$13,500,000



# Supporting/Supplemental









