



**The Waterdown Library  
and Civic Centre**

**Hamilton, ON**

**RDH Architects (RDHA)**

**Toronto**



Within its 23,500 square feet, the Waterdown Library and Civic Centre, located in the Waterdown suburb of Hamilton, embraces a public library, archive, recreation rooms and municipal, community and police services outlets. Perched atop the Niagara Escarpment, the facility exploits its topography by being organized as a split-level building spread over six levels, each of which is accessible by barrier-free walkways with a 1:25 slope (a change of one foot in height per 25 feet of length). The main reading room sits at the summit and offers striking views of the escarpment and beyond to

Lake Ontario. Sustainable initiatives include a handsomely detailed, glazed curtain wall to maximize daylight; fritted glass and wood fins on the curtain wall as solar-screening devices; recycled material including Douglas fir wall panels and fins salvaged from Hamilton Central Library renovations; locally available and low-V.O.C. materials (materials that don't emit volatile organic compounds such as benzene, which can irritate mucus membranes); a flowering orchard to shade parking areas; green roofs; and bioswales in parking lots and green spaces.