

Guelph Comes to Life with Anolis

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Nine individual buildings magically come to life after dark as part of the Canadian city of Guelph, Ontario's eye-catching ongoing public lighting initiative, "Illuminate Downtown Guelph," in lighting schemes that utilise Anolis Eminere LED luminaires.

Lighting for each individual building in this stylish and eye-catching urban transformation project

has been designed and specified by Toronto-based AV integration and immersive tech specialists, Aligned Vision Group (AV Group), led by John Coniglio.



John chose Anolis Eminere lighting fixtures – a combination of 1, 2 and 4 ft long units – as the primary lighting for the different installations, each encompassing its own architecture, history, and functionality.

The project was initiated by the City of Guelph with the idea of attracting people and businesses from the suburbs into downtown to enjoy the vibes and the facilities. The first phase involving five buildings was delivered at the end of 2023, and this was so successful that another four buildings were added.



John was initially approached to discuss the basic concepts of the project pre-covid via his connections to the city, and to present some creative ideas.

This is the first time that AV Group has spec'd and used Anolis on a project, but AV Group has used products from sister company Robe on several different installations, and being familiar with the quality of these, was confident that Anolis would also be right for this high-profile architectural project. "We knew it would be a solid choice," confirmed John.

John and design engineer Paul Rennick oversaw the visualisation and planning of all the different lighting installations. The first phase focused on the Wyndham Street North and St. George's

Square area of downtown, and this was expanded in the second phase, which has recently been completed.



The logistics were immense and one of the biggest challenges.

All the buildings were separately owned, so the AV Group team had to meet with each of the owners, discuss their own ideas as well as take on board the owners' directions and thoughts about how their real estate should be lit.

The resulting lighting schemes were a careful combination of both, presented in a physically



achievable format and designed to take into account multiple considerations, from overall look and aesthetics to practicality.

Considerable time was spent with each client discussing how their building would look when illuminated with the Emineres, and the design renders proved to be highly accurate.

Not all buildings could have any fixtures directly attached to them as they were built from limestone and some were heritage protected, so AV Group had to design and produce variable special bracketing to get the Emineres into all the correct positions.

Elegant Unistrut gantries were installed on the roofs of some buildings to cantilever the Emineres over the walls and get them sitting in the exact correct positions to be able to wash evenly and smoothly down the walls.

Most buildings also required that cabling and infrastructure be kept as concealed as possible, presenting another complex set of challenges.



Hope House was a favourite both because of the building and the complexity of the installation needed to achieve the desired results. Built as a stone church in 1855, modelled as a mix of Gothic Revival and Italianate architecture, it is now a non-profit offering community-based services and programs to challenge the stigmas of poverty and assist people in becoming self-sufficient.

The AV Group team worked with an electrical contractor to devise an appropriate conduit system for cable management, a process that involved intense negotiations between the building owners and the electrician. A series of custom brackets was devised to secure the Emineres in relevant lighting positions located precisely where needed.



The Wellington Building was another favourite. Standing at the convergence of Wyndham and Woolwich Streets in downtown Guelph, it is visually striking for its unique architecture. Constructed in 1877 and designed by architect Victor Stewart in Second Empire (Louis-Philippe) style, its impressive mansard roof, dormers, and corner dome give it a distinctive classical Parisian boulevard feel!

The challenge to overcome on the Wellington Building, like most of the properties, was the strict limitation of attaching any fixture to the building itself. Instead, AV Group found a unique placement on the top side of the sill overhang between the first and second floors.

The methodology needed for Guelph Civic Museum was another interesting installation. This time special brackets for the Emineres were fitted like clasps to the structural steel elements of the glass atrium entranceway.

Each of these inventive lighting solutions involved “some great collaboration between our account manager, design engineer and professional service teams,” noted John, and it also illustrated the multiple disciplines, skills and knowledge required from AV Group to deliver such spectacular results.



The lighting programs are controlled via a Pharos system, which is cloud based and can be accessed and changed remotely. The default look currently has all the buildings running the same show, but they can also have individual looks applied as required.

The lighting activates at dusk with traditional white and amber hues running for the start of the evening, and these then morph into 'show' mode with more colours for a period later in the evening, before returning to the more classical architectural looks.

Photos are courtesy of the Aligned Vision Group