



Introduction



A resurfacing project was commissioned on a moderate-traffic northern Wisconsin roadway that transitions into a county highway near a popular park and lake (see Figure 1). In addition to the road resurfacing, a new ¼-mile section of sidewalk and curb was installed along the park boundary.

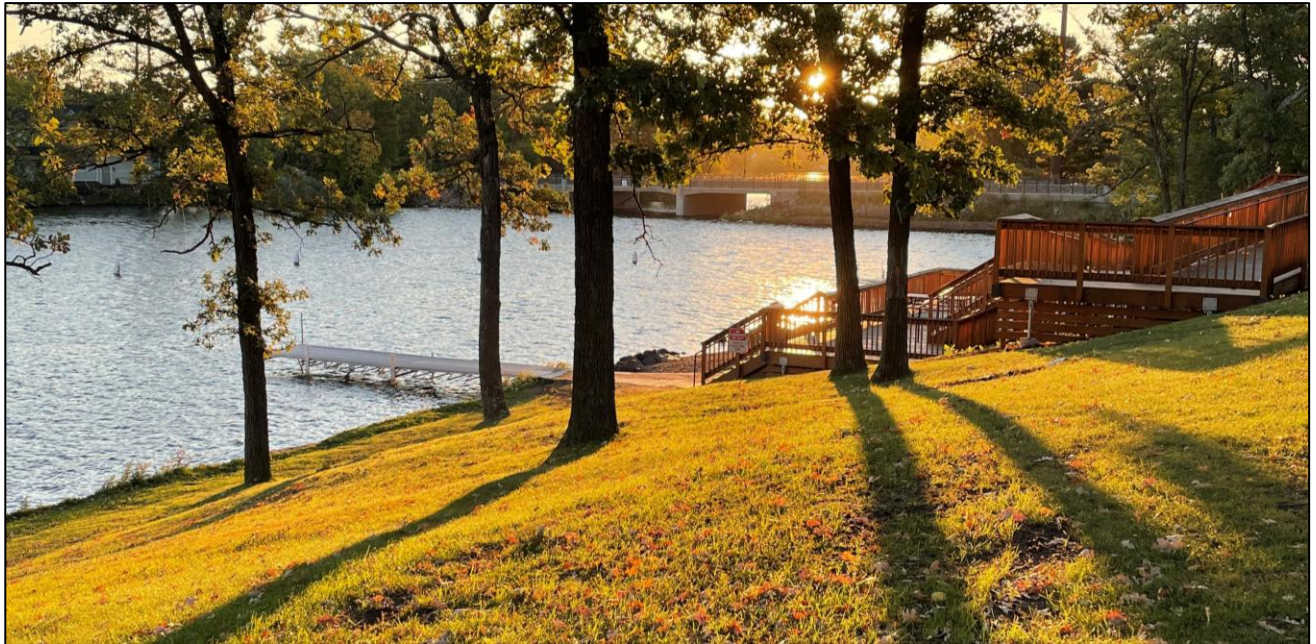


Figure 1: View of the lakeside park near the county highway.

Project Scope



Project requirements included erosion control and revegetation of the bare soil areas surrounding the curb and sidewalk. The soil needed to be held in place to prevent it from eroding into city streets, stormwater drains, and of course the park and lake. In addition to erosion control requirements, the project owners wanted to ensure a clean, finished look since the park would remain open during construction.

Work was completed during the late summer months, meaning the area could encounter extended stretches of rainy and wet conditions, borderline drought conditions, or anything in between. The selected erosion control best management practice (BMP) used needed to accomplish several goals:

- Keep the seed and soil in place, especially during hydrologic events.
- Successfully revegetate the bare soil areas.
- Provide a clean, finished look as quickly as possible, no matter the weather conditions.

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The Plan



Curlex® I QuickGRASS®, an erosion control blanket (ECB) manufactured by American Excelsior Company, was selected to protect and revegetate the bare soil areas. It features a fully biodegradable Curlex® matrix stitched beneath a single net (see Figure 2).

What is Curlex? Curlex refers to Great Lakes aspen excelsior fibers that are engineered specifically for erosion and sediment control. These fibers are curled and barbed, meaning unlike other natural fibers used in such applications, they naturally cling to one another and the soil. They also expand when wet, forming a Velcro-like connection with the subgrade that stabilizes soil in place while simultaneously reducing the force of raindrop impact and the effects of sheet flow. During dry conditions, the fibers slowly release the absorbed moisture back to the soil, creating a hygroscopic action that nurtures seeds and promotes revegetation.

The “QuickGRASS®” in the ECB’s name signifies that its Curlex fibers are colored green via a non-toxic pigment, which presents a finished, vegetated look until seeds germinate and plants replace the ECB’s biodegradable matrix. This installation also utilized QuickMow™, a rapid-degrading top netting.



Figure 2: Curlex I QuickGRASS installed on a sloped roadside area.

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Executing the Plan and Results



Once resurfacing was complete, seed and soil amendments were applied to the bare soil areas surrounding the curb and sidewalk. Next, Curlex I QuickGRASS was installed on top of the seed bed (see Figure 3).

Curlex I QuickGRASS successfully protected the area and provided a clean, finished look until vegetation was established (see Figure 4).



Figure 3: Curlex I QuickGRASS installed on top of the seed and soil amendments.



Figure 4: Project area from Figure 3 taken in autumn approximately 1.5 months after installation.

Next Steps



The area will be mowed at regular intervals by municipal personnel for the foreseeable future.

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