



Council report

Meeting date:	June 15, 2021
Title:	West Grey Parks and Garden Plan
Prepared by:	Kodey Hewlett, Recreation Supervisor
Reviewed by:	Laura Johnston, CAO

Recommendation

THAT council receive the West Grey Parks and Gardens Plan for information; and

THAT council authorize staff to proceed with the Parks and Garden Plan for 2021 recognizing a potential budget variance to complete the plan.

Executive summary

Staff has completed a review of West Grey parks, gardens, and greenspaces throughout the urban centers of the municipality and developed a parks and garden plan to address the various issues identified.

Background and discussion

In addition to community volunteers, the former parks committee of council, which was dissolved in 2018, managed West Grey parks and gardens. Currently, small groups of dedicated volunteers in each community coupled with a small team of staff have been tending to flower beds and gardens.

In preparation for the 2021 beatification season, and looking further toward the 2022 Durham homecoming, staff completed a review of the parks and garden inventory and identified many shortfalls.

Several budget lines are allocated parks and beautification. The economic development budget has \$25,000 for 2021 commercial beautification projects. The parks budget funds summer staff wages, water and materials expenses for all other parks. The 2021 budget was presented to council as a status quo budget, given other significant budget pressures this year. However, this parks plan and schedule was developed as a proactive measure and in conjunction with recent community and volunteer feedback.



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In order to restore the parks and gardens that were previously maintained by volunteers, the following plan has been prepared. Budget shortfalls will be reported as a variance in the Parks 2022 budget presentation.

2021 Parks Plan:

1. Train existing students and staff regarding what is needed for the gardens and how to maintain them. (ongoing)
2. Inventory, prioritize and create project/work plan for existing municipal flower and vegetable gardens in West Grey. (completed)
3. Monitor the outcomes of the 2021 season and identify improvements for future seasons. Make recommendations for parks and garden status moving forward
4. Prepare a parks operating and capital budget for 2022
5. Continue with the existing internal and contracted grass cutting programs

Flower Garden Priority / Work Plan for 2021

Priority level (high, medium, normal) outlines the order in which the gardens / parks will be addressed. Priority levels were established through community and committee consultation, visibility, staff input and current condition.

Parks and Gardens	Location	Priority Level	Status	Work Plan
West Grey Municipal Office	Durham	Normal	Good	Remove weeds and top with mulch
Durham Entrance Signs	Durham	Medium	Fair	Top up the beds with mulch if needed



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Flower Beds (4)				
Rest Awhile Park	Durham	Medium	Fair	Remove weeds and top with mulch
Heritage Park – Lion's Club	Durham	NA	NA	This site is under construction for 2021
Durham Town Hall & Park /Fire/Police Gardens	Durham	Medium	Fair	Remove weeds and top with mulch. Clean and repaint chess tables
Elvidge Parkette	Durham	Normal	Poor	Remove weeds and top with mulch. Allow unused areas to naturalize.
Vickers Park	Durham	Medium	Poor	Remove weeds, plant flowers, and top with mulch
Post Office Planters	Durham	Medium	Fair	Remove weeds and plant flowers
Brick Tulip Garden	Durham	High	Poor	Remove weeds, plant perennials and top with mulch. This garden has high potential to be a significant asset as an entry garden.
McGowan Falls Planters	Durham	High	Poor	Remove the planters and discard the dead trees.
Tennis Court Garden	Durham	High	Poor	Relocate majority of garden beds to a naturalized area around the perimeter. Weed, mulch and plant remaining beds. Level remaining area to allow for off street parking access for the tennis and basketball courts (installing stone dust if

				needed)
Rock Street Garden	Durham	Medium	Good	Remove weeds and top with mulch
Riverside Park	Durham	Medium	Poor	Remove weeds and top with mulch
Riverside Trail Park	Durham	Medium	Fair	Remove weeds and top with mulch. Remove empty planter baskets
Durham Arena & Community Centre	Durham	Normal	Fair	Remove weeds and top with mulch, plant shrubs
Pump House Garden	Durham	Medium	Fair	Remove weeds and top with mulch. Future plan: relocate perennials and replace with sod
Durham Library	Durham	Normal	Good	Two raised planters to be planted with annuals. Future consideration to be given to a proper flowerbed, perhaps below the sign or in conjunction with a future digital sign.
Ayton Entrance Signs	Ayton	Normal	Good	Remove weeds and top with mulch
Ayton Arena / Hall	Ayton	Medium	Good	Remove weeds and top with mulch. Repair retaining wall
Ayton Arena Butterfly / Pollinator Garden	Ayton	Normal	Good	Top with mulch and stone dust



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Ayton Arena / Fire Hall	Ayton	Normal	Fair	Remove weeds and top with mulch
Ayton Centennial Hall	Ayton	Normal	Fair	Remove weeds, thin bushes and top with mulch
Louisa Street Planters	Ayton	Medium	Good	Plant Annuals
Entrance Signs	Neustadt	Normal	NA	Establish Gardens (2022)
Neustadt Lions Park	Neustadt	Medium	Poor	Weed, plant, and top with mulch
Neustadt Arena Hall	Neustadt	Normal	Fair	Remove and replace old planters. Weed beds and top with mulch
Neustadt Flagpole Garden	Neustadt	Normal	Fair	Remove weeds and top with mulch
Entrance Sigs	Elmwood	Normal	Fair	Remove weeds and top with Mulch
Grass cutting	Urban Centers / Parks	NA	NA	Ongoing Maintenance
Hanging Basket/ Planter Program	Ayton Durham Elmwood Neustadt	High	Good	Ongoing Program



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Legal and legislated requirements

None

Financial and resource implications

Funding has been allocated within the 2021 economic development and parks operating budgets for ongoing maintenance and will be monitored throughout 2021 with variance reporting throughout the year. Any 2021 year end deficits may need to be included in the 2022 budgets for recovery. 2021 operations will be used for developing 2022 budgets.

Staffing implications

In 2021, the existing complement of the Infrastructure and Public Works department, including summer students, will maintain the existing gardens.

Consultation

CAO

Director of Finance

Director, Infrastructure and Public Works

Supervisor, Urban Operations

Facility Superintendents

Alignment to strategic vision plan

Pillar: Build a better future

Goal: Vibrant community

Strategy: Continue West Grey beautification projects

Attachments

None

Next steps

Summer students have been hired and training and orientation will begin in late June. Public Works staff are currently preparing planters, baskets and garden areas. Maintenance and clean-up schedule to run throughout June, July, August and September.

Respectfully submitted:

Kodey Hewlett, Recreation Supervisor