

**Green Line Report to
Green Line Committee
2021 May 19**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
GC2021-0770
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Green Line Public Gardens Q2 2021 Update

RECOMMENDATION:

The Green Line Committee receive this report as an update on the workplan for Green Line Public Gardens for the Corporate Record.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This report presents an update on the Green Line Public Gardens workplan which identifies the governance, process and scope of work required to develop the Public Gardens Master Plan and deliver initial public gardens projects.
- ***What does this mean to Calgarians?*** Green Line Public Gardens will create publicly accessible and creative public spaces connected to transit. They offer a unique opportunity to connect people to places for a purpose of building community and making social connections, improving the quality of life for those using the Green Line.
- ***Why does this matter?*** The workplan outlines a clear structure and process for delivering public gardens in a manner that allows for the best value and outcomes for Calgarians. Projects will be procured through a trusted partner with the ability to grow funding beyond the initial budget allocated and establish a process to ensure community involvement and meaningful outcomes that reflect community desires.
- The workplan outlines how Parks Foundation Calgary will be responsible for developing the Public Gardens Master Plan and delivering public gardens projects.
- The Green Line's \$4 million allocated for Public Art will be transferred to Parks Foundation Calgary to support the delivery of the public gardens projects and lead fundraising efforts to grow the initial public art allocation to support the delivery of additional public garden projects.
- The public gardens projects will be delivered and completed through a partnership between the Parks Foundation Calgary and City Administration.
- A robust governance structure will be provided through the establishment of two committees to provide oversight and guidance on the Public Gardens Master Plan and delivery of public gardens projects.
- On April 24 2019, Administration was directed to report back with a workplan for the Public Gardens Master Planning work. Additional background and previous Council direction is included as Attachment 1.
- ***Strategic alignment to Council's citizen priorities:*** A Prosperous City; A City of Inspiring Neighbourhoods; A City That Moves; and A Healthy and Green City.

DISCUSSION

A public garden is defined as *"a piece of ground appropriated for public enjoyment and recreation, serving as a gathering place for communities – that may be cultivated and ought to be enriched by art."* (Public Gardens Scoping Report)

The scope of the Public Garden Master Plan will include the Green Line Stage 1 alignment from 16 Avenue N. to 126 Avenue S.E. and will include locations both within and outside of the

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Green Line footprint. Across the alignment, four focus zones were identified, each with distinct characteristics and site typologies that offer varying opportunities for the development of public gardens. The focus zones are listed below and described further in Attachment 2.

- **Prince's Island to Crescent Heights** (9 Avenue N. and 16 Avenue N.)
- **Downtown & Beltline** (2 Avenue S.W., 7 Avenue S.W., Centre Street S. and 4 Street S.E.)
- **Elbow River to Bow River South** (Ramsay/Inglewood, 26 Avenue S.E. and Highfield)
- **Southeast of Bow River** (Lynnwood/Millican, Ogden, South Hill, Quarry Park, Douglas Glen and Shepard)

With each zone, several criteria were established to help evaluate opportunities for public gardens sites, which include:

- ❖ **Accessible & inclusive:** Gardens should be in a location that is easily available and publicly accessible to a large and broad group of Calgarians and aims to be inclusive for everyone.
- ❖ **Impactful & engaging:** Gardens should be in a location that allows them to have a measurable impact on people's lives. They are a place to bring people together for a purpose, so should aim to offer an engaging experience.
- ❖ **Synergy:** Gardens should be located where public and private investment can be leveraged and amplified, but also where there is diversity in opportunities.
- ❖ **Green Line connection:** Gardens should be somewhere relevant and related to the Green Line – born out of the notion of railway gardens, the locations for public gardens should have a connection to transit and the Green Line LRT.

Parks Foundation Calgary will be responsible for developing the Public Gardens Master Plan and delivering various projects. The Green Line's \$4 million allocated for Public Art will be transferred to Parks Foundation Calgary to support the delivery of the Public Gardens projects. Parks Foundation Calgary will lead additional fundraising efforts to grow the initial public art allocation to support the delivery of more public garden projects.

Governance of the public gardens program will be managed through two committees – Public Gardens Steering Committee and Public Gardens Advisory Committee.

City Administration will establish the Public Gardens Steering Committee, which will be accountable for keeping the public's interest in mind by ensuring proper expenditure of the public art funds and future stewardship of built infrastructure. The Steering Committee will be comprised of representatives from Green Line, Calgary Parks, Calgary Recreation (Arts & Culture) and Calgary Transit. This Committee will provide overall program and project oversight, guidance, financial accountability, design and construction approvals, operations & maintenance strategy, and cross corporate coordination.

Parks Foundation Calgary will establish a Public Gardens Advisory Committee to serve as a sounding board for ideas, designs and proposals for the public gardens projects and to provide perspective from the community lens. Committee membership will consist of up to two members of the Administration-led Steering Committee, Parks Foundation Calgary and six other subject matter experts from a variety of community groups and external special interest organizations.

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For more information on governance, roles and responsibilities, see Attachment 2.

Next steps:

- Partnership Agreement between The City and Parks Foundation Calgary to be finalized;
- City to transfer Green Line's \$4 million allocated for public art to Parks Foundation Calgary;
- City to establish Public Gardens Steering Committee Terms of Reference and membership, including Chair;
- Parks Foundation Calgary to establish Public Gardens Advisory Committee, Terms of Reference and membership;
- Parks Foundation Calgary to develop master plan and project plans for the delivery of public gardens based on potential location and opportunities (parcels/sites) provided by the City.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

Meetings were held with key internal and external stakeholders, including Parks Foundation Calgary, to establish the workplan and approach to delivering public gardens projects and determine roles and responsibilities of both the Public Gardens Steering Committee and Public Gardens Advisory Committee. Further engagement and a chartering process with these stakeholders will be required to finalize membership and terms of reference for both committees.

Public and community stakeholder engagement for specific public gardens projects will be undertaken by Parks Foundation Calgary with support from City Administration as each project plan is developed.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Public gardens will serve as social gathering places bringing together community members, businesses and transit users along the Green Line. By providing opportunities and encouragement for social and cultural connections within our communities, a sense of belonging, security, health and purpose can help improve the overall social well-being of a city and quality of life of its citizens.

Environmental

Green infrastructure is a key element of public gardens. By developing public spaces into public garden sites that incorporate plant material of various types, these spaces can become habitat for urban wildlife and insects, improving biodiversity and stormwater management in our city. Opportunities to transform underused City-owned lands into attractive and interesting gardens not only help to "green" the Green Line, but help promote more healthy, active lifestyles that

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promote increased use of transit, reducing preference for car travel which, in turn, can help reduce GHGs.

Economic

Public gardens will serve to increase interest and economic activity around and within Green Line station areas. By attracting people to these locations, local businesses and services near these areas may benefit from increased pedestrian traffic and spending, thus public gardens may help serve to stimulate local economies.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing capital funding - one-time

Green Line's public art contribution was established through the 1% percent for public policy and capped at \$4 million. This public art budget has been earmarked for the delivery of the Public Gardens program. Additional funding through various opportunities is to be explored through potential fundraising efforts by Parks Foundation Calgary.

There is no impact to the current operating budget from this report. An operating and maintenance strategy will be developed for each public gardens project and reviewed by the Public Gardens Steering Committee as part of the project approval process.

RISK

Opportunity to integrate public gardens into Green Line infrastructure may be limited, due to the complexity of Green Line's design-build-finance procurement model. To mitigate this risk, the Green Line project team has reviewed and identified potential sites within the footprint where public gardens could be incorporated. In addition, opportunities for public gardens projects have also been identified within a 500 metre radius of each station, outside of the footprint.

Expectations for fundraising and leveraging of Public Gardens' budget need to be managed based on realities of current economic conditions of public and private sectors. To mitigate this risk, expectations for fundraising will be clearly outlined in the Partnership Agreement between The City and Parks Foundation Calgary.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1: Previous Council Direction
2. Attachment 2: Public Gardens Workplan

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Michael Thompson	General Manager - Green Line	Approve
James McLaughlin	Director – Recreation	Inform
Kyle Ripley	Director – Calgary Parks	Inform
Katie Black	General Manager - Community Services	Inform