

## Public Gardens Workplan

May 2021

### Summary

This document outlines the work plan and approach for delivering the Green Line public gardens program.

Parks Foundation Calgary will be responsible for developing the Public Gardens Master Plan and delivering public gardens projects on behalf of The City. To support the delivery of public gardens projects, the Green Line's \$4 million allocated for Public Art will be transferred to Parks Foundation Calgary. Parks Foundation Calgary will 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, whereby a robust governance structure will be established to provide oversight and guidance on the development of a Public Gardens Master Plan and delivery of public gardens projects.

### Background

In December 2018, a Notice of Motion (NOM C2018-1445) was brought forward by Councillor Keating to introduce and direct Administration to explore the idea of Railway Gardens along the Green Line LRT alignment as a way to enhance public spaces at transit stations and to serve as a meaningful theme for public art. This was modernized to Public Gardens through the Green Line Public Gardens Scoping Report (TT2019-0429) that was presented to Council on April 25, 2019.

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).

More simply put, a public garden is a place that brings together people for the purpose of building community, making social connections and fulfilling personal enjoyment by having greenery and/or art.

The Public Gardens Scoping Report (TT2019-0429) confirmed the feasibility and desirability of public gardens and further identified six seed themes to help guide the development of public gardens projects.

- Community
- Art, local history, and education
- Seasonal + year-round
- Events
- Wayfinding
- Digital technology

### Scope

The scope of the Public Garden Master Plan will encompass 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 Green Line footprint. The Green Line footprint is defined as the "infrastructure lands" and/or the "temporary construction lands" as per the Green Line Project Agreement.

Incorporating public gardens into the Green Line footprint will offer opportunities to leverage the Green Line investment and afford greater success by enhancing the LRT infrastructure and transit spaces delivered by Green Line. However, these locations will be dependent on Green Line timelines and will not be available until after construction completion of Green Line LRT in order to manage risk, schedule and delivery of both Public Gardens and Green Line LRT programs. It will also require close coordination with the Green Line team to ensure interface and integration opportunities are considered and well managed. For example, if a public garden project proposes painting a mural or planting a vertical garden (i.e. vines) on a Green Line retaining wall, Green Line needs to ensure the wall is designed and constructed to support the mural or vines and that warranties are not impacted.

For locations outside the Green Line footprint, an approximate 500m radius will be used to define locations for eligible projects. The purpose of looking outside the Green Line footprint is to expand the options of available locations and allow the opportunity for some public gardens sites to be developed independent of Green Line project timelines and constraints. These may include locations on other City owned lands such as existing community parks, natural open spaces, road right-of-way (boulevards), remnant parcels and residual lands where public gardens investments could transform under-used and left-over spaces into community amenities. In addition to City owned lands, areas that are privately-owned, but publicly accessible could also be considered, subject to agreement by private landowners.

For future stages, the Public Gardens Master Plan and the process of delivering the initial public gardens sites will serve to guide future location selection, project implementation, design process and delivery of future public gardens projects. As the detailed scope and alignment configurations of future Green Line LRT stages are not yet confirmed, further work to determine potential locations for public garden sites will need to occur once these details are known. Processes and lessons learned from stage 1 will be applied to future stage opportunities.

## Public Gardens Locations

A variety of potential locations for public gardens projects have been identified within the Green Line footprint and the 500m radius around stations along the Green Line stage 1 alignment. As part of the work plan, Parks Foundation Calgary will review the potential locations and develop a master plan that identifies specific sites and public gardens projects.

Four key criteria were established to evaluate and select potential locations for public gardens sites:

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **Synergy:** Gardens should be located where public and private investment can be leveraged and amplified, but also where there is diversity in opportunities.
4. **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.

Projects will be identified in four focus zones and associated station areas across the stage 1 alignment:

**Zone 1. Prince's Island to Crescent Heights** (9 Avenue N. and 16 Avenue N. Stations) – The Green Line LRT within this zone consists of an urban integrated system running over Prince's Island Park and the Bow River and surface running LRT along Centre Street North. Opportunities for public garden sites within this zone include those under and around the new Bow River LRT bridge, as well as those integrated within the Centre Street streetscape or in adjacent green spaces.

**Zone 2. Downtown & Beltline** (2 Avenue S.W., 7 Avenue S.W., Centre Street S. and 4 Street S.E. Stations) – The Green Line LRT within this zone consists of an urban underground system that tunnels through much of the downtown core and Beltline districts. Opportunities for public garden sites within this zone include those within the underground station locations, as well as public spaces and green spaces on or above the surface in areas nearby the Green Line alignment.

**Zone 3. Elbow River to Bow River South** (Ramsay/Inglewood, 26 Avenue S.E. and Highfield Stations) – The Green Line LRT within this zone consists of a mostly grade separated system that runs through both an urban established neighborhood and industrial area of the city. Opportunities for public garden sites within this zone includes those within Green Line infrastructure and station areas, as well as remnant parcels along the alignment and green spaces nearby.

**Zone 4. Southeast of Bow River** (Lynnwood/Millican, Ogden, South Hill, Quarry Park, Douglas Glen and Shepard Stations) – The Green Line LRT within this zone consists of an LRT running within a dedicated guideway through mainly suburban neighborhoods and LRT stations that serve as community hubs for public transportation. Many of these station areas include integrated bus loops and park and ride facilities. Opportunities for public garden sites within this zone include those at these station areas, within transit plazas and in nearby green spaces, open space and City-owned lands.

## Funding

The Green Line's \$4 million allocation for Public Art will be transferred to Parks Foundation Calgary to serve as seed money and to support the delivery of the Public Gardens projects. Parks Foundation Calgary is a trusted partner who has worked with the City on numerous successful initiatives and has the ability and experience to grow the initial \$4 million allocation through funding partners, sponsorships and philanthropic donations. A key goal of the program is to grow the initial public art funds to support both delivery and maintenance of public garden projects.

Green Line's soft landscape budget for segment 1 area has been identified as a potential funding source for public gardens projects. The soft landscape budget is earmarked to deliver the soft landscape scope (trees, shrubs, soil, groundcover, grass and other plants and landscaping) within the segment 1 stations areas. Should a public garden be developed as part of the soft landscaping in these areas, Green Line's budget could be leveraged to deliver an integrate public garden that is part of the station landscape.

It is important to note that Green Line's soft landscape budget can only be leveraged, if the public garden project is delivered as part of the station landscape, as such, close collaboration and coordination between Parks Foundation Calgary and the Green Line team will be required for these opportunities.

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. A variety of alternate

options for maintaining projects will be explored, such as use of volunteers and the establishment of an operating endowment.

## **Delivery Strategy**

Parks Foundation Calgary will be responsible for developing the Public Gardens Master Plan and delivering various public garden projects. Given the desire for greater transparency, a more direct connection to local artists and Calgary communities and a streamlined approach to delivering public art projects, Parks Foundation Calgary is better able to support these goals by leading the public garden initiative, with the support of City Administration. Their long-standing history and partnerships with a variety of local organizations ensures a process that will embrace greater community involvement and deliver meaningful outcomes that reflect individual community desires and needs.

City Administration will work to support the Parks Foundation Calgary and will serve to provide overall program and project oversight as outlined in the Program Governance section below. Previous efforts on the public garden initiative will be shared with the Parks Foundation Calgary to ensure work is not lost and to facilitate a seamless transition.

One aspect is the work to identify a variety of potential sites and location opportunities both within and outside the Green Line footprint in each of the focus zones. City administration has developed a preliminary list that meet the selection criteria defined for locations and have been confirmed as viable opportunities for further exploration. These have been presented to Parks Foundation Calgary as potential locations for public garden projects.

Through additional external stakeholder and community engagement, consultation with the Public Gardens Advisory Committee, and considerations for potential funding and partnership opportunities, Parks Foundation Calgary will develop ideas for gardens concepts and select the final locations for public garden projects.

Public garden concepts and locations will be brought forward by Parks Foundation Calgary to the Public Gardens Steering Committee through a defined stage-gate process. Stage-gating is an established process, adopted by the City under the Corporate Project Management Framework (CPMF) and used for managing and delivering projects, programs and services. It involves dividing a project, program or service into stages - from early concept through to post-implementation - separated by gates at which a structured, informed decision-making process is used to confirm investments and approve work. Public Gardens projects brought forward by Parks Foundation Calgary will reviewed through this process by the Public Gardens Steering Committee to ensure projects align with program goals.

## **Program Governance**

### **Parks Foundation Calgary**

Mandate: responsible for leading the public gardens work program

Responsibilities include:

- Develop a detailed engagement plan and conduct appropriate public and community consultation
- Develop a Public Garden Master Plan that will serve to guide future delivery of public garden projects along the full alignment of the Green Line LRT
- Make final selection of public garden project sites based on community feedback

- Procure consultants, artists and required expertise to develop project concepts, plans, designs and contract documents
- Lead fundraising efforts through the application of grants, exploration of sponsorship opportunities, philanthropic donations and corporate partnerships to leverage and grow funding beyond the initial capital budget allocated
- Provide project and construction management through the delivery and construction of public gardens projects.

Two committees will be established to provide oversight and guidance to the public gardens work program: Administration-led Steering Committee and Parks Foundation Calgary-led Advisory Committee.

### **Public Gardens Steering Committee**

Membership: this Committee will be led by City Administration and will be comprised of representatives from Green Line, Calgary Parks, Calgary Recreation (Arts & Culture) and Calgary Transit. Additional business unit involvement may be required depending on committee needs and locations of projects.

Mandate: provide overall program oversight and decision making authority on public gardens projects

Responsibilities include:

- Provide oversight and guidance on public gardens projects, ensuring the vision and purpose of public gardens is realized
- Ensure financial accountability for the expenditure of Green Line public art funds; a stage-gate process will be used to review and approve each stage of the projects prior to expenditure of budget for project costs
- Assist and facilitate City review and approval processes throughout design development and construction phases of work
- Approve design and construction plans for public garden projects to ensure built infrastructure is aligned with future stewardship and maintenance requirements provided by The City
- Ensure cross corporate coordination with other capital works by The City and/or planning approvals of private developments

### **Public Gardens Advisory Committee**

Membership: this committee will be led by Parks Foundation Calgary and will be comprised of up to two members from Parks Foundation Calgary, up to six subject matter experts from a variety of community groups and external special interest organizations and up to two members of the City Administration-led Steering Committee.

Members of the Advisory Committee will have unique resources, knowledge and expertise that will serve different aspects of public garden projects and additional roles for specific advisory committee members may be determined by Parks Foundation Calgary, as required for each project.

Mandate: serve as the sounding board for ideas, designs and proposals for public gardens projects and to provide perspective from the community lens. Parks

Responsibilities include:

- Provide input, endorsement and support of public gardens projects from a public and community perspective.

## Next steps

City Administration and Parks Foundation Calgary will finalize the Partnership Agreement between both parties that outlines how the partnership will work, responsibilities of each party, and contractual terms of the agreement. Once the Partnership Agreement is executed, The City will transfer the Green Line LRT's \$4 million public art allocation to Parks Foundation Calgary. Expenditure of the budget will be managed through the corporate stage gate process described above.

City Administration will establish the Public Gardens Steering Committee, define the terms of reference for the steering committee, identify participating members and representatives and appoint a committee chair. Once the Steering Committee is established, a program chartering process will be undertaken to ensure all members are aligned with the program goals and objectives.

The Parks Foundation Calgary will establish the Public Gardens Advisory Committee, define terms of reference for the advisory committee, identify participating members and representations and appoint a committee chair. Parks Foundation Calgary will work with the Advisory Committee to review projects and leverage members' expertise to guide the process. It is anticipated that the Public Gardens Advisory Committee can be used as a pilot for future advisory committees on public realm projects beyond public gardens.

Finally, Parks Foundation Calgary will work to develop a master plan and project plans for the delivery of public gardens based on potential location and opportunities (parcels/sites) provided by the City. Administration will continue to work with and support Parks Foundation Calgary to ensure the successful delivery of public gardens going forward.