



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 19, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Clean and Green Hamilton Strategy 2020 Year-End Update (PW21016) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Diane Butterworth (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5089
SUBMITTED BY:	Craig Murdoch Director, Environmental Services Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Staff were directed to provide a progress update on the Clean and Green Strategy on an annual basis to the Public Works Committee.

INFORMATION

The Clean and Green Hamilton Strategy contains five pillars including litter, illegal dumping, graffiti, beautification and environmental stewardship. Information included in this report highlights the 2020 accomplishments within each pillar and activities undertaken by local citizens, organizations and community groups whose work supports the goals of the Clean and Green Hamilton Strategy. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant impacts to the performance of the City's Clean and Green programs in 2020 compared to accomplishments achieved in previous years.

Pillar #1 – Litter

Litter Remediation Programs

The City of Hamilton (City) coordinates and supports several volunteer initiatives which include litter remediation programs such as Team Up to Clean Up and Adopt-A-Park

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

as well as other community-led litter pick-up activities. Litter remediation program supplies are funded by the Keep Hamilton Clean and Green Committee.

All volunteer and litter remediation programs were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic closure during the spring and associated social and physical distancing protocols. Between March and June 2020, volunteer programs were suspended temporarily to comply with the Province's and City's lockdown measures. In July 2020, during Phase Two of the Hamilton Reopens Plan, the Team Up to Clean Up and Adopt-A-Park registrations were reopened to small cleanups of up to 10 people. As part of Phase Three of the Hamilton Reopens Plan in August 2020, cleanup group sizes were increased to a maximum of 100 people. In November 2020, outdoor group gatherings were later reduced to under 25 people as part of the Red – Control category under the Province's COVID-19 Response Framework. Participants were encouraged to review all government and public health guidelines and precautions related to COVID-19 and to take this information into consideration before planning or hosting a cleanup event.

The activity results from the City's litter remediation program in 2020 are not indicative of previous years' results; however, they demonstrate the dedication of community groups and individuals who actively participated in safe cleanup efforts during the pandemic. There were several individuals who were involved with weekly cleanups throughout the year. In one example, a Dundas Secondary School student walked over 80 km, collected 93 bags of litter, 72 bags of recyclable materials and completed 89 hours of community service. They also diverted 400 Halloween pumpkins which were used by a local Dundas farm. Another local resident organized and completed four cleanups along the Redhill Valley Trail by collecting 78 bags of waste, 48 bags of recyclable materials and removing 52 bulk waste items from the natural environment. These positive news stories were reflected in local media.

Community groups that typically organize large scale litter cleanups chose to either cancel or modify community cleanup events during 2020. Those that proceeded with modified cleanups with support from the City include Beautiful Alleys and the Lions Club of Ancaster. Beautiful Alleys, a volunteer led group that engages community members to maintain and beautify alleyways, organized a modified autumn alley cleanup event on October 3, 2020 which collected 317 bags of waste, 80 bags of recycling, 135 yard waste bags and removed an estimated 1.5 tonnes of large debris items. The Lions Club of Ancaster completed a modified cleanup event at Bertram Brockhouse Park on November 14, 2020. Volunteers collected 26 bags of waste and 45 yard waste bags.

The results of litter remediation activities in 2020 are summarized in Table 1. Due to the impacts of the temporary COVID-19 closure and associated social distancing protocols, there was a significant decrease in the number of registered Team Up to Clean Up events from 234 in 2019 to 52 in 2020. The number of volunteers and total volunteer

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hours were substantially lower in 2020 compared to the results from 2019, shown in Table 2, which is the result of the cancellation of larger community clean-up events.

Program	Volunteers	Garbage (bags)	Recycling (bags)	Volunteer hours	Value of Volunteer Hours ¹
Team Up to Clean Up	756	1,305	437	2,203	\$51,616
Adopt-A-Park	90	30	4	1,157	\$27,109
Community-led activities	275	343	80	825	\$19,330
2020 Total	1,121	1,678	521	4,185	\$98,055

Program	Volunteers	Garbage (bags)	Recycling (bags)	Volunteer hours	Value of Volunteer Hours ¹
Team Up to Clean Up	16,983	2,722	1,297	51,115	\$1,236,460
Adopt-A-Park	353	192	55	810	\$19,606
Community-led activities	803	5,048	88	4,824	\$116,693
2019 Total	18,139	7,962	1,440	56,749	\$1,372,759

Ontario Day of Action on Litter

As part of Bill 130, the Provincial Day of Action on Litter is observed on the second Tuesday of May each year in Ontario. May 12, 2020 was recognized as the first official Day of Action on Litter which included an awareness campaign on actions Ontarians can take to prevent, reduce and divert waste at home. As a result of the COVID-19 closure, the Ontario Government rescheduled the outdoor cleanup activities to Waste Reduction Week in Canada, held from October 19 – 24, 2020.

To support the Provincial Day of Action on Litter, the City promoted this event through social media to encourage residents to prevent and reduce waste at home and in their community as well as participate in small local cleanups to help keep the environment clean and healthy.

¹ Value based on hourly staff rate for a Labourer (Waste) position

Waste Reduction Week in Canada 2020

Waste Reduction Week in Canada was held between October 19 – 24, 2020. This event focused on the principles of circular economy, resource efficiency and waste reduction. In support of Waste Reduction Week and the Day of Action on Litter, the City hosted a social media campaign to encourage residents to actively embrace the Waste Reduction Week's seven themes: Circular Economy, Textiles, E-Waste, Plastics, Food Waste, Sharing Economy and Swap and Repair. The social media campaign was viewed by 2,304 people and engaged 254 comments and re-postings on Facebook and Twitter.

Pillar #2 – Illegal Dumping

Municipal Law Enforcement

As a result of the COVID-19 impacts, the Licensing & By-Law Services Enforcement Officers' priority has been to focus on Provincial Regulations/Orders and Municipal By-laws related to COVID-19 and the immediate health and safety concerns, e.g. inadequate heat, vital services. In 2020, the City's Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (MLEO) in the Planning & Economic Development Department investigated illegal dumping on the private properties of the CN and CP Railways only when time permitted. The Municipal Law Enforcement Section received approximately 246 calls for illegal dumping on private property and 392 calls under the City's Yard Maintenance Bylaw. The number of calls related to illegal dumping were lower in 2020 compared to the number in 2019 as seen in Table 3.

	2019	2020
Illegal dumping on private property investigations	450	246
Yard Maintenance Bylaw service issues	1,810	392

Waste By-Law Enforcement

Waste/Parks MLEOs responded to 2,549 issues relating to illegal dumping on public property between January 1st and December 31st, 2020. In addition to the illegal dumping service matters, the Waste/Parks MLEOs responded to 5,564 requests for service, conducted 5,008 visits to parks or other City properties and issued 2,222 warnings or orders related to the Solid Waste Management By-law 20-221. Fees for services were applied to the tax roll for 22 non-compliant properties. A comparison of the By-law related activities between 2019 and 2020 is outlined in Table 4. There was a

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decrease in actions in 2020 as the result of MLEO redeployment to assist with Provincial Regulations/Orders and Municipal By-laws related to COVID-19.

	2019	2020
Solid Waste Management By-law service issues	6,053	5,564
By-law visits to parks and City properties	6,884	5,008
Illegal dumping on public property investigations	2,744	2,549
Warnings/orders related to By-law 20-221	2,706	2,222

Pillar #3 – Graffiti

Graffiti Program

As a result of COVID-19 impacts, two student MLEO positions in the Licensing and By-law Services Section, who were initially hired to implement the Graffiti Program during 2020, were redeployed to other work duties. A full-time MLEO was assigned to the Graffiti Program between May 1, 2020 and October 31, 2020. The focus of the Graffiti Program in 2020 was to contact property owners to see if existing complaints and orders had been complied with, as well as to work with the property owners to achieve compliance.

Pillar #4 – Beautification

Adopt-A-Park

Adopt-A-Park activities were limited because of social and physical distancing protocols due to COVID-19 impacts. In 2020, approximately 90 Adopt-A-Park volunteers provided park maintenance in 42 municipal parks across Hamilton. Their accomplishments included collecting litter in adopted parks, removing bulk items, picking up yard waste and tree planting. This program continues to engage park users and community groups to assist with park maintenance while taking pride and ownership of their community. The comparison of the Adopt-A-Park activities in 2019 and 2020 is outlined in Tables 1 and 2 above and shows that although the number of volunteers were lower in 2020, the number of hours each volunteer put in were higher which highlights their dedication to the program.

Hamilton in Bloom

The Hamilton in Bloom Traffic Island Sponsorship Program continued to be supported by local businesses and organizations in 2020. In total, 39 traffic islands were sponsored by 23 program sponsors with revenues of approximately \$45,250. This aided in offsetting operational costs in the Forestry and Horticulture Section of the Environmental Services Division.

Hamilton Trillium Awards Program

The Trillium Awards Program promotes and encourages community pride by recognizing residents' excellence in landscape design, maintenance and effort to beautify properties making a positive contribution to the City.

The Trillium Awards Program is coordinated by a volunteer committee. Due to COVID - 19 impacts in 2020, the Trillium Awards Program Committee introduced a digital format for the nomination process for the 2020 program. In a regular year, the Trillium Awards Program Committee would award hundreds of White Trillium Awards, 14 Pink Trillium Awards, up to 28 Awards of Excellence and the prestigious Red Trillium Award which would be presented at the annual Trillium Awards Celebration Event. In 2020, due to COVID-19 impacts, 384 properties across the City self-nominated for a White Trillium Award and of those, 202 properties received a White Trillium Award and 27 businesses won the Award of Excellence. The 2020 Program did not award Pink or Red Trillium Awards and the celebration event was not held.

Garden Shows - The Spring Tide Show

The Spring Tide Show was held for one day on March 13, 2020 and was immediately cancelled in response to health and safety regulations due to the COVID-19 pandemic closure. The one-day event drew 300 visitors compared to 11,500 visitors in 2019.

Garden Shows - The Fall Garden and Mum Show

While respecting COVID-19 health and safety guidelines, the Fall Garden and Mum Show was held from October 23, 2020 to November 1, 2020. The theme was adjusted to be a Thank You Frontline Workers event, which included amazing floral displays created by the City's Horticulture Section. The admission fee was waived for all visitors. Visitors were required to reserve tickets for hourly time slots through the City's online ticketing system. The event attracted 3,750 visitors in 2020, compared to 15,500 visitors in 2019. The floral displays included over 200 varieties of chrysanthemums and more than 100,000 blooms.

Waste Outreach and Education

School participation in the Waste Outreach and Education programs was minimal in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One in-person presentation was completed in 2020 prior to the lockdown as compared to 94 in 2019. City Staff have reached out to the school boards to investigate alternative methods and modes of delivery for educational classroom presentations through online and virtual formats.

Pillar #5 – Environmental Stewardship

Clean & Green Neighbourhood Grants

The Keep Hamilton Clean and Green (KHCG) Committee supports community-led initiatives by awarding small grants to individuals or community groups which have developed a project plan to keep their neighbourhood clean and green. A total of \$4,500 in grant funding was approved by the KHCG Committee in 2020 to 8 community groups to support grassroots environmental stewardship initiatives and special projects.

The projects included the following:

- Installation of pet waste receptacles at a cooperative housing complex including resident education to help keep their area clean;
- Replacing an impermeable surface with a green space as a de-paving initiative in the Barton Street BIA area;
- Improvements for a community garden in Flamborough;
- Construction of garden boxes at the Barton Public Library to create teaching and volunteer opportunities for children and youth;
- Engaging high school students to restore and replant native and pollinator gardens at the Green Venture EcoHouse property;
- Planting native trees in areas adjacent to alleyways and providing information and tools for residents to plant native plant species;
- Delivering educational programming at McQueston Urban Farm in partnership with local schools; and
- Planting pollinator and native plants at a community space in the downtown area, as well as installation of rain barrels to capture stormwater.

Each grant application was assessed and recommended for funding based on the merit of the initiative, the initiative's alignment to the Clean & Green Strategy, the anticipated level of community support and engagement and the overall use of public funds.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not applicable