




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 22, 2022
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Clean and Green Hamilton Strategy 2021 Year End Update (PW22023) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SUBMITTED BY:	Cynthia Graham Acting 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

Report PW22023 summarizes the 2021 Clean and Green Hamilton Strategy's accomplishments. The Clean and Green Hamilton Strategy contains five pillars including litter, illegal dumping, graffiti, beautification and environmental stewardship. Information included in Report PW22023 highlights the 2021 City of Hamilton (City) staff accomplishments within each pillar, and activities undertaken by local citizens, organizations and community groups whose work supports the goals of the Hamilton Clean and Green Strategy. Despite another year with pandemic restrictions, volunteer participation increased by 93% over 2020.

Pillar #1 – Litter

Litter Remediation Programs

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.

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The City coordinates and supports several volunteer initiatives, which include litter remediation programs, such as Team Up to Clean Up and Adopt-a-Park, 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 closures and associated physical distancing protocols throughout 2020 and 2021. Provincial guidelines changed rapidly and frequently throughout 2021, creating many challenges to overcome. Through the process of ongoing evaluation, staff worked diligently to provide flexible, modified programming to residents that were in alignment with provincial mandates. During lockdowns, City staff were supporting micro cleanups limited to those residing in the same household. With the intermittent closures of our Municipal Service Centers, staff continued to provide those supplies through porch delivery services.

The activity results from the City's litter remediation program in 2021 are not indicative of annual results that predate COVID-19; however, they demonstrate the dedication of community groups and individuals who actively participated in safe cleanup efforts during the pandemic. There were several citizens who were involved with ongoing cleanups throughout the year. In one example, a local youth partnered with the Royal Botanical Gardens Young Environmental Science Alliance to host an eco-walk, resulting in the collection of approximately 8.5 bags of garbage and 2.5 bags of recycling. This resident also organized a pumpkin recycling drive after Halloween and collected 7,257 kilos of pumpkins to donate to a local farmer. In another example, a citizen spent their vacation organizing and executing multi-week cleanups. This resident engaged 12 families and 30 individuals, collectively gathering approximately 40 bags of garbage throughout 12 of our City parks.

Community groups that typically organize large scale litter cleanups chose to either temporarily cancel or modify community cleanup events during 2021. Groups that proceeded with modified cleanups with support from the City include:

- Beautiful Alleys – a volunteer led group that engages community members to maintain and beautify alleyways, organized many modified events throughout the year, including a cleanup of the Emerald/Birge Alley where 1.5 tonnes of debris was collected.
- The Escarpment Project – due to COVID-19 restrictions, their annual cleanup in April was cancelled, however they supported families with supplies for individual cleanups limited to those residing in the same household.

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The 2021 results of litter remediation activities are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 – Team Up to Clean Up Program Summary (2021)				
Program Branch	Volunteers	Bags Collected (Garbage and Recycling)	Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours ¹
Team Up to Clean Up (including community-led initiatives)	3,673	4,136	7,249	\$169,844
Adopt-A-Park	138	414	828	\$19,400
Total	3,811	4,550	8,077	\$189,244

Despite the continued challenges respecting lockdowns and social distancing limitations, 2021 saw a 93% increase over 2020 in volunteer participation. Table 2 provides a comparative analysis of the economic value of volunteer efforts, specifically contrasting 2020 and 2021.

Table 2 - Economic Value of Volunteer Hours: A Comparative Analysis				
	2019	2020	2021	Difference 2020 vs. 2021
Volunteer Hours ²	56,749	4,185	8,077	+ 3,892
Economic Value of Volunteer Hours ¹	\$1,372,759	\$98,055	\$189,244	+ \$91,189

Ontario Day of Action on Litter

The Provincial Day of Action on Litter is observed on the second Tuesday of May each year in Ontario and was held on May 11, 2021. The City promoted this event through social media to encourage residents to prevent and reduce waste at home and in their community. Individuals took part in small local cleanups to help keep the environment clean and healthy.

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

² Combined total of volunteer hours between Team Up to Clean Up and Adopt-A-Park

Waste Reduction Week in Canada 2021

Waste Reduction Week in Canada was held between October 18 – 24, 2021. This event focused on the principles of circular economy, resource efficiency and waste reduction. In support of Waste Reduction Week, the City's Waste Management Division's Outreach Team hosted two free webinars titled Reduce Your Weekly Waste and Put Waste in the Right Place. The sessions focused on residential waste and provided an opportunity for residents to learn more about the City's waste programs and answer any questions they had.

Pillar #2 – Illegal Dumping

Municipal & Waste By-law Enforcement

Waste/Parks Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (MLEO) responded to 1,844 issues relating to illegal dumping on public property between January 1st and December 31st, 2021. In addition to the illegal dumping service matters, the Waste/Parks MLEOs responded to 4,706 requests for service, conducted 4,616 visits to parks or other City properties, and issued 1,344 warnings or orders related to the Solid Waste Management By-law 20-221. Fees for services were applied to the tax roll for 53 non-compliant properties. A comparison of the By-law related activities between 2019, 2020 and 2021 is outlined in Table 3. There was a decrease in actions in 2021 as the result of MLEO redeployment to assist with Provincial Regulations/Orders and Municipal By-laws related to COVID-19 and previous enforcement success. The Enforcement Team has made great progress in educating residents to change behaviours and enforcing contraventions of By-law 20-221, as a result there is a constant decrease in non-compliance.

	2019	2020	2021
Solid Waste Management By-law service issues	6,053	5,564	4,706
By-law visits to parks and City properties	6,884	5,008	4,616
Illegal dumping on public property investigations	2,744	2,549	1,844
Warnings/orders related to By-law 20-221	2,706	2,222	1,344

Pillar #3 – Graffiti

Graffiti Program

Two student MLEO positions were hired in 2021, which were involved with the proactive management of the Graffiti Program, supporting the graffiti Victim Assistance Program, and researching a new location for an additional Graffiti wall like the one in Woodland Park. The Municipal Law Enforcement Section actioned approximately 1,347 files pertaining to Graffiti in 2021, with the graffiti Victim Assistance issuing one gift certificate to a property owner for the purchase of supplies to remove the graffiti.

Pillar #4 – Beautification

Adopt-a-Park

Due to COVID-19 impacts, Adopt-a-Park activities were limited due to social and physical distancing protocols. In 2021, approximately 138 Adopt-a-Park volunteers provided park maintenance in 46 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. Please refer to Tables 1 and 2.

Hamilton Trillium Awards Program

The Trillium Awards Program promotes and encourages community pride by recognizing residents' excellence in landscape design, maintenance, and property beautification efforts that make a positive contribution to the City. The Trillium Awards Program is coordinated by a volunteer committee. In 2021, the Trillium Committee introduced a digital format for the nomination process, which helped to nominate 530 gardens across the City for consideration for a Trillium Award. With the support of City staff, the committee recruited and trained 111 volunteers who travelled throughout the City to score each nominated garden. Table 4 provides an overview of the awards administered in 2021.

Table 4 – 2021 Trillium Awards by Category	
White Trillium Award	280
Pink Trillium Award	14
Red Trillium Award	1
Community Trillium Award	25 Local Businesses

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Garden Shows - The Spring Tide Bulb Show

The Spring Tide Bulb Show was cancelled, although the Tropical Greenhouse remained open. A small bulb display was put on daily through the latter half of March and early part of April. This show was also cancelled after one day in 2020 due to COVID-19. Please see Table 4 for metrics from previous Spring Tide Show attendance.

2017	8129
2018	7780
2019	11,556
2020	300

Garden Shows - The Mum Show

While adhering to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines, the Fall Garden and Mum Show was held from October 22 - 31, 2021. The theme was 101st Anniversary, A Walk Down Memory Lane. The event attracted 12,123 visitors, compared to 3,750 visitors in 2020 and 15,500 visitors in 2019. The City's Horticulture Section recreated some of the most outstanding displays from the last 101 years. Floral displays included highlights from the Japanese Garden from the 70s, Mums and Steel from the 90s, A Walk in The Woods from the early 2000s, Once Upon A Toy from 2018, as well as many others. The displays included over 200 varieties of chrysanthemums and more than 100,000 blooms. The admission fee was waived for all visitors, as was the case for 2020. Visitors were required to reserve tickets for hourly time slots through the City's online ticketing system.

Waste Outreach and Education

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, staff were not able to hold in-person presentations, so they were replaced with virtual presentations and webinars. A new Waste Virtual Classroom was created for students, primarily grades 1 - 5, but can accommodate up to grade 8. The virtual classroom was introduced in the Fall and received 33 requests, reaching 858 students. The program will continue to be offered and promoted in 2022.

Community presentations were offered virtually with two webinars held during Waste Reduction Week. The Outreach Team also attended a few other virtual presentations and had the opportunity to speak to and educate residents about the City's waste programs, reaching over 200 residents.

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 who have developed a project plan to keep their neighbourhood clean and green. A total of \$4,830.91 in grant funding was approved by the KHCG Committee in 2021, distributed to 6 community groups and citizens for 8 projects to support grassroots environmental stewardship initiatives and special projects.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

N/A