

**Date:** 2023-06-21

**Subject:** **Measures for Beautification of Local Neighbourhoods (RM 60/2022)**

**Contact:** Razmin Said, Manager, Community Safety & Well-Being Office

**Report Number:** Community Services-2023-517

**Recommendations:**

1. That the report from Razmin Said, Manager, Community Safety & Well-Being Office (CSWO), dated June 21, 2023, to the Committee of Council Meeting of June 21, 2023, re: **Measures for Beautification of Local Neighbourhoods**, be received; and
2. That Council approve the strategy presented in the Neighbourhood Association Guide and the CSWO Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant; and
3. That Council direct staff to request the necessary funding needed for the Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant through the 2024 Budget submission.

**Overview:**

- **Measures for Beautification of Local Neighbourhoods is a Referred Matter (RM 60/2022) from December 12, 2022, related to motion C380-2022.**
- **The overall look and feel of neighbourhoods are often associated with perceptions of safety. Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program survey data (2018-2022) has shown that residents have expressed an interest in beautifying their local neighbourhoods as a means of enhancing safety and well-being.**
- **The Community Safety Action Plan identifies the development of a Neighbourhood Association Guide as a tactic to empower residents to take action.**
- **The Neighbourhood Association Guide will include a new source of funding through the CSWO called the 'Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant,'**

**for up to \$1500, for the purpose of beautification and enhancing the safety of local neighbourhoods.**

- **A community leader workshop will be scheduled following Council approval of the draft Neighbourhood Association Guide, to provide existing leaders and neighbourhood groups with the opportunity to collaborate in finalizing the Guide and validate what the CSWO has learned through previous engagements.**
- **Developing and implementing the Neighbourhood Association Guide aligns with the strategic direction that Brampton is a Healthy and Safe City.**

### **Background:**

Utilizing concepts of strategic and holistic planning, the strategy for beautifying local neighbourhoods and enhancing sense of belonging within the neighbourhood is built into the Neighbourhood Association Guide. The strategy focuses on the long-term safety and well-being benefits of social development and prevention levels of the Community Safety and Well-Being Planning Framework, rather than reactionary and incident-driven responses. Beautification, improved belonging, and greater connectedness within local neighbourhoods intends to create new opportunities for maintaining safety and well-being in Brampton and is a mechanism to proactively mitigate and reduce identified risks.

The physical character of a neighbourhood can impact the way people feel and interact, as well as provide several additional benefits to the community related to Brampton's Community Safety Action Plan (the Action Plan). Neighbourhood beautification benefits include:

- *Safety*: Improve perceptions of safety and neighbourhood well-being.
- *Awareness*: Serve as a base for helping residents connect and interact on common issues.
- *Empowerment*: Build neighbourhood pride, ownership, and stronger neighbourhood relationships as residents build capacity and social capital.

### **Current Situation:**

Using place-based approaches, the community is at the heart of this work. Through resident engagement from the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program, the CSWO heard that feeling safe, being connected to resources, and having a sense of belonging are important to creating positive impacts in neighbourhoods.

When the physical state of a neighbourhood shows visible signs of poor maintenance and unkemptness, the environment encourages anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, loitering, and further disorder. Research indicates a visually appealing community increases property values, attracts new residents, and improves the overall perception of neighbourhoods and one's interest in participating in neighbourhood initiatives.

Community safety and well-being is a collective responsibility, and there are vital roles for both leaders and partners. The measures for beautification of local neighbourhoods empower residents to become leaders in their own safety and well-being through the Neighbourhood Association Guide and the funding of up to \$1500 that will be made available through the CSWO Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant, following Council approval of the 2024 budget submission.

#### Neighbourhood Association Guide

The Neighbourhood Association Guide is a tactic identified in the Action Plan to serve as a tool for residents to gain tips and information for capacity building and establishing a network of neighbours to support working collectively to address and overcome safety and well-being concerns in their neighbourhoods.

The Neighbourhood Association Guide will launch in the spring of 2024 and aims to support groups of residents (minimum of five (5) residents, each from different households), governed by volunteers with a vested interest in improving the well-being of residents. The Guide will provide information on the following:

- CSWO Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant for up to \$1500 per Affiliated Neighbourhood Association
- Beautification, connectedness, sense of belonging, and safety measures
- Reducing barriers and increasing access
- Navigating systems and services
- Designing programs
- Collecting data, sharing, and reporting
- Participating in events
- Making connections

Measures for beautification to be outlined in the Neighbourhood Association Guide include projects for graffiti removal, painted neighbourhood trails, and various additional tips and tools for affiliated Neighbourhood Associations including resources such as gaining access to municipal space and municipal staff.

#### CSWO Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant

The CSWO recognizes the unique and valuable role neighbourhood groups can play in delivering projects that meet needs across their neighbourhood, complement City services, and contribute to advancing City's strategic directions.

Through the CSWO, an additional funding source to support local neighbourhood beautification will be developed with funds allocated through the 2024 budget process. Affiliated Neighbourhood Associations in Brampton will have the opportunity to apply for funding through the newly established Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant for projects related to beautification, cleanliness, and for taking proactive approaches to the upkeep of neighbourhood properties. Affiliated Neighbourhood Associations are eligible for up to \$1500 for collective beautification measures taken, or other projects or initiatives related to community safety and well-being, as reviewed and approved by the CSWO. Applications are expected to outline outputs, measures, and impacts, and align the project to the Community Safety Action Plan.

Using a phased approach, the 2024 Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant for up to \$1500 would be used for the following potential purposes:

- Organizing and holding neighbourhood meetings and walking tours to discuss neighbourhood vision and goals
- Organizing and conducting a neighbourhood assessment
- Organizing and running neighbourhood clean-up events (includes litter clean-up, graffiti removal, etc.)
- Organizing and running a painting event for neighbourhood waste receptacles
- Organizing and running a planting event for neighbourhood entrance flower beds
- Organizing, running, and delivering a neighbourhood trail painting event
- Reimbursing the cost of supplies and equipment for clean-ups, planting, painting, etc.
- Developing and implementing a neighbourhood maintenance plan
- Gaining access to available municipal space (i.e., Recreation Centres, City Hall campus, and parks, based on scheduling availability)
- Projects related to increasing the sense of belonging in the neighbourhood, through events such as street parties and street barbeques.

Potential opportunities for future iterations of the Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant could be associated with empowering neighbourhoods to take additional actions towards enhancing their surroundings.

Strategies for planting, planters, and items that require long-term maintenance will be made in consultation with the City of Brampton Parks Maintenance & Forestry division for a feasibility study and does not guarantee implementation.

The CSWO will evaluate the impacts on safety and well-being in neighbourhoods resulting from the Neighbourhood Association's collective measures on beautification, enhanced safety projects and will track outputs and outcomes as a measure for determining the success of the Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant.

The administration and delivery of the Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant will be discussed and validated with the community during the upcoming Community Leader Workshop.

### Upcoming Community Leader Workshop

Participation from residents in the process of finalizing the Neighbourhood Association Guide and potential uses for the Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant funding to Affiliated Neighbourhood Associations allows residents and stakeholders to be a part of the evolution of providing solutions and addressing and overcoming gaps related to neighbourhood-level interventions.

The CSWO will run a focus group workshop-style session with the roster of community leaders and existing Neighbourhood Associations identified through previous neighbourhood engagements, to gain insight and input into the Neighbourhood Association Guide and associated Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant available to affiliated Neighbourhood Associations.

### **Corporate Implications:**

#### Financial Implications:

There are no immediate financial implications directly associated with this report. Implementing the newly identified Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant will require an allocation of \$75,000 and additional funds needed for general liability coverage through the 2024 budget submission, subject to Council approval.

The CSWO will work with the Purchasing and Finance division for the procurement, tracking, receiving, and distribution of all supplies/materials that are required for the completion of projects through the Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant opportunity.

#### Other Implications:

##### *Strategic Communications:*

The CSWO will work with Strategic Communications to develop a communications plan for residents and stakeholders, including but not limited to digital and print assets, social media posts, and web updates.

##### *Insurance & Risk Management:*

The City will arrange to place general liability insurance coverage for those Neighbourhood Associations who are granted affiliation status and who qualify for this benefit under the CSWO affiliation requirements and eligibility, as identified in the Neighbourhood Association Guide.

### **Term of Council Priorities:**

This initiative supports the strategic direction that Brampton is a Healthy and Safe City by providing strategies for enhancing safety and well-being in neighbourhoods through measures for beautification of local neighbourhoods, whereby neighbourhoods with clean and beautified physical spaces will promote positive behaviours and improve

sense of belonging and connectedness, which aligns with the goals and safety, awareness, and empowerment focus areas of the Council approved Community Safety Action Plan.

**Conclusion:**

The CSWO aims to achieve an empowered and connected Brampton where everyone feels safe, has a sense of belonging, and has their needs met. Through the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program survey data analysis, the CSWO learned residents across Brampton want to enhance their neighbourhoods. Suggested actions for improvements include increased cleanliness, maintenance, and beautification. Understanding that safety and well-being is a collective responsibility, the Action Plan tactic of the Neighborhood Association Guide and the Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant proposed to be available through the CSWO highlights the commitment of the CSWO to work closely with residents, City staff, and community partners to enhance safety, share information, and take action. Beautification of local neighbourhoods is linked to the Action Plan as a targeted neighbourhood-level response to address safety concerns, ensure access to resources, and enhance one’s sense of belonging in the community. To move this work forward, staff are seeking approval of the draft Neighbourhood Association Guide (attached), the proposed Nurtured Neighbourhood Grant, and the measures for beautification of local neighbourhoods identified in this Report.

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**Attachments:**

Appendix A – Draft Neighbourhood Association Guide