

Baskets & Barrel Program Streetscape Beautification

Report to General Committee



Background

- Budget Direction to reduce cost by 50% in the Basket & Barrel Program in the 2009 program
- Directed to report back to General Committee on options to achieve the cost savings based on equitable approach town wide.








Origins of Program

- 1978 – started on Main Streets only- Unionville, Markham and Thornhill
- Contributions from BIA's to support program up until 2007
- Additional streets added over the years without any criteria to determine placement or beautification objectives
- 2008 – total program inventory 2,665



Opportunities/Challenges

Benefits of program:

-  beautification
-  Pedestrian friendly – encourage walking
-  Enhances cleanliness & encourages public to keep area clean & beautiful
-  Generate pride of place for residents
-  Aids in streetscape objectives



Challenges

- Costly relative to other horticulture and streetscape initiatives
- Cost drivers: double growing practice, daily watering
- Environmentally – unsustainable – maintenance, pollution from vehicles, fuel/labour intensive
- Lack of standards for placement
- Need to develop an integrated, sustainable horticulture program within a public realm initiative



Streetscape/Public Realm Considerations

- Reconfirm objectives – focus on outcomes: *“beautification in a sustainable way”*
- Focus on rebuilding/repositioning ‘*Baskets & Barrels Program*’ as a part of the Town’s Public Realm and Sustainability Framework
- Undertake to develop new sustainable program within a Public Realm Streetscape Initiative



Public Realm and Sustainability Framework

What is the Public Realm?

- The Public Realm can be defined as all publicly owned streets, sidewalks, rights-of-way, open spaces, parks, civic buildings and facilities and social networking spaces

What will be included in the Public Realm Plan?

- The Plan will explore key goals, neighbourhood character, streetscape design, heritage considerations and landscape elements. How public spaces compliment and interact with each other to the benefits of our residents. The plan will ensure that these components integrate with the sustainability goals of the 'Green Print' strategy for Building Markham's Future Together.



Sustainability Plan

- Create an integrated horticulture plan for public spaces within a public realm program
- Elements to consider:
 - Perennials
 - Self watering planters
 - Plant selection
 - Permanent beds
 - Tree canopy
 - Entrance features



Sustainability Plan





Sustainability Plan






Options




Option One: *Budget Committee Variation*

-  Reducing number from 2,652 to 1,232
-  Criteria – equal reductions in all areas

Option Two: *Maximize Service levels and Visual Impacts - recommended option*

-  Reducing number from 2,652 to 1,493 units
-  Opportunity to re-engage BIA's
-  Pilot sustainable permanent planting beds

Option Three: *Original Program*

-  Reducing number from 2,652 to 878
-  Opportunity to re-engage BIA's
-  Pilot sustainable permanent planting beds



BIA Streetscape



Next Steps

- Communicate with BIA's
- Develop sustainable plan for 2010
- Communication plan

