



**TO: Development and Infrastructure Committee**  
**FROM: Capital Works**  
**SUBJECT: Report providing information regarding opportunities to establish an Itabashi garden/park**

Report Number: CW-09-16                      Wards Affected: 3,4

File Numbers: 575-15

Date to Committee: April 19, 2016                      Date to Council: May 9, 2016

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**Recommendation:**

For information only.

**Purpose:**

Respond to staff direction.

On September 29, 2014, Council approved the following staff direction:

Direct the Director of the Capital Works Department to investigate opportunities to establish an Itabashi garden/park in the City of Burlington to commemorate the 25 year twinning relationship with the City of Itabashi, Japan and report back to the Development and Infrastructure Committee in 2015 on the potential location, costing and timing (SD-25-14).

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**Background:**

In May of 1989, the City of Burlington signed a twinning agreement with the City of Itabashi, Japan. Over the years, various exchanges and programs have taken place between Itabashi and Burlington, and relations between the cities have flourished on all levels. The twinning relationship has been demonstrated through regular citizen visits, official delegations, special gift exchanges and memorable anniversary celebrations.

The following are gifts received from Itabashi:

- Peace Memorial Statue - City Hall (lower level)
- Itabashi Bridge, Itabashi Way and Sakura (cherry) trees along Itabashi Way - Tansley Woods
- Sakura (cherry) trees and limestone walkway - Spencer Smith Park

- Red Crowned Crane In Grasses, by Robert Bateman - City Hall (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)
- Japanese Tortoise and Crane - Art Gallery of Burlington (hallway)
- Burlington Clock - City Hall
- Enomoto Rhododendron Garden - Paletta Mansion
- Cherry Tree - Roly Bird Park

Establishing a garden/park to commemorate a twinning relationship has been undertaken with Apeldoorn, the Netherlands. As a result of the October 2007 visit to Apeldoorn, Burlington Council approved a program where Burlington and Apeldoorn would participate in an exchange of design services leading to a park development in each of the sister cities. Therefore, Apeldoorn Park was constructed and opened in 2014 in Burlington and Burlington Park was opened in Apeldoorn in 2015.

At the September 3, 2014 meeting of the Mundialization Committee, members approved a motion to pursue the opportunity of establishing an Itabashi park/garden in the City of Burlington to commemorate the 25 year twinning relationship with Itabashi, Japan. This motion was supported by Council and formed the basis of the staff direction for report CW-09-16.

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## **Discussion:**

### **Cultural Action Plan**

The Cultural Action Plan supports the development of cultural nodes or clusters striving for:

- Vibrant neighbourhoods throughout Burlington with visible identity supported through public art, cultural nodes or clusters.
- Enhance the use of public spaces and achieve a higher level of satisfaction with public spaces.
- Cultural clusters that create a critical mass of cultural activity in specific geographic areas.

Further, the plan envisioned the expansion of cultural nodes in Burlington with enhanced visibility in parks and around community facilities such as recreation centres through:

- Consideration for the use of unique landscaping and/or techniques to maintain appealing greenspace and enhanced passive entertainment for users of neighbourhood nodes.

The establishment of a Japanese garden is consistent with actions identified in the Cultural Action Plan.

## Mundialization Committee Vision

City staff met with the Chair of the Committee and Chair of the Itabashi sub-Committee to clarify the Committee’s vision for an Itabashi garden/park. The following is a summary of the Committee’s preferences:

- Name a park after Itabashi and develop in a Japanese garden theme
- Re-name a park and redevelop in a Japanese garden theme
- Develop a garden in an existing park or community centre
- Large enough to host events
- Develop garden/park and/or have a commitment from Council to develop the garden in time for the 30<sup>th</sup> commemoration of the twinning in 2019.

City staff also took the opportunity to discuss with the Chair and sub-Chair selection considerations to be used by staff to identify and evaluate the feasibility of potential sites. In addition to park sites, staff agreed to look at storm water pond areas as potential sites. This initial meeting helped guide staff’s exploration of opportunities for a Japanese garden/park.

### Strategy/Process

The following chart provides site considerations used to identify and evaluate potential sites for a Japanese garden/park:

Selection Considerations	Description
Potential for naming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there barriers to renaming the park</li> <li>• Feasibility to name a feature in the park or community centre</li> <li>• Anticipation of acceptance by the community</li> </ul>
Funding availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is funding identified in capital budget for park development/enhancements?</li> <li>• Is funding identified for park repair and renewal?</li> </ul>
Compatibility to other park uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there features in the park (e.g. sport field lights) that would compromise the character of a Japanese garden</li> <li>• Are there sufficient buffers to incorporate a garden into the overall park design</li> <li>• Is the garden displacing an existing use</li> </ul>
Maximization of exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the park or garden area promote visitors over the entire year</li> <li>• What site maximizes exposure of garden/park to the public</li> </ul>
Visually accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the garden visually accessible for safety and</li> </ul>

	security
Spatial fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the area large enough to achieve a meaningful garden</li> </ul>
Existing amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are washrooms available</li> <li>• Is parking available</li> <li>• Are services such as water, electrical supply available</li> </ul>
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the anticipated costs to develop features ( e.g. water)</li> <li>• Anticipated operating impacts</li> </ul>

Options Considered

Using the selection considerations, staff identified 11 potential sites including an option to purchase land specifically for the purpose of establishing an Itabashi Park. The sites included:

- Tansley Woods Community Centre
- Tansley Woods Woodlot
- Burloak Regional Waterfront Park
- General Brock Surplus School Site
- Orchard Community Park
- Ireland Community Park
- Brant Hills Community Park
- City View Park
- Lampman Park Storm Water Management Pond
- Alton Storm Water Management Ponds
- New Park purchased for this purpose

At the February 3, 2016 meeting of the Mundialization Committee staff made a presentation and facilitated a discussion with the intent of further defining the Committee’s vision for an Itabashi garden/park. The following information was presented:

- Photo images of gardens in Itabashi
- Photo images of Japanese garden types for inspiration
- Analysis of the 11 potential sites

As a result of discussions, the Committee narrowed their focus to 3 preferred sites for further consideration. The preferred sites are presented in order of preference including:

- Tansley Woods Community Centre – courtyard area behind the main lobby (refer to Appendix A- Tansley Woods Courtyard)
- Brant Hills Community Park – front lawn area between Brant St. and the berm (refer to Appendix B- Brant Hills Community Park)
- City View Park – area in proximity to storm water ponds and proposed park pavilion ( refer to Appendix C- City View Park)

Staff also presented an option to purchase land for the purpose of establishing an Itabashi Park. The Committee agreed the costs associated with purchasing land were prohibitive to this option.

The following chart provides the location, pros and cons for each site:

Site	Pros	Cons
Tansley Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heightened awareness of the garden with year round exposure of the garden from inside spaces of the community centre</li> <li>• Community rooms and lobby area could be used to host cultural events</li> <li>• Supporting amenities such as washrooms and parking are available</li> <li>• Water and electrical services for garden development are in close proximity</li> <li>• Courtyard provides a more enclosed environment and protection for plants associated with Japanese gardens</li> <li>• Year round staff presence</li> <li>• In similar fashion to the bridge, the garden could be named the Itabashi Garden</li> <li>• The garden would enhance the cultural hub established with the Itabashi bridge and street name Itabashi Way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courtyard area and slope used in summer for day camps</li> <li>• Courtyard is available for rentals</li> <li>• Area identified is relatively small and constrained by the existing courtyard and walkway</li> <li>• Site does not lend itself to a garden that you could walk through</li> <li>• Courtyard has been recently renewed limiting the garden expansion into the courtyard</li> </ul>
Brant Hills Community Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good visual exposure from Brant Street and driveway leading to the community centre</li> <li>• Supporting amenities such as washrooms and parking are available</li> <li>• Community rooms could be used to host cultural events</li> <li>• Proposed area is larger in size with potential to establish a garden that could be walked through and contain built forms such as a pavilion</li> <li>• Year round staff presence</li> <li>• RPM staff located on site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't have a strong visual or spatial connection to the community centre</li> <li>• Water and electrical services for garden development are further away from sources</li> <li>• Area backs onto existing uses that may detract from the tranquil character of a Japanese garden</li> <li>• Site is more exposed to winter conditions</li> </ul>
City View Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park pavilion including public washrooms is projected to be constructed in 2019</li> <li>• Parking is available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location is relatively isolated making it less visually accessible from Kerns Rd. &amp; Dundas St.</li> <li>• Limited washroom facilities</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storm water pond provides a ready made water feature</li> <li>• Potential integration of the garden in the site works for the park pavilion</li> </ul>	<p>available until pavillion is constructed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storm water pond will require maintenance to dredge which would be undesirable for the garden character</li> <li>• NEC approval would be required for an amendment to the park plan</li> <li>• Maintenance requirement characteristics of a Japanese garden differ from the naturalized character of the park</li> <li>• Site is very exposed to winter conditions</li> <li>• Staff isn't present year round</li> </ul>
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Each of the three sites identified provide unique opportunities and potentials to establish a Japanese garden. Considering the pros and cons identified, Tansley Woods and Brant Hills provide the most feasible opportunities to develop a garden.

Given the analysis of these sites, staff believes the Tansley Woods courtyard provides the most feasible option to develop an Itabashi garden. This is based on the site's year round exposure to the public, the synergies between the indoor and outdoor spaces, connection to other Itabashi elements and a more sheltered environment to establish the type of plant material typical of the garden type.

Committee members were also asked to review the photo images and provide their favorite images they believed were the most inspirational to influence the design concept. These images will be the starting point for design of an Itabashi garden.

**Financial Matters:**

It is difficult to definitively identify the costs to develop a Japanese garden without knowing the complexity of features to be included in the design and total understanding of the site opportunities and constraints.

The following chart provides the range of construction costs associated to the two potential sites and by complexity of garden development:

Site	Complex garden development including water features, rock feature, structures and planting	Less complex garden development including rock feature, dry pond, and planting
Tansley Woods CC (approx. 600m <sup>2</sup> )	\$150,000 to \$200,000	\$100,000 to \$150,000
Brant Hills (approx. 1000m <sup>2</sup> )	\$250,000 to \$300,000	\$150,000 to \$200,000

### Total Financial Impact

The maintenance requirements of a Japanese themed garden will vary due to the complexity of the garden. Roads and Parks Maintenance anticipate the range of annual labor costs to be \$6,500 to \$9,000 per year and \$1,500 to \$3,500 per year for material.

### Source of Funding

Funding for the development of an Itabashi garden is not currently identified in the Capital Budget and Forecast.

Potential funding sources include:

- Park Dedication Reserve Fund (PDRF)
- Section 37 – funding for community benefits
- Corporate sponsorship & community fund raising campaign

Should Council decide to proceed with the development of an Itabashi garden, staff has prepared the following recommendations:

Endorse the Tansley Woods courtyard as the preferred location for a commemorative Itabashi garden; and

Direct the Executive Director of Capital Works and the Director of Roads and Parks Maintenance to consider inclusion of an Itabashi garden in both the 2017 Capital Budget and 2018-2026 Forecast and corresponding operating budget.

### Other Resource Impacts

Not applicable

### **Environmental Matters:**

The design of the Itabashi garden will take this into consideration, as well as City policies and Provincial regulations, to ensure the implementation is undertaken with regard to acceptable environmental practices.

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### **Public Engagement Matters:**

To-date public engagement on the opportunities for an Itabashi garden has been limited to discussions with the Mundialization Committee.

Public engagement will be a component of the preferred Itabashi garden location anticipated to have a public participation goal of “Inform” in order to:

- Provide the public with balanced and objective information on how the site was selected and identify components of the proposed garden
- Identify ways the community can become involved with the ongoing maintenance of the garden through participation or volunteering
- Opportunities to be informed of the project’s progress

Promotional materials will be developed for use on the City’s web page, in City Talk and the Live & Play Guide.

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### **Conclusion:**

The implementation of an Itabashi garden is consistent with objectives of the Cultural Action Plan and commemoration of a twinning relationship, as demonstrated through the development of Apeldoorn Park. Given the analysis of these sites, staff believes the Tansley Woods courtyard provides the most feasible option to develop an Itabashi garden.

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Respectfully submitted,

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**Appendices:**

- a. Tansley Woods Courtyard
- b. Brant Hills Community Park
- c. City View Park

**Notifications:** (after Council decision)

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