

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Community Services Committee  
**Report From:** Adam Parsons  
**Meeting Date:** September 21, 2022  
**Report Code:** CS-22-122  
**Subject:** Commemorative Forest Monument Location and Concept Design

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-22-122 respecting the Commemorative Forest Monument, the Community Services Committee recommends that City Council approves the location and design of the Commemorative Forest Monument in Harrison Park.

### Highlights:

- In 2021, the Memorial Tree Program was modified to the Commemorative Tree Program.
- 15 Commemorative Trees have been donated in 2022.
- A central monument will provide a location for donors to be acknowledged with a personalized plaque.
- Once constructed, an annual event to celebrate donors and trees in Owen Sound will be brought forward for September 2023

### Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Green City - KR1 - Offset 100 tonnes of CO2 per year by annually planting 100 hardwood tree species

## **Previous Report/Authority**

[CS-21-010 Memorial Tree Program- Proposed Restructuring](#)

### **Background:**

In 2021, the City restructured the memorial tree program into a Commemorative Forest Program model [CS-21-010 Memorial Tree Program- Proposed Restructuring](#).

This new Memorial Tree Program will:

- Prevent over-crowding of trees in popular locations;
- Promote more even distribution of trees throughout the City's parks and trails;
- Permit staff to plan resources and optimize planting timing for each tree species;
- Permit staff to select native tree species that are best suited to soil microclimate and light conditions specific to each location;
- Allow for a long term approach when selecting tree species considering the tree's requirements over its entire lifecycle, including typical crown diameter, height, and growing habit;
- Provides for a central monument commemorating the contribution in a centralized location, reducing the duty for perpetual care of plaques and markers at the base of trees in parks settings is eliminated;
- Require less frequent customer contact related to each individual request, as planting locations will be arranged by the City and follow up contact related to plaque purchases and installation will be reduced;
- Avoid creating negative experiences in the future for donors when trees planted too close together don't mature evenly or with the classic characteristics of a chosen tree species;

The proposed change in fee under the new program ensures the memorial forest program covers the City's cost to deliver.

Funding for the construction of a central monument for the Commemorative Forest program is included as a part of the City's approved 2023 capital budget at a cost of \$20,000. The detail sheet for project 23D.14 is included with this report as attachment 1.

The purpose of this report is to set out a recommended location for the central monument along with the general design.

## **Analysis:**

### **Location**

Harrison Park is classified as a City park with more than 40 hectares of streams, trails, gardens, playgrounds, forests and green space in the heart of Owen Sound. The park has several distinct areas that offer varying amenities and features, including the west park entrance and meadow, the Pleasure grounds (island), the Inn, band shell and rink area, pool area, Weaver Creek boardwalk, community hall, tennis court, and open area, campground, waterfowl area, mile drive, toboggan hill and Harrison Park extension.

Harrison Park is one of the area's greatest attractions, retaining the natural beauty and rustic charm that have drawn generations of people to its gates. Harrison Park is a designated cultural heritage landscape under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The area of the proposed commemorative forest monument is outside of the area covered by the heritage designation. The Park is classified as a "City Park" in the Recreation, Parks & Facilities Master Plan by definition, providing unique, specialized recreational facilities and services, serving users from throughout the City. Based on data collected, it is estimated that the park welcomes 493,500 visitors by vehicle and 1,110 walkers each year.

The location proposed for a central monument for the Commemorative Forest Program, indicated on the air photo below, is in the area east of the fitness trail, north of the base of the toboggan hill. This is adjacent to a well-travelled recreational trail.



## Construction of a Central Monument

The new program allows donors to have their contribution acknowledged 15cmx 15cm individualized plaque.

A basic concept design to determine scale and location has been drafted in-house. Using the concept as a starting point, a detailed design by a landscape architect was contemplated and included in the capital budget request.

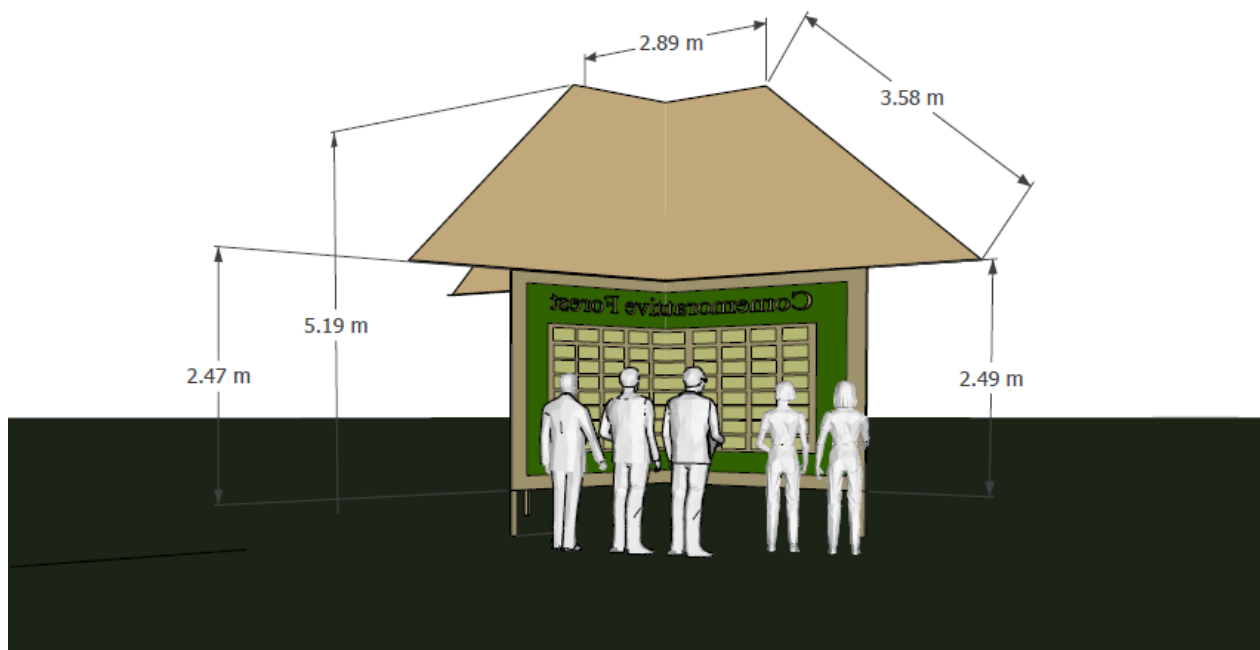
Detailed design can be completed over winter, with construction anticipated in Q2 2023.

### Concept Design

An image of the concept design below is to scale in the proposed location of a close up of the concept, demonstrating general design elements and scale compared to human figures.

**Image 1.**

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Each year, there would be a commemoration ceremony in September to acknowledge and celebrate the donations in the monument area. The public and donors and families, and friends would be invited to this event.

## **Approvals required**

The proposed location is an area that is part of Harrison Park but within the geographic Township of Georgian Bluffs and regulated by NEC development control. Permits from the Township may be required to construct the monument, and an NEC development permit will also be required. GSCA may also require a Permit for the placement of the structure in this area.

## **Financial Implications:**

\$20,000 included in the approved 2023 Capital Budget, including \$2,500 for design and \$17,500 for construction.

## **Communication Strategy:**

This Report

Each year there will be a celebration and acknowledgment of the donations made public. This supports the City's ongoing designation as a Tree City of the World. Information on the program is on the website and will be updated with information on the central monument.

## **Consultation:**

Community Services Committee Via this report.  
Director of Community Services

## **Attachments:**

1. 23D.14 Capital Detail Sheet

## **Recommended by:**

Adam Parsons, Manager of Parks and Open Space  
Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services

## **Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Adam Parsons, Manager of Parks and Open Space at [aparsons@owensound.ca](mailto:aparsons@owensound.ca) or 519-376-1440 x 1221.