Date April 16, 2019          Report No. 2019-82

To   Chair and Members
     Committee of the Whole, Operations and Administration

From  Sandy Jackson
       General Manager, Community programs, Parks and Recreation

1.0  Type of Report

Consent Item  [ ]
Item For Consideration  [x]

2.0  Topic  Brantford Food Forest Report [Financial Impact – None]

3.0  Recommendation

A. THAT Staff report CPREC 2019-082, Brantford Food Forest BE RECEIVED; and

B. THAT the Brantford Food Forest Project BE APPROVED at Parson’s Park; and

C. THAT staff BE DIRECTED to continue to work with the Brantford Food Forest Committee to finalize and approve the project design and maintenance plan; and

D. THAT staff BE DIRECTED to ensure that project costs to develop the food forest do not exceed funds that have been raised by the Brantford Food Forest Committee; and

E. THAT staff BE DIRECTED to enter into a license agreement for the Brantford Food Forest Project in a form approved by the City Solicitor or her designate.
4.0 **Purpose and Overview**

To report back to City Council with a progress update on the Brantford Food Forest Project.
5.0 **Background**

At the City Council meeting of September 18\(^{th}\), 2018 the following recommendations were approved by Council;

A. *THAT Staff report CPREC2018-024 Brantford Food Forest, BE RECEIVED; and*

B. *THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to conduct a public information center (PIC) regarding the potential for construction of a food forest in Parson’s Park and report back on the outcome of the public information centre (PIC); and*

C. *THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to work with the Food Forest Naturally Connected group to develop a budget estimate for the purposes of establishing a fundraising goal for the Food Forest Group to achieve prior to the commencement of a project; and*

D. *THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to review and approve the proposed Food Forest design and maintenance plan for Parson’s Park should the public consultation show support for this location; and*

E. *THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to develop a Food Forest Policy and License Agreement for future consideration by City Council.*

6.0 **Corporate Policy Context**

Community Strategic Plan Goal #2: High Quality of Life & Caring for All Citizens by providing well-maintained cultural and heritage assets.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan suggested the following;

- Consider new and emerging types of active and passive outdoor recreation facilities with priority to community-based proposals.

7.0 **Input From Other Sources**

Staff worked closely with the Brantford Food Forest Committee drafting this report.

The report was reviewed by the City’s Legal Department.
8.0 Analysis

8.1 PIC

A Public Information Centre was held for the Brantford Food Forest Project on December 12th, 2018 at Bellview Public School. The evening was attended by members of the Brantford Food Forest committee, City staff and area residents. A total of approximately 20 people attended the event and shared positive thoughts and ideas regarding the project and the proposed location in Parson’s Park located at 160 Ontario Street.

City staff displayed conceptual images of the proposed park including the suggested location of the Food Forest within Parson’s Park. Examples of other local Food Forest projects were also on display to give people an understanding of the concept of a food forest, what they look like and what they typically contain.

8.2 Next Steps

The next steps in the Food Forest project include a staff review of the maintenance plan for the project as developed by the Brantford Food Forest Committee and finalization and approval of the design plan which will include estimated project costs. Staff will also ensure confirmation of sufficient funding provided by the Brantford Food Forest Committee for the completion of the project, and development of a Food Forest Policy and License agreement will be brought back to Council for approval.

8.3 Food Forest Committee

The Brantford Food Forest Committee is currently comprised of four core members and 11 members at large. This committee composition provides a good starting point and should be sufficient to undertake the tasks involved in developing and maintaining a food forest project.

Timing for initiating the Food Forest project is sensitive to the spring planting season as members are anxious to get plans completed and plants into the ground. Once approved the project would be monitored by City staff who will provide guidance and advice to the group.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 Funding
Financial implications of the project and associated fund raising efforts by the Food Forest Committee are outlined below. The final design of the food forest has not been completed and staff is currently consulting with designer who has vast experience developing food forest projects in neighbouring communities. The Food Forest consultant would be retained by the City and will work with staff to finalize a design in collaboration with the Food Forest Committee. Project costs including the cost of the design are the responsibility of the Brantford Food Forest Committee.

Information shared with staff by the Food Forest Committee outlines the following funding secured to date for the project;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Brant Community Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$900</td>
<td>Wilfrid Laurier University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$321</td>
<td>Go Fund Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$350</td>
<td>Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11,571</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Costs associated with the Food Forest Project construction will not impact the operational budget of the department, however staff time will be required to oversee the project including design plans and providing guidance to the group on an ongoing basis. The ongoing operating costs are the responsibility of the Food Forest Committee. The current fund-raising efforts as outlined above represent sufficient funding to initiate the Food Forest project design and construction.

10.0 Conclusion

The Brantford Food Forest Project in Parson’s Park demonstrates strong environmental stewardship and aligns with a green infrastructure incentive as outlined in the City’s Strategic Plan. The Brantford Food Forest Committee has been responsive to staff guidance and continues to demonstrate a strong desire to undertake and complete this project. The factors which will determine the project’s success will be the ability to obtain ongoing financial support to maintain the food forest in addition to continued commitment by the volunteer group.

Staff supports the Brantford Food Forest project and look forward to working closely with the committee to develop this program and establish this new food resource for our community.
In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required [ ] yes [x] no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk [ ] yes [x] no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? [ ] yes [x] no