

Gardening Report, August & September, 2025

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On the whole things have gone well - and been busy - the last two months. The gardens were all kept well watered through the dryness of late summer, we've survived mulch madness in September (the volunteers trundled 5 cubic yards of mulch to 4 gardens and our two food tree plantings in ten days), we've put on four public events, and there's a fair bit of news on the new project front.

The Pickable Commons Gardens

The herb garden, berry patch, and Lewis Commons are all flourishing and are being well used - and the passing pedicab driver patter at the berry patch is getting more entertaining by the week. (We are now getting pointed out as a sight to tourists: "And *these* are some of our community gardeners.") Lewis Commons has been thickly planted with edible greens for winter and early spring harvesting.

The Allotments

Each allotment garden has received a card which allows any member to dispose of green waste at the City's Rock Bay Depot, whether or not they live in a building that pays for City green waste service. Each of our commons gardens has also received a card, so that volunteers who live in condos and apartments can also deliver green waste to the closer site, rather than having to go to Hartland.

A priority this fall will be shifting the allotments at Huntingdon Hotel and Suites into a self-governing model similar to that used at the other two allotments.

New Projects

Garden at Irving Park: In the last report, I mentioned that New Horizons had indicated that it was not interested in renewing the license of occupation for the garden in Irving Park along the side of their building, and that the City had asked the JBNA whether they would take it on. New Horizons has now decided they can continue to operate a garden there and reapplied for a license, so that garden will, presumably, remain under their management.

The Rithet Street Butterfly Garden: The detailed design proposal for this garden has been submitted to the City. We have received permission to proceed with the engagement portion of the project, the next step. A sign has gone up at the site and we will be dropping a letter to as many residents as we can access on Rithet and one block in each direction on South Turner, explaining the plan and asking for comments. We will also be at the site for an hour or two one afternoon so people can talk to us in person.

The Croft Street Boulevard: We are exploring the possibility of creating a small boulevard garden on Croft near Simcoe which will, among other things, offer better protection for the base of a large Garry Oak tree.

Events

All four events during this period went smoothly. The last herb garden 'open house' of the year drew 12 people, 9 of whom were keeners who wanted the full tour and lots of information. The fall plant swap had a steady stream of 'customers' for the entire two hours, lots of people brought in plants to trade, and we brought in a little over \$450 in donations, a bit more than last year.

Both Get Growing events, the seedling distribution and mulch day (photo below by Holly Sellers) also went well, so all our contracted Get Growing responsibilities have been completed for 2025.

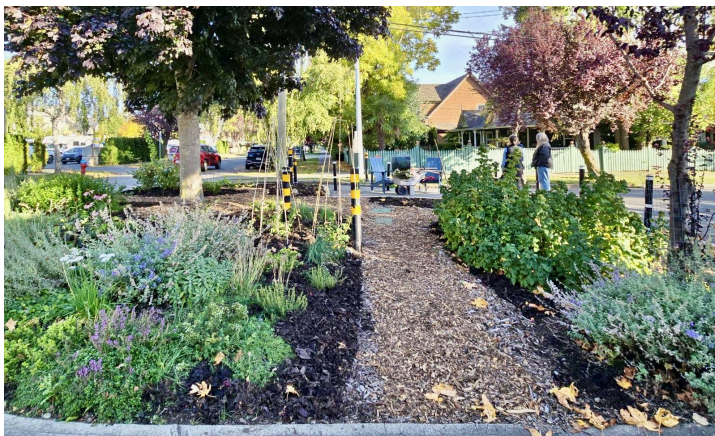


Community Connections

We once again provided Get Growing food plants to Heron House (Garth Homer Society) and the James Bay Community Project through our neighbourhood distribution.

The Usual

Also still running four work parties per week (weather permitting), writing Beacon columns, and attending Urban Food Table meetings.



The berry patch, all smartened up with leaf mulch and fresh wood chips on the paths. Photo by Ann Smith.

