

City to renovate two parks

BY ISAAC OLSON

With approximately \$1 million set aside in the capital works budget for park renovations, Côte St. Luc officials will focus largely on revamping Nathan Shuster and Richard Schwartz parks by mid-summer or early fall.

The plan is to enhance the nature area and walkability of Shuster Park (located between Wallenberg and Collins roads), according to Mitchell Brownstein, the councillor responsible for the city's Parks and Recreation department. The goal, he said, will be to upgrade the walkways, replace some of the play structures and to add in a stream or pond. More colours, he said, such as flowers, will be incorporated along with better lighting.

"We want it to be a place that people can feel comfortable walking through day or night," said Brownstein. "Every park is vital to the quality of life in the community. Parks are used by people of all ages, so it's important for us to maintain and upgrade our parks."

Schwartz Park is on Côte St. Luc Rd., just west of the Smart Ave. intersection. The park, said Brownstein, will keep fea-

tures such as the skating rink and splash pool, but the playground equipment will be replaced as the current play structures are getting old. The hope, he said, is to also have a community garden installed, but the city will first be hosting a "place-making exercise" with officials and residents to see what people want in the park.

The city has already hosted a place-making exercise in Shuster Park, according to the councillor in charge of Public Works, Steven Erdelyi. Rather than meeting in a boardroom to discuss plans, the place-making exercise gives officials a chance to take a close look at a park alongside the residents who use it, hearing exactly what people want or envision for the area while creating a plan that maximizes the available space to "make it a place that everybody will want to visit."

Erdelyi said the city has been trying to renovate a park or two a year while continuing to do smaller projects in others. Along with adding features that make the space attractive to people of all ages, he said the city is also looking to modernize the playground areas by including up-to-date play structures and, possibly, a new play surface, which could be wood chips



Councillors want to add a community garden to Richard Schwartz Park.

Photo: Isaac Olson

or possibly a synthetic material rather than sand.

The place-making exercise for Schwartz Park will take place in the next few weeks, said Erdelyi, and he encourages interested residents to contact the city council's office to get involved.

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ing he's will not release the name of the chosen app until the details are finalized.

People will still be able to manually call in non-emergency public works issues like a broken bench or graffiti-stained playground. Emergency issues, such as a water main break or a malfunctioning traffic light, should still be immediately reported to Public Security.

When it comes to minor issues, the app will make the process easier for officials and the resident because it will help speed up the time it takes to make a report and reduce duplicate reports, said Erdelyi. In the past, four different people would call in a burnt-out streetlamp, giving varying indications as to its location, and four work orders would be generated. Then, he said, when the resident tried to track the progress of that repair, it was often difficult to get an answer.

This new system, he said, will automatically keep track of which problems have already been reported and the app will be updated when the problem is repaired.

Residents will be able to snap a photo and then upload it to the app, and because the app is cloud based, residents can check either on their mobile device or home computer to see if the issue has been repaired.

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