



## OSHAWA COUNCIL PAVES PARADISE TO PUT UP A PARKING LOT

Last year, in one of the only times Oshawa Mayor Dan Carter used his Big City Mayor powers, he ordered the creation of a Monument to Fallen Firefighters, at a cost of \$600,000.

Along with staff support, the decision was made to locate the monument in the crown jewel of Oshawa's 130 parks, The Oshawa Botanical Garden.

The Gardens boasts one of most beautiful and natural landscapes anywhere in Ontario, featuring hundreds of different plant species, including hostas, day lily's, Japanese maple trees, a waterfall, the Memory Garden, a beautiful arched bridge, and all with the Oshawa Creek running through the centre.

The Botanical Gardens is also home to the Annual Peony Festival, which was named on Ontario's Top 100 Festivals and Events list 13 years running, and an ivy wall that runs nearly all around the 80-year-old Kinsmen Stadium.

Now, Council and staff intend to rip up the grass lawn in the Memory Garden, with its Roman pillars and classic cupola, (one of the top spots in Oshawa for wedding photos), and replace it with a concrete and stone monument.

Meanwhile several hundred yards away sits Firehall #1 with a perfect location for the statue already landscaped and on one of the busiest streets in Oshawa, directly in front of the Firehall.

The question must be asked why the city would elect to spend \$600,000, much of it in site preparation, when an existing site already exists?

Local councillor for Ward 4 Rick Kerr claims they relied on staff's recommendation, and that the two Oshawa Rotary Clubs who funded the arched bridge and the Memory Garden cupola and pillars were notified of the change, but no one from Rotary is responding.

"In my opinion, this is just another instance of Oshawa Council and staff just ignoring the wishes of local residents in favour of their pet projects", says Hugh Nicholson,

President of Elgin Garden's Condominium which sits across the street from the Proposed location of the Memorial.

"The city preaches net zero and has moved to electric vehicles and buses, but at the same time is tearing up grass and replacing it with concrete. How does that help the carbon footprint?"

"It's an election year, so I guess Council and City staff feel \$3000 a vote for the 200 local firefighters and their families is worth the investment.

Given that Councillor and Mayoral candidate Jim Lee who made the motion is an ex-firefighter and who has a son on the Service, its hard not to be cynical about this move.

Meanwhile, one of the few heritage sites and natural landscapes in a city notorious for tearing down its heritage buildings, is about to be spoiled.

### One metre matters:

#### Drivers reminded to give cyclists space

Whitby, Ontario—A little space makes a big difference. The Region of Durham reminds drivers to leave at least one metre of space when passing or travelling alongside people on bicycles to improve safety for everyone using the road. Through Durham Vision Zero, the Region works with road safety partners to reduce collisions, road fatalities and injuries, with the goal of zero people killed or injured on Durham roads.

Under Ontario's Highway Traffic Act, drivers must maintain a minimum one-metre distance when passing a cyclist travelling in the same direction. When necessary and safe to do so, drivers may cross the centre line, provided they follow all rules of the road. If it is not safe to pass, drivers should remain behind the cyclist until it can be done safely.

Cyclists are not required to leave a one-metre gap, but they must obey all traffic laws. Staying alert, maintaining awareness of surrounding vehicles, and safe positioning on the roadway are key to reducing risk.

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