

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA

REPORT NO. CSD-2025-0001

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF
COUNCIL**

January 15, 2025

SUBJECT: 2025 Updated Recommendations for Priority Capital Improvements in Cemeteries

1. RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council receive Report No. CSD-2025-0001 dated January 15, 2025 prepared by the Community Services Department for 2025 Updated Recommendations for Priority Capital Improvements in Cemeteries;
2. That Council approve redirecting previously approved funds in the amount of \$42,000 for foundation walls at Keswick Cemetery, towards the purchase of two (2) new columbarium units at the Keswick Cemetery.

2. PURPOSE:

Council previously approved a total budget of \$60,000 for two new concrete foundation walls at Keswick Cemetery. Funding was approved through business case 24-CI-CS-03, funded from the Parks R&R Reserve, and through Resolution C-2024-0063, funded from the Infrastructure/Corp Capital Reserve.

Staff are seeking Council approval to redirect \$42,000 of the approved budget for foundation walls towards the purchase of two new columbarium units at Keswick Cemetery instead. Staff are also seeking approval to change the funding sources from the original ask to instead draw \$26,000 from the Parks R&R Reserve, and \$16,000 from the Keswick Cemetery Reserve. No additional funding is being requested and there will be no additional budgetary impact as a result of this proposed change.

3. BACKGROUND:

The placement of upright monuments marking each internment burial is a customary practice. Each upright monument requires a concrete foundation to adequately support the weight of the headstone. At Keswick Cemetery, long concrete foundation walls, poured in rows (resembling a narrow sidewalk), have traditionally been used as the foundations for upright monuments.

Staff worked with LEES and Associates Consulting Ltd. through the Keswick Cemetery Master Plan in 2023 to develop recommendations to enhance the design

and operation of Keswick Cemetery. Staff were advised that the use of foundation walls is not a particularly common practice in southern Ontario. Individual foundations provide a more traditional cemetery appearance and are routinely used at cemeteries across Ontario and Canada. At the Town's other active cemetery, Cooke's Cemetery, foundations for upright monuments are successfully formed and poured individually for each lot.

As such, the newest interment section on the hill ('Section 4') was designed to accommodate individual foundations in lieu of foundation walls. Foundations for upright monuments will be formed and poured individually for each lot. Based on current sales projections in the master plan, Section 4 will provide approximately 25 years of casket and cremation burial lot inventory.

The Keswick Cemetery Master Plan identifies an immediate, short term need to develop new burial lots and cremation inventory, including columbaria niches. In keeping with the priority recommendations, Staff recommend redirecting the currently approved funds for foundation walls to the more effective and needed purchase of two (2) additional columbaria units of the same make and model as our current columbaria.

The columbarium inventory is sold by way of niches. According to the master plan, Keswick Cemetery is projected to sell 225 niches over the next 25 years. The Town currently has 55 niches available for sale, including a new 48-niche columbarium installed in November 2024. Purchasing two more columbaria would add 96 niches, providing the Town with a total of 151 niches available for sale, or 16 years of projected sales inventory for niches based on the master plan. The Town of Georgina currently has the highest cremation rate in York Region – 82% which is higher than the Provincial cremation rate in Ontario of 70%.

4. ANALYSIS:

As per the 2024 approved budget, business case 24-CI-CS-03 was approved by Council to provide one new columbarium (\$20,000) and one new foundation wall (\$30,000) totaling \$50,000. The new columbarium was purchased in May 2024 and installed at Keswick Cemetery in November 2024 at a cost of \$18,047.14.

On February 28, 2024, Council approved the provision of one additional foundation wall (\$30,000) through Resolution C-2024-0063.

Staff are seeking approval to utilise the remaining funds from business case 24-CI-CS-03 (approximately \$32,000), and \$10,000 of the remaining funds from Resolution C-2024-00630003 to provide a total budget of \$42,000 to supply and install two additional columbarium units.

No new additional funding is being requested.

Breakdown is as follows:

- Each columbarium is estimated to be approximately \$19,000 - \$21,000
- Includes crane rental to place units (cost previously waived by contractor due to error at time of submitting their bid)
- Estimate includes inflationary cost increases over one year
- Expected unused funds approved through Resolution C-2024-0063 estimated to be \$20,000

All totals in this report are inclusive of the non-refundable 1.76% HST.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Delivering service excellence – Ensuring cemetery facilities and assets are professionally managed and operated based on forecasted demand. Active cemeteries owned and operated by the Town must meet the needs and expectations of residents of Georgina.

6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:

The proposed scope changes will be completed within the previously approved project budgets for capital improvements at Keswick Cemetery. Although there is no change in the dollars requested, there is going to be a change in the funding source. There will be no additional budgetary impact as a result of these changes.

Original Request	Source	Funding
C-2024-0063	Infrastructure/Corp Capital Reserve	32,000
24-CI-CS-03	Parks R&R Reserve	10,000
	Total Budget	42,000

Requested in this report	Source	Funding
CSD-2025-0001	Parks R&R Reserve	26,000
CSD-2025-0001	Keswick Cemetery Reserve	16,000
	Total Budget	42,000

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

The Town will satisfy all Bereavement Authority of Ontario requirements for the installation of new columbaria at Keswick Cemetery.

8. CONCLUSION:

The master plan identified an immediate, short term need to develop new burial lots and cremation inventory, including columbaria niches. With the decision to no longer use foundation walls at this section of the cemetery, Staff recommend redirecting previously approved funds for foundation walls towards the provision of two additional columbaria instead. The additional columbaria will allow the Town to meet projected sales for the foreseeable future as identified in the Keswick Cemetery Master Plan.

APPROVALS

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