



TOWN OF MINTO

DATE: July 7, 2017

REPORT TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Mike McIsaac, Road Foreman, Bill White, C.A.O. Clerk

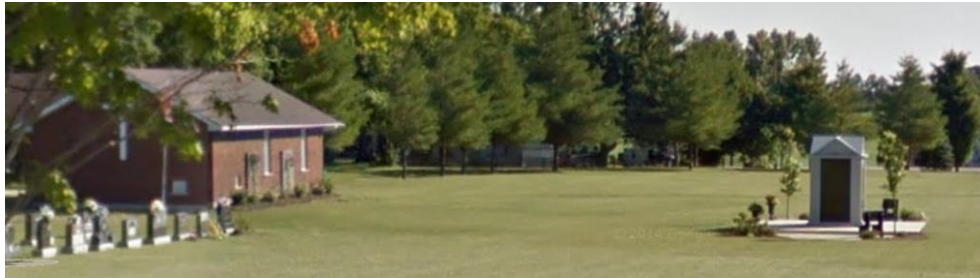
SUBJECT: Minto Cemeteries, Cremation Gardens and Columbarium's

STRATEGIC PLAN:

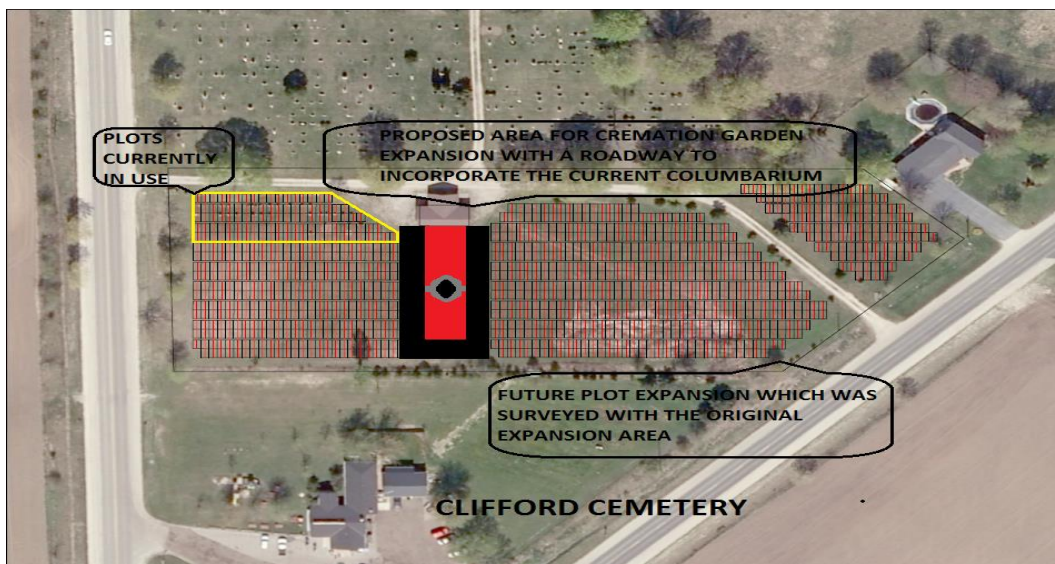
7.8 Establish cemetery management plans to assist with long term capital planning, increase visual appeal, enhance interment options, and increase cemetery use as a place to learn about the people, stories and history of the community.

BACKGROUND

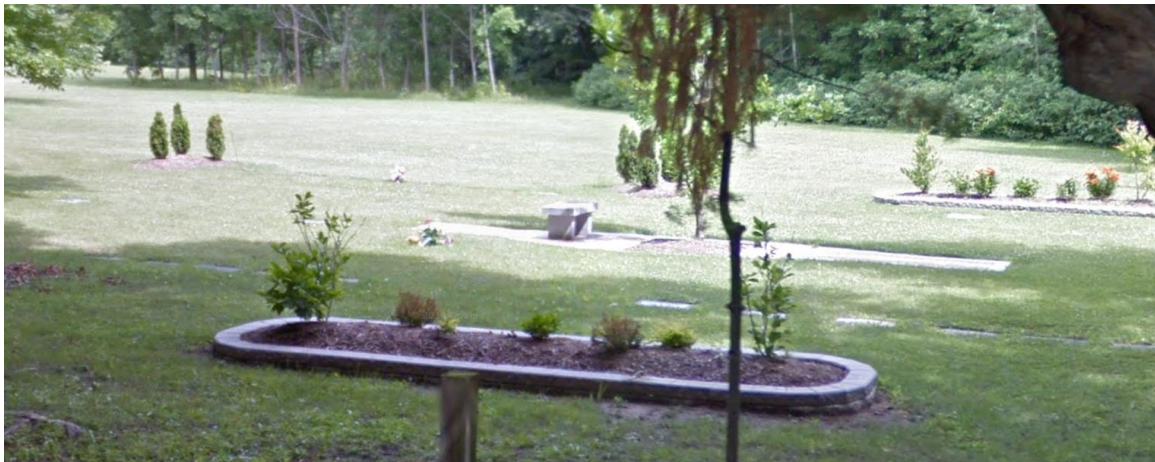
The Town has cemeteries in Palmerston on Highway 23, Harriston on Jessie Street and just outside of Clifford on Highway 9. *Clifford* has a columbarium that can accommodate cremation burials built in 2013 using a \$60,000 private donation. The columbarium is shown to the right in the picture below.



Staff proposes to link the chapel building to the columbarium with a roadway, paths and landscaping. A cremation garden may also be possible with small plots to intern ashes. The sketch below shows plots currently in use, locations to expand cremation gardens and areas for future plot expansion. Staff reviewed ground penetrating radar survey information and has identified a few areas where plot adjustment may be needed. This can be dealt with through tree removal and possible adjustment to plot locations into the expansion area



Harriston currently has a cremation garden located southwest of the main entrance road and chapel. Sale of plots in this area goes back to 1993 and landscaping completed over the last 4 years. Approximately a third of the plots available have been sold to date. The cremation garden is shown in the picture below.

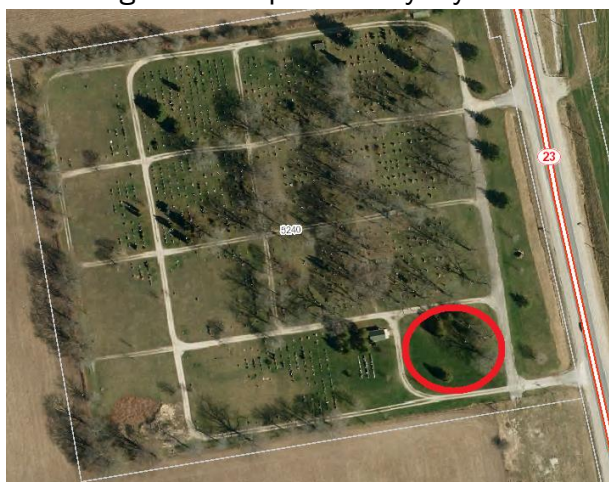


There is room to expand the cremation garden west of the chapel building, while to the east of the building there are lands for full size additional plot development. Staff would like to pre-construct an access road this year and set up the space for future plot sales.

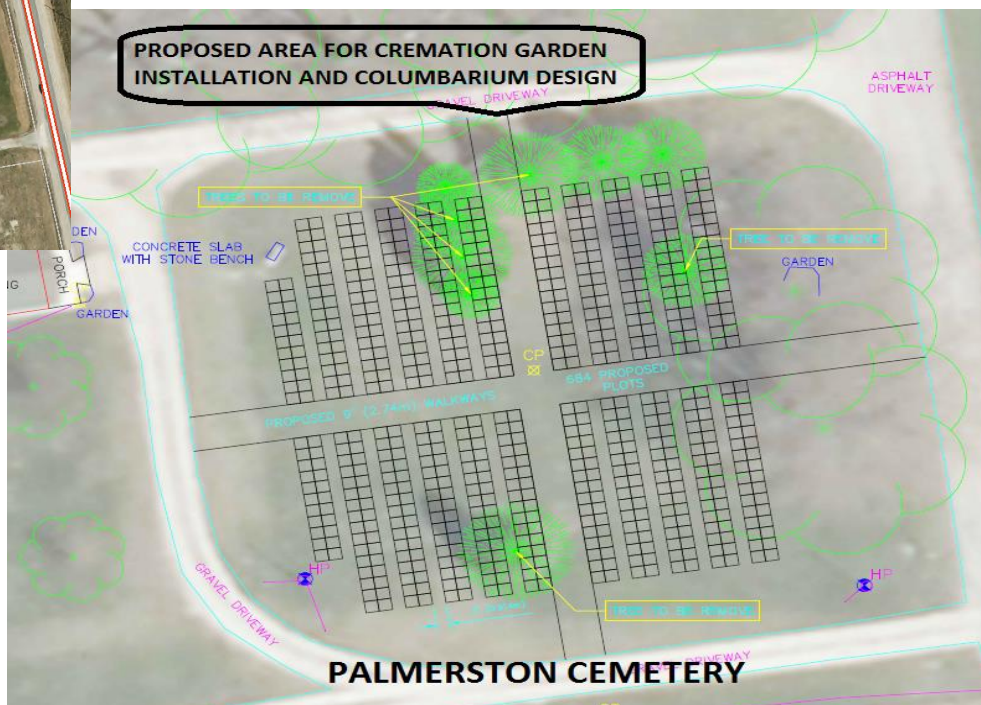
The Harriston Cemetery has a unique space in the Center Circle, currently unused, that could be a good site for a columbarium. It could be accessed by radial pathways into the centre creating a focal point in the entire property.



Palmerston Cemetery currently does not have an option for cremations except for a full size burial plot. The area shown in red is identified as a potential location for a cremation garden. A preliminary layout has been developed that shows up to 684 cremation plots as shown below. The layout involves cross shaped nine foot entrance walkways, and plots separated by three foot paths. Some tree removal would be needed to facilitate this grid pattern layout.



The benefit to this layout is that it maximizes the number of plots. Other layouts are possible that work closely with existing trees and terrain, and could involve a cremation wall, or more curved pathways and features. Construction and maintenance costs are also key concerns with any design.



COMMENTS

The 2017 budget includes \$20,000 for a Harriston Cremation Garden, and \$35,000 for a Columbarium. A columbarium is a building within which urns for cremated remains are stored with an identifying marker or plaque. Cremation gardens are landscaped areas where cremated remains may be interred in the ground in a traditional way or in "cremorial" where urns are suspended below (but not in) the ground. Cremated remains can also be



interred in walls or similar structures depending on family interest. This sketch of a project California illustrates a combined option where there cremated remains can be interred in the ground with a marker, or in a wall with a memorial plaque. Increasingly cemeteries offer these options as an alternative to traditional burials to use land more efficiently and to meet changing needs in the market.

Council is asked to assist Public Works with identifying priority projects for alternatives for cremated remains. The following summarizes issues to begin to address with current funding (\$55,000):

- Link columbarium in Clifford to chapel area with path/road and cremation garden (design and install)
- Establish cremation garden in Palmerston and identify location for columbarium (design and install)
- Assess alternative locations for columbarium in Harriston, and provide for growth and expansion of community gardens (design and install)

Before proceeding with any work one option is to use some of the funding to complete design work for cremated remain opportunities in each cemetery, develop cost estimates for installations including a financial plan for costing plot sales and perpetual care.

In addition establishing potential cremation internments, work to be completed with existing operating budget funds includes:

- installing new access road and layout plots north and east of the chapel in Harriston
- on-going work in Clifford to align family plots and internments identified by ground penetrating radar analysis

Each of the Town's three cemeteries has room for expanding traditional plots to meet current need in the short and medium term. Adding options for interring cremated remains is an opportunity to use lands more efficiently, respond to market demand and work toward bringing perpetual care costs in line with revenue streams. It is a fact of demography that in the coming 30 years or so the "baby boom" generation will be looking for cemetery options for their family members.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The 2017 cemeteries budget includes \$90,000 of maintenance costs set against about \$70,000 in revenue. This means that about \$20,000 annually from the tax rate goes into perpetual care. It is proposed to use part of the \$55,000 allocated capital for design and some expansion work as outlined.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive the Road & Drainage Foreman and CAO Clerk's July 7, 2017 report Minto Cemeteries, Cremation Gardens and Columbariums, that staff proceed with contracting design work to develop internment options for cremation gardens, columbariums, cremation walls or similar features as may be desired in Harriston, Clifford and Palmerston cemeteries, and that options include costing and financing of new installations over time, and that work on the access road and plots northeast of the chapel in Harriston and re-alignment of plots in Clifford continue using existing budgeted funds.

Mike McIsaac Roads & Drainage Foreman

Bill White, C.A.O. Clerk

