Report to:	Stratford Public Library Board
Meeting Date:	June 1, 2021
From:	Julia Merritt, CEO
Subject:	Garden Stratford Project

Summary, Activity to Date

In February 2021, SPL was approached by Garden Stratford with a proposal to redesign the garden. Garden Stratford has been responsible for maintaining the front garden since at least the 1980s, if not earlier. The proposal is to redesign the space to make it more usable for more people, incorporating the principles of a “restorative” garden, where people can both relax and roam. The focus would be on hardy perennial plants, and an atmosphere that prioritizes sounds, textures, and scents.

Staff have met with Garden Stratford committee members and communicated the goals and limitations of the Library and GS is willing to take on the challenge of maximizing the use of that space for the public in partnership with the Library.

Garden Stratford is anticipating that this would be a 2-year project with a preliminary estimated budget of $34,000. Garden Stratford is prepared to commit up to $20,000 and GS has just received approval for grant funding of $6,000 from the Stratford Perth Community Foundation to assist. Preliminary designs have been solicited from local firms and the Garden Stratford committee is in the process of selecting a designer. Further details around cost will become available after that, and the Library may be asked to contribute financially in the future.

Staff Recommendation

Staff believe that this is a valuable partnership and project to pursue. This project will support the library’s strategic goals in supporting engaging community programming and spaces at the current location. Staff recommend that the following motion be approved:

Draft Motion:

THAT the SPL Board give Garden Stratford permission to proceed with a project to revitalize the Library’s front garden AND THAT the SPL Board authorizes Garden Stratford to accept the Stratford Perth Community Foundation grant on its behalf and disburse monies as necessary.