

## Mavrinac Park should include community gardens

(Re: Mavrinac Park promises something for everyone, April 28)

No, actually Mavrinac Park does not promise something for everyone.

Council's short-sighted decision to exclude a community garden from Mavrinac Park means that the park, in fact, will not offer something for every Aurora resident as it will not offer residents the opportunity to garden.

A community garden is defined as a single piece of land gardened collectively by a group of people.

It is not, as Councillor Kim suggests, 'usually located to support people who don't have back yards or have tiny back yards and can't plant their own garden?', or as Councillor Abel suggests, 'in high density areas where people do not have the opportunity.?'

One only has to look north to the Town of Newmarket to see how a community garden can benefit everyone.

Newmarket's community garden is located adjacent to Fernback soccer fields on Mulock Drive, just north of the Stonehaven neighbourhood. Stonehaven is neither a neighbourhood considered to have either intensification or small backyards.

Located on a bus route, the Newmarket Community Garden and the surrounding park with walking trails and soccer fields is open to all residents of Newmarket. Very popular, this community garden is vibrant and has few available plots.

The suggestion that the residents of the Mavrinac neighbourhood have no need for a local community garden presupposes that no one else in the Town of Aurora might want to garden. The current Aurora garden, located on Industrial Parkway South, is nowhere near either a residential neighbourhood or any intensification. How does that work?

The suggestion that pests might come to the garden is an interesting concept.

The development of the lands in the St. John's and Bayview neighbourhoods disturbed more 'pests' than a community garden could ever attract. Would it be so horrible if a gopher took up residence in the community garden and Aurora children could learn about wildlife?

Hartman Public School, located just north of the park, could have a garden plot and Aurora children could learn how veggies grow. A community garden located in Mavrinac Park will allow all residents of Aurora, regardless of where they live in the town, not only to benefit from gardening but to enjoy the park as well. Add raised garden beds, and the community garden will also be fully accessible and truly open to all.

Or, is Mavrinac Park only open to those live in the immediate area? That would be akin to stating that the Town Park, with its Farmers' Market, splash pad and summer concerts is only available to those who live in that immediate area.

In a time where vegetable gardening is on the rise, and everyone is being encouraged to plant, Council is shutting down the idea of community gardening. For the benefit of all Aurora residents, I urge Council to reconsider the concept of including a community garden in Mavrinac Park. Let's make the new park truly something for everyone.

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