



Members of Halton Hills, including Mayor Rick Bonnette and Regional Councillor Jane Fogal, help plant apple trees at the Civic centre as part of the Town's initiative to go green.  
Submitted Photo

## Expanding the Civic Centre garden

Working in partnership with local business Wheelbarrow Orchards, the Town has expanded the Civic Centre Demonstration Garden to include 10 apple tree saplings which are expected to produce fruit in two to three years. The fruit will be donated to local food banks.

The Garden was initiated five years ago by the Staff Sustainability Team and began as an initiative to demonstrate growing food that is given to local food banks. This demonstration garden continues to be a learning experience about growing food locally as well as how gardens can produce an abundance of vegetables with proper maintenance. The successful garden has grown a wide variety of vegetables including: tomatoes, beans, carrots, onions, cucumbers, peas and potatoes.

This garden supports the implementation of the Community Sustainability Strategy and its four pillars: cultural vibrancy, economic prosper-

ity, environmental health and social well-being.

The Garden is maintained by the Town's Staff Sustainability Team and volunteer employees who have an interest in gardening. This successful garden not only grows food, but it has generated conversations, workshops, team work and a sense of pride for the staff who maintain it. The yield from the garden has increased over the past five years. Last year, the garden's yield surpassed its goal of 100 pounds with 200 pounds of fruit and vegetables grown and donated to local food banks throughout the summer, said Mayor Rick Bonnette.

Wheelbarrow Orchards learned about the Demonstration Garden last fall when they were invited by Town staff to share their opinion on the existing apple trees located on the Civic Centre property. The apple trees are estimated to be at least 60 years of age.

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