

Five Year Plan

The State of Monuments at Woodlawn Cemetery

Core Document

This report contains the outline vision plan for the safety, conservation, and maintenance of the existing monuments of Woodlawn Cemetery, now including Rockwood & Parkinson's cemeteries. The accompanying comprehensive work plans are contained in the In-House Version of this Five Year Plan.

Once the work of this project is completed, this 5-Year Plan document is to be followed by a long-term Safety, Conservation, And Maintenance Plan (SCAMP) for the monuments of Woodlawn, Rockwood, and Parkinson's Cemeteries.

Volunteer Drafts by Sach Killam

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Introduction

This five year plan has been designed to bring an exciting and positive close to the first 150 years of Woodlawn as the community cemetery for the City and Township of Guelph. From the original Union and St. George's cemeteries, there has been a slow transformation from simple public burying ground to flourishing arboretum and historical site. At some point, however, the care and maintenance of the historic monuments was allowed to decline. The ambitious and ever-expanding monument repair projects of the 1990's have significantly begun to reverse this problem, but a dauntingly large amount of work remains. It is in this context, at the suggestion of Paul Taylor, General Manager of Woodlawn Cemetery, that this plan has been developed. In five years, the progress of the last decade could be taken to a new level. This plan demands incredible effort by the staff of Woodlawn, and a strong commitment from the public & the managing Guelph Cemetery Commission.

There is an opportunity, at this moment, to grasp the potential to truly change the state of monuments at Woodlawn in an extraordinary way. The historic landscape, embodied in the often deteriorating monumental stones, can be restored and preserved for future generations.

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Vision Plan

Ten aspects of monument conservation, repairs, and actions are discussed in the following vision plan. The intention is to provide a list of objectives which could be worked towards in the next five years. The specific progress and actions that would be necessary to realize these objectives is provided as a scheduled goal plan (contained in the In-House Version). With the completion of the various facets of the plan, Woodlawn Cemetery could celebrate 150 years of history secure in the knowledge that the monumental landscape is, and will continue to be, in good repair and well-maintained. Woodlawn Cemetery will then provide an example for other large historic cemeteries to follow.

Facet A

Master the techniques and obtain the experience & equipment to efficiently and safely make repairs to every monument in the Cemetery, and to make these repairs at the highest practical conservation standard.

Facet B

Continue and expand the yearly Safety Survey to ensure the highest possible safety standard and integrate the information provided by the survey to establish a Long-term Safety, Conservation, And Maintenance Plan (SCAMP) for the Monuments of Woodlawn Cemetery.

Facet C

Successfully complete repairs to all monuments identified as Safety/Priority Class 0, 1, and 2. (Safety/Priority Class 2: a monument which could be pushed over by purposeful human contact without undue effort, or by minor machine contact. See Data Sheet: Safety Priority Classes, CSK, 1998)

Facet D

Progress should be continued in the Block-by-Block restoration of the historic older areas of the cemetery, with a goal of having addressed every monument of safety/priority class 3 or higher in every older Block of Woodlawn by the end of the Five Year Plan.

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Facet E

Progress should be continued in the complete maintenance of monuments in the modern areas of the cemetery, with a goal of having addressed every modern monument of safety/priority class 3 or higher in every Block of Woodlawn by the end of the Five Year Plan.

Facet F

Conservation work should be initiated on the marble and limestone monuments which embody the history contained in Woodlawn Cemetery. Priorities for action include those monuments most at risk of accelerated damage and those currently in storage.

Facet G

All safety removal monuments (1998) should be reinstalled, while all broken parts of all repairable monuments should be safely stored. (Marble and small parts should be stored indoors, while large granite pieces could be stored in an outdoor location. All pieces must be fully labelled and have full documentation including a photograph and a written assessment.)

Facet H

Statistical standards for the classification of the safety/priority of monuments need to be investigated and approved. Complete expanded and precise standards need to be published to ensure that no new monuments could ever become Safety/Priority Class 0, 1, or 2 without foundation failure.

Facet I

Woodlawn Cemetery should act as a leader in the field of cemetery conservation, and should continue and expand the sharing of information with other organizations.

Facet J

Progress should be made to ensure that, in the long term, the care and maintenance of monuments in Woodlawn Cemetery is entirely self-financing.