

# INTERIM REVIEW OF OUR "GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE SHIFT"

APRIL 6, 2023

For over two years, Les Jardins du Souvenir has been actively engaged in a sustainable development process. We are multiplying our initiatives to get closer to our ultimate goal: to integrate the principles and objectives of sustainable development into every step of our work and in every decision we make.

## A brief review of our initiatives to date:

- We are allowing unused areas of some of our cemeteries to return temporarily to their natural state, to reduce the pollution caused by our maintenance equipment.
- We have joined the great movement of "May without a lawnmower" to promote better pollination.
- For the past three years, we have stopped clearing snow from some of the more remote cemeteries to limit the negative economic and ecological impact of this activity.
- We invest several thousand dollars annually in the training and development of our staff.
- We offered a training workshop to all our employees on the "sustainable development" of cemeteries.
- We have shared this training with more than fifteen representatives of parish cemeteries.
- We have digitized more than 25,000 records and are increasingly using software that reduces the use of paper.
- Wherever possible, we use local resources to maintain our cemeteries. In this way, we reduce the environmental impact of our long-distance travel and invest in the local economy by creating jobs in the communities.
- We have put in place the necessary infrastructure for waste management, recycling, and composting.
- We provide a monthly report to all employees on the status of the organization's finances.
- We use slow-growing grass seed that requires less water in our cemeteries to reduce the frequency of mowing and the amount of water needed to maintain them.
- For three years now, we have been prioritizing the use of a technology made of recycled plastic, "Monugrid", to build the foundations on which the monuments are placed. This less expensive technique has a much lower environmental impact than the construction of cement foundations. The environmental impact of cement is important in its preparation, but just as important, if not more so, if we must replace the foundation and dispose of this huge block of cement<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The firm Cargo, which is the promoter of the project, specifies that the building will be the very first of its kind in Gatineau to be built with engineered wood... One cubic metre of concrete is one tonne of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

- Water fountains are installed in each of our premises to limit the proliferation of single-use plastic containers.
- We have made available to our clients a rain barrel in one of our cemeteries to allow them to water their floral arrangements and we will continue to install them in other cemeteries where running water is not available.
- We have begun greenhouse production of our own plants and flowers using school facilities that we will help fund.
- We invest a lot of time, energy and money in the maintenance and restoration of statues, works of art and other heritage buildings in our cemeteries.
- Some of our facilities have green walls and flowers to enhance the environment for our clients and employees.
- We offer our clients a wide range of eco-responsible and biodegradable products (urns, coffins, reliquaries, etc.)
- Since the summer of 2022, the soil removed from the graves (urns or caskets) is left near the burial site in order to reduce the pollution generated by the comings and goings of our transport vehicles.
- 50% of our machinery has been replaced by more modern and less energy consuming equipment. The same is true for over 80% of our vehicles.
- We purchase our products and services locally and regionally (including biodegradable urns, which are produced by an NPO in Gatineau)

And it doesn't stop there, we already have several other projects in mind:

- Starting with the 2023 season, usually beginning around mid-April, our clients will have the option of being buried in new sections of our cemeteries reserved for fully biodegradable urns and caskets (the list and map of these sections will be posted on our website shortly).
- Gradually, over the next few years, we will continue our efforts to reduce our environmental footprint (soil pollution) by increasing the number of environmentally designated sections and by encouraging our clients to opt for fully biodegradable urns or caskets.
- By the end of 2025, we plan to use only biodegradable urns and caskets in all our cemeteries. Customers who wish to continue using urns and caskets made of traditional materials will be able to use interment in our columbaria and mausoleums.
- We will replace the plastic bags in which we pour ashes before placing them in the urns with biodegradable plastic bags.
- We are continuing our "Funeral by the Lot" initiative to minimize the impact of multiple trips for funeral convoys.
- Beginning in the summer of 2023, we will be able to broadcast funeral ceremonies and wagers on the web, via a specialized application. Already available in our chapel, this technology allows more people to participate without the need to travel and generate greenhouse gases from the combustion engines of their vehicles.
- Starting in 2023, we will be using "natural stones" (quarry stones) to place on the lots, to reduce the environmental impact of granite monuments that travel tens of thousands of kilometers before being installed in our cemeteries.

- We will continue to work with heritage organizations to promote the rich history of our cemeteries.
- We will give our various catering services until the end of 2023 to adapt to our new "no single-use plastic" policy (plastic dishes, utensils, and glasses) for receptions after funerals.
- We plan to invest in the renewal of our heating installations to optimize the use of the heat generated by the crematorium.

We are committed to doing our part to preserve the environment and fight climate change and we are confident that our customers and the public will support us as we continue to "go green and sustainable".

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