

## Community Garden Initiative in West Seneca, NY

West Seneca, NY, is a vibrant community with a strong spirit of collaboration. In the coming years, a focus on enhancing our neighborhoods and promoting mutual aid within our community is necessary. We propose the establishment of community gardens in one or several key locations across the town. These gardens will serve as gathering spaces, educational hubs, and sources of fresh produce for residents. By harnessing the power of community engagement and local partnerships, we aim to create beautiful green spaces that benefit both individuals and the environment.

### Objectives:

- Establish community gardens in Sunshine Park and/or Centennial Park.
- Foster a sense of community ownership and pride in these public spaces.
- Promote sustainable gardening practices and environmental education.
- Provide residents with access to fresh, locally grown produce.
- Enhance the aesthetic appeal of the parks and playgrounds.

### Implementation Plan:

#### 1. Site Selection:

- Sunshine Park and Centennial Park have been identified as suitable locations for the community gardens.
- Each site will be evaluated for sunlight exposure, soil quality, and accessibility.

#### 2. Community Engagement:

- Host town hall meetings and information sessions to solicit input and involvement from residents.
- Recruit volunteers to help plan, design, and maintain the gardens.
- Establish a community garden committee to oversee the project and ensure ongoing collaboration.

#### 3. Partner Engagement:

- Reach out to local businesses for donations of materials and resources.
- Collaborate with nurseries, seed suppliers, and landscaping companies to provide mulch, seeds, plants, and other necessary supplies.

#### 4. Garden Design and Implementation:

- Work with local landscapers to design a garden accessible to young children, the disabled, and the elderly.
- Install raised beds, pathways, composting areas, and other essential features.
- Organize community workdays to prepare the sites and plant the first crops.

#### 5. Maintenance and Management:

- Develop a maintenance schedule and recruit volunteers to tend to the gardens on a regular basis.
- Provide training and support for gardeners, including workshops on organic gardening, pest management, and composting.
- Establish guidelines for garden use, including rules for harvesting and sharing produce.

#### 6. Educational Programming:

- Offer workshops, classes, and demonstrations on gardening, nutrition, and environmental sustainability.
- Partner with local schools, libraries, and community centers to integrate garden-based learning into educational programs.
- Create signage and interpretive displays to educate visitors about the plants, wildlife, and ecological benefits of community gardening.

#### 7. Celebration and Outreach:

- Host opening ceremonies and seasonal celebrations to showcase the gardens and recognize the contributions of volunteers and partners.
- Use social media, newsletters, and local media outlets to share updates and success stories with the broader community.
- Encourage residents to visit the gardens, participate in events, and get involved in ongoing initiatives.

#### Budget:

- The estimated budget for each community garden is as follows:
  - Site preparation: \$X
  - Materials and supplies: \$X
  - Educational programming and outreach: \$X
  - Maintenance and management: \$X
- Total estimated budget for both gardens: \$X

By creating community gardens in Sunshine Park, Tim Russert Park, Westgate Playground, and/or Centennial Park, we have the opportunity to transform underutilized spaces into vibrant hubs of activity and growth. Through the collective efforts of residents, businesses, and community organizations, we can cultivate healthy fruits and vegetables, and a stronger sense of connection and belonging. We look forward to working together to make this vision a reality and to sow the seeds of a brighter, greener future for West Seneca.

Thank you for considering our proposal.

Sincerely,

Scarlett Hanley and Christopher Hanley

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