

HISTORY

• Fall 2014

Bloomington Garden Club members meet with Bloomington Park District officials to discuss the creation of community and giving gardens. Research by the Bloomington Garden Club revealed a great need for fresh produce in the Bloomington Township area with more than 260 families accessing food from area food pantries weekly. The greatest need is during the summer months when children do not have access to free and reduced cost meals at school.

• Winter, 2014/2015

Bloomington Park District and Bloomington Garden Club are joined by U of I Extension DuPage Master Gardeners and Roselle Park District Garden Club and form the "steering committee."

Site visits conducted at Seasons Four Park, Springfield Park, Stratford Park, and Westlake Park to determine the best location for the gardens. Springfield Park is the overwhelming choice.

Mission statement and guidelines drafted for the Bloomington Park District Community & Giving Gardens. Village of Bloomington and Bloomington Township become involved.

• Spring, 2015

Three demonstration garden plots determined and coordinated by Bloomington Garden Club, Roselle Park District Garden Club, and U of I Extension DuPage Master Gardeners with all produce to be donated to area food pantries.

Bloomington Park District prepares the sites.

Planting occurs.

• Summer, 2015

By the end of August, 2015, more than 200 pounds of produce from the demonstration gardens given to local food pantries!

Meeting with neighboring Erickson School's principal to discuss possible involvement of elementary students with the Community & Giving Gardens.

St. Walter Parish Troop 194 Boy Scout takes on the creation and building of a "Donation Station" as his Eagle Scout Project.

Additional donors contribute to the efforts of Bloomington Park District's Community & Giving Gardens.

CONTACT US

For more information about the Bloomington Park District Community & Giving Garden, visit <http://www.bloomingtonparks.org/adult-programs/community-giving-garden.htm>, email parks@bloomingtonparks.org, call (630) 529-3650 or scan the QR code below.



PARTNERS

Bloomington Park District
Bloomington Parks Foundation
Bloomington Garden Club
Bloomington Township
Roselle Park District Garden Club
University of Illinois Extension DuPage Master Gardeners
Village of Bloomington

DONORS

Ball Horticulture
Boy Scout Troop 194, St. Walter's Parish, (Eugene [Alex] Solomon)
Franco Coladipietro, Mayor of Village of Bloomington
Costco Wholesale
Home Depot
Len's Ace Hardware
Lowe's Home Improvement
Maher Lumber
Midwest Groundcovers. LLC

MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance the quality of life of Bloomingdale area residents by creating and sustaining garden plots that foster horticulture education, environmental stewardship, recreation, and contribute excess produce to local food pantries.



OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a place for area residents to meet and share a common interest in gardening
2. Offer opportunities for children, youth, adults and seniors to learn about gardening and grow healthy food
3. Give area residents of all ages and abilities an accessible place to garden
4. Promote collaboration and community investment to develop, sustain and preserve the gardens for generations to come
5. Nurture organic, non-chemical growing techniques
6. Encourage community gardeners to support the produce needs of clients who access local food pantries
7. Exhibit demonstration gardens and educational information that promote various gardening habitats, such as vegetable gardens, rain gardens, raised garden beds, container gardens, straw bale gardens, native plants, etc.
8. Facilitate future park district programming related to gardening, e.g., food preservation, garden habitats, pollinators, etc.
9. Expand and promote additional community gardens at selected Park District and Village properties in the future
10. Pursue local and national grant opportunities to assist in the development and sustainability of the Community & Giving Gardens

LOOKING AHEAD

Garden plots of various sizes will be available for rent by area residents in 2016. The vegetables harvested are for the enjoyment of the respective gardeners who also will be encouraged to periodically donate a portion of their produce to area food pantries via the Donation Station on site. Volunteers will deliver donated produce multiple times each week during the harvesting season.

The demonstration gardens provided by Bloomingdale Garden Club, Roselle Park District Garden Club, and University of Illinois (U of I) Extension Master Gardeners will provide signage, gardening classes, and information to the Community Gardeners and area residents.

Raised garden beds will be installed for children, youth, adults, and seniors that have special needs to facilitate their participation in gardening. Partners plan to connect with area schools to assist students and staff to develop an interest in gardening so that children can learn about and tend their own classroom garden plots.

The success and demand for garden plots may result in additional locations on Park District or Village property to expand the Community & Giving Gardens.

