



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

City Council Agenda Item

Subject: Community Garden Request – Legislative Offices

Submitted By: Councilwoman Latresa Akins-Wells, Ward 4

Date Submitted: June 23, 2024

Work Session Date: July 1, 2024

Council Meeting Date: July 1, 2024

Background/History:

Community gardens play a crucial role in fostering numerous benefits for neighborhoods and society as a whole:

1. **Promoting Local Food Production:** Community gardens encourage the cultivation of fresh, nutritious produce locally. This can improve access to healthy food options, especially in urban areas where fresh produce may be less accessible.
2. **Building Community Connections:** Gardens serve as gathering places where people from diverse backgrounds come together. They promote social interaction, cooperation, and a sense of belonging among participants, fostering a stronger community fabric.
3. **Educational Opportunities:** Community gardens provide hands-on learning experiences about gardening, nutrition, and environmental stewardship. They offer valuable educational programs for children and adults alike, promoting sustainable practices and food security awareness.
4. **Enhancing Urban Green Spaces:** By converting vacant lots or unused spaces into green oases, community gardens contribute to urban beautification and improve air quality. They mitigate the urban heat island effect and provide habitats for pollinators and wildlife.
5. **Improving Mental and Physical Well-being:** Engaging in gardening activities has been linked to reduced stress levels, improved mental health, and increased physical activity. It provides a therapeutic outlet and promotes overall well-being.
6. **Sustainability and Resilience:** Community gardens contribute to local sustainability by reducing food miles and promoting organic gardening practices. They also enhance community resilience by creating local food sources that can withstand disruptions in the global food supply chain.
7. **Empowerment and Social Justice:** Gardens empower communities by providing access to nutritious food and economic opportunities through produce sales or food donation programs. They can also address food deserts and promote food justice initiatives.

In essence, community gardens serve as catalysts for positive change, promoting health, sustainability, social cohesion, and resilience within neighborhoods and beyond. Their

importance extends far beyond the act of gardening, enriching both individuals and communities in multifaceted ways.

Cost: \$

Budgeted for: **Yes** **No**

Financial Impact:

Action Requested from Council: