

MEMORANDUM



TO: BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION
FROM: KATHERINE OPPERMANN, CITY LIASON
SUBJECT: NOTES ON NEW PROJECTS & PROGRAMMING OPTIONS
DATE: AUGUST 9, 2023

City of Novi Beautification Awards

Recommended to be based on the Dearborn City Beautiful Commission's "Standards of Excellence Awards".

- Their program involves City Beautiful commissioners, working with the Property Maintenance and Development Services Department, to appraise the city's neighborhoods looking for exemplary stewardship of residential properties. Winners are selected from among the 17 districts created by City Beautiful to ensure all parts of Dearborn are represented.
- The awardees are featured in an announcement, properties are photographed to be featured on the city webpage or a linked website (such as flicker or Google Photos), briefly interviewed if interested, and recognized in a City Beautiful ceremony at the Dearborn Administrative Center. Other residents are encouraged to take a drive to see these outstanding properties
- To implement a similar program, we would need to:
 - Determine Criteria, timing, responsibility of Commissioners in appraisal of properties (note: Dearborn has a significantly larger membership – 27)
 - Establish "districts" if wished (the voting precinct map may be a good jumping off place for this venture)
 - Engage our Code Compliance Officers to assist with affirming the good standing of given properties and possible also to recommend honorees.
 - Engage Community Relations for designing promotional materials, the award sign markers/banners. They will also be able to identify costs associated with the printing of materials.

Seasonal Events (Autumnal or Halloween decor/Holiday Lights, etc.)

Some excellent examples from neighboring communities:

- [Dearborn City Aglow, 2022 Awardees, Video](#)
- [Livonia "Haunt Your Home"](#)
- Farmington "Bootification" Award
- Farmington Ready, Set, Grow! Garden Award as part of Edible Farmington
 - Also offers a program to pick up excess produce from gardeners for donation to the local CARES program.

Educational Programs (Native Plants, Foraging, etc.)

Could be an excellent opportunity to work collaboratively with our PRCS department programs, Library programs. Tollgate Farm would be a good starting resource.

Bee City USA

Captain Theisen of the Novi Fire Department reached out to the City Managers office about the possibility of the City adding Beehives to City-Owned Building Roofs or other properties. He is also an avid beekeeper in Milford and would be interested in spearheading a project.

He also noted fellow beekeepers is creating pollinator sites throughout the City of Detroit: [Bees in the D](#)

City Manager Cardenas stated that he would be interested in pursuing such a project, especially if we also aligned it with becoming part of the [Bee City USA](#) initiative which he noted the Beautification Commission had previously been looking into.

Community Garden

Having cited the Beautification Commission's mention of a possible Community Garden our administrative leadership team recommended instead working with Tollgate Farm for such efforts.

The City is not currently interested in pursuing establishing a City-Owned Community Garden for a few reasons, especially related to maintenance and management:

1. Requires staff to register and maintain database of users and plots.
2. Disputes occur between plot holders that need to be resolved by staff (not keeping up on weeding, stealing from other plots, abandoning their area, differences of opinion on pesticides, disease spreading between plots, etc.)
3. Maintenance staff required pre and post season and clean-up of weeds, debris, and abandoned plots.
4. Need for readily available water source and restroom.
5. Vandalism and theft

They believe that Tollgate has the experience and network of volunteers to best manage a community garden. They already have one as well as a "Plant a Row for the Hungry Garden".