

Girl Scout Troop 2191 Community Garden Proposal

Introduction

The document outlines the objectives, scope, timeline, and anticipated outcomes of the community garden. Its purpose is to ensure that the village board and all stakeholders are aligned throughout the project's lifecycle, leading to the successful use of the garden for years to come.

Project Title

Community Garden

Rationale for Creating a Community Garden

Creating a community garden will provide significant benefits to Girl Scout Troop 2191 and the surrounding village. The garden will promote environmental stewardship and offer access to fresh produce, while also serving as an educational space for both youth and residents. Through collaboration in a shared green area, participants will strengthen social connections, encourage healthy living, and gain valuable skills related to gardening and sustainability. The initiative will also address local food security and enhance the neighborhood's appearance, fostering civic pride and engagement.

Background and Rationale

A community garden previously operated in Saint Joseph, IL, successfully bringing people together and providing nutritious options for individuals facing food insecurity. Building on this success, Girl Scout Troop 2191 proposes to start with a small plot of land north of Crestwood Park. The plan includes planting vegetables, which will be made available to everyone in the community. The troop will construct a handicap-accessible section and a food washing station. Their goal is to inspire other community members to rent plots from the village and grow their own produce for personal use or to share.

Project Objectives

- Promote environmental stewardship and sustainability within the community.
- Provide youth and residents with access to fresh, nutritious produce.
- Serve as an educational resource for gardening, healthy living, and sustainable practices.

- Foster social connections and strengthen community engagement through collaborative activities.
- Address local food security by offering produce to individuals and families in need.
- Encourage community members to participate by renting plots and growing their own produce.
- Ensure inclusivity with features like handicap-accessible garden sections, which allows everyone to feel they contribute to their community.
- Outdoor gardening can also improve your body and mind by engaging your muscles, relieve stress, and boost your mood.

Scope of Work

- Identify and secure a suitable plot of land for the garden.
- Obtain necessary permissions from local authorities or property owners.
- Engage community members and stakeholders to build support and involvement.
- Plan the layout, including designated areas for vegetables, handicap-accessible sections, and shared amenities like a food washing station.
- Prepare the soil and install any required infrastructure (e.g., fencing, raised beds, irrigation).
- Choose and purchase seeds or seedlings based on community preferences and climate.
- Organize volunteers or assign responsibilities for planting, maintenance, and harvesting.
- Establish guidelines for sharing produce and renting plots to encourage participation.
- Promote the garden through local channels to attract additional participants.

Methodology

- Assessment Phase:
 - Previous community garden was well-liked, and community members have expressed interest in the project being restarted
 - The troop leaders have met with the Mayor, Jim Page, twice to review possible locations for a community garden.
 - Location: Crestwood Park, north of the gazebo and west of the soccer fields
 - Sunlight
 - Water source
 - No heavy traffic

- accessible
- Needs:
 - Close to the water pump for watering the garden space(s)
 - A harvest washing station can be placed near the water pump for ease of access/use
 - Materials to create raised garden beds to ensure the garden is also handicap-accessible
 - Land will need to be prepared/tilled this Fall 2025 to ensure planting can commence in Spring 2026. Village works will be asked to help with this portion.
 - Parking access to the garden
 - Call J.U.L.I.E. prior to breaking ground
 - Seeds, soil, fertilizer
 - Build the garden beds and washing station
- Design Phase:
 - Veggie portion: 4'x8'
 - Herbs portion: 4'x4'
 - Pathways that are large enough for wheelchairs and wheelbarrows
 - Raised bed specifications of at least 22in wide x 12in deep x 30in high for optimal access and accessibility. This will need to include level ground, wide pathways, shady places to take breaks.
 - Pathways: at least 4' wide but 5' more ideal for maneuverability
 - Smooth and level surface
 - Proper water drainage to prevent muddy and slippery spots
 - No steps or elevation changes
 - Concrete or crushed rock is best
- Estimated Costs (initial set-up):

Item	Details	Est. Cost (\$)	Notes
Raised bed	1 raised accessible bed	\$80-100	Choose food-safe wood or plastic.
Potting Soil/compost mix	3-4 cu ft per container	\$30-\$50	A blend that has good drainage for veggies and herbs.
Drainage material (gravel)	Small bag	\$5-10	Optional if container has drainage
Fertilizer	1 small bag	\$8-15	Balanced or herb-specific
Mulch	Small bag	\$5-10	Helps retain moisture

Seeds or starter plants	6-8 varieties of veg and herb	\$18-35	Seeds cheaper (\$2-3); starter plants faster (\$4-5)
Initial setup Total:		\$146-230	

Ongoing/Seasonal Costs:

Item	Frequency	Est. Cost/Year	Notes
Fertilizer refresh	2-3 times/season	\$10-20	Compost or liquid feed
Soil top-up	Every 1-2 years	\$15-30	Improves soil structure
Seeds	Seasonal	\$10-20	Optional if replanting annual herbs
Water	Growing season	\$5-15	Depending on local rates and rainfall
Subtotal yearly maintenance:		\$40-85	

- Implementation Phase:
 - Phase 1:
 - Ground will be prepped Fall 2025
 - Raised garden bed and washing station will be built Spring 2026
 - Initial garden plot will be planted Spring 2025
 - Troop will maintain a watering, weeding, and harvest schedule for 1st season of garden
 - Educational events will be hosted by Troop 2191 during Summer 2026
 - Food will be available to the community and local food pantry
 - QR code cards marking each produce item will link to nutritional information and recipes that include that particular produce.
 - Community garden will be promoted within the community. Success stories, recipes, and gardening tips can be shared through schools, social groups, community newspaper, and social media.

- Evaluation Phase:
 - Review community interest through social media poll and community engagement day at the garden.

- Phase 2:
 - Expand by adding individual plots (ex: 4'x8')
 - Plots can be rented out by the village per household
 - Village will take over responsibility for the community garden
 - Add a plot for each school to use freely for educational purposes
 - Explore fundraising options through local sponsorships, grants, community fundraisers, and in-kind donations.
 - Continue to promote educational events to teach community members about sustainability practices and healthy eating habits.
 - Add more places to sit in shade.

- Timeline

Phase 1	Duration	Milestone
Fall 2025	2 weeks- October/November	1. Location confirmed 2. JULIE contacted 3. Village works preps land for community plot 4. Weed barrier placed by Troop
Spring 2026	4 weeks-March	1. Troop teams build an accessible raised garden bed and produce washing station 2. Stations are placed at Crestwood Park 3. Soil is prepared 4. Plot has rabbit fence 5. Accessible pathway is created for raised garden bed
Spring 2026	1 week-April/May	1. Seeds purchased 2. Planting completed at plot and raised bed 3. Water schedule completed weekly
Spring/Summer 2026	May-June	1. Watering 2. Weeding 3. Fertilizing 4. Community engagement via

		social media and flyers
Summer 2026	July-September	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue with tending gardens 2. Create weekly harvest schedule 3. Advertise to community what is available 4. Host education events for community (gardening tips, recipes, etc) 5. Assess community interest in more plots

Contact information for Troop 2191

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