

South East Chicago Commission Announces the Neighborhood Enhancement Grant

Community Beautification Project Awards for 2021

CHICAGO (June 1, 2021) - The Neighborhood Enhancement Grant program is an initiative administered by the South East Chicago Commission (SECC) and sponsored by the Elizabeth Louise Smith Fund alongside private and individual donations. The SECC awards micro-grants to neighborhood organizations to support beautification projects that enhance the quality of life, work together as community partners and enhance the physical attractiveness of the Hyde Park, Kenwood, Oakland, Washington Park and Woodlawn communities. Since 1999 the SECC has collectively granted more than \$1,000,000 in beautification funds.

“This is a great opportunity for all of us to work together as community partners to improve the aesthetics of our neighborhoods, strengthen civic pride, and enhance the quality of our urban living”, said Diane Burnham, Executive Director of the SECC

The grant selection committee, comprised of community members from the five footprint neighborhoods, selected the following community groups for the strength of their proposals and the breadth of potential impact:

- **Jessie Ma Houston Park Mural** - Woodlawn Diversity in Action and the Jessie “Ma” Houston Park Advisory Council are partnering to create a mural located on the ComEd building at E. 50th and S. Drexel Blvd. The mural will feature images and quotes of living African American activists and leaders who have ties and live in the Kenwood Neighborhood. *(Kenwood)*
- **Woodlawn Pollinator Project** -The University of Chicago Charter School Woodlawn Campus, a public charter school of Chicago Public Schools, will create site designs and a planting lists for three pollinator gardens at S. Woodlawn Ave. and E. 63rd St. They will be adding trees and flowering shrubs to the space, as well as providing the seating that will welcome school family members and neighbors to visit and rest in the garden space. *(Woodlawn)*
- **Chicago Eco House Washington Park Expansion**- The Chicago Eco House will create a new flower farm located at E. 52nd St. and S. Prairie Ave. They will clear the site, install a solar-powered irrigation system, install beehives for pollination, and grow and maintain a flower crop. Participants in their workforce development program are formally trained as flower farmers and florists. *(Washington Park)*
- **East 47th Place Median Landscape Project** – The Ancona School will assume maintenance of an unkept median on E. 47th Place near the school. They will be removing a dangerous dead tree, planting new trees, establishing grass on the median, and doing some simple plantings. *(Kenwood)*

- **The Greenhouse Effect-** The YWCA Metropolitan Chicago is going to build a greenhouse to accompany the Y Women Grow Urban Farm in Chicago's Woodlawn community. The YWomen Grow Farm is a 3,800 square foot urban farm located at Emmett Till Fine and Performing Arts Magnet School that benefits the students, their families, and the surrounding Woodlawn community. (Woodlawn)
- **Nichols Park 55th St. Fountain** – The Nichols Park Advisory Council will do a landscape maintenance project located around the fountain flower bed located on the south end of Nichols Park near the corner of East 55th and S. Kimbark Ave. (Hyde Park)
- **The Burke Garden Revitalization Project-** 2016 Ma'at, a community-based organization that works to empower residents, will revitalize the Burke School community garden into a place of beauty as well as a functional area for the socializing of local residents and the education of young children attending the Burke Elementary School. (Washington Park)
- **United Church of Hyde Park 53rd Street Frontage Upgrade-** The United Church of Hyde Park will improve its highly visible 53rd Street frontage by upgrading its 840 square foot raised landscape beds with amended soil, new sod, and select showpiece plantings. (Hyde Park)

Please contact the South East Chicago Commission via email at rebecca@secc-chicago.org to learn more about the 2021 Neighborhood Enhancement Grant awardees and their projects.

ABOUT THE [SOUTH EAST CHICAGO COMMISSION](#)

The mission of the SECC is to facilitate and support economic development within the Southeast lakefront communities of Hyde Park, Kenwood, Oakland, Washington Park and Woodlawn to foster collaboration and coordination among businesses, organizations and institutions to promote the creation of jobs, investment and economic vitality.