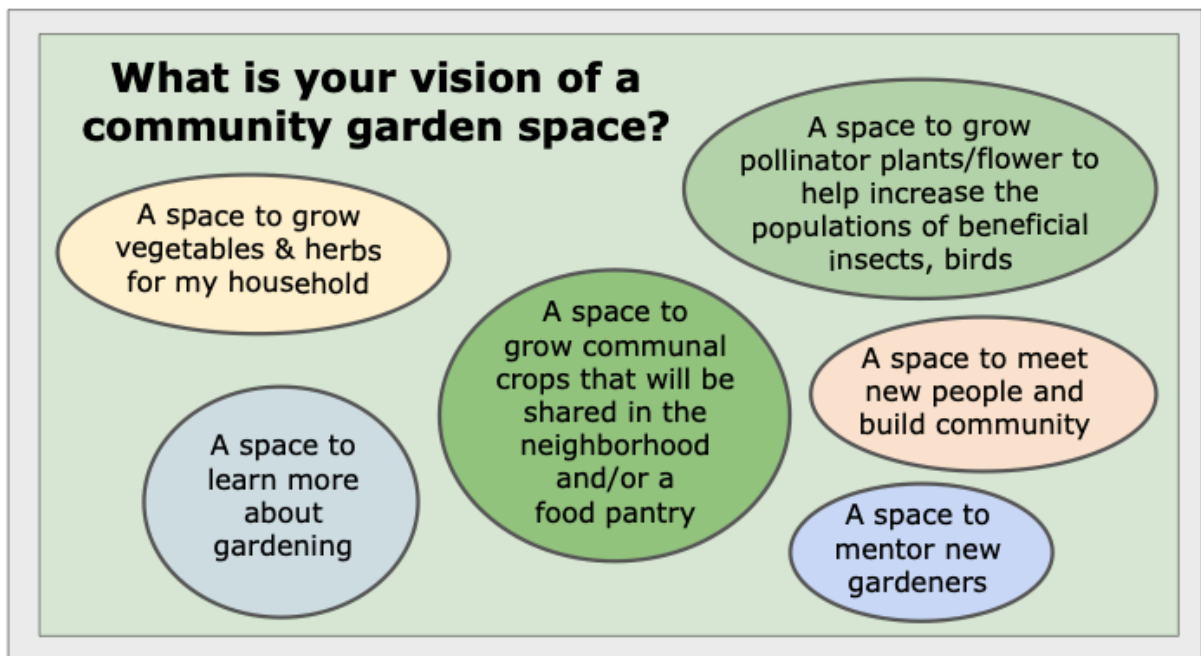


Proposal:

Woodfin Community Garden at Geneva Maney Park

Introduction

The Woodfin Community Garden at Geneva Maney Park will provide a welcoming and safe space for Woodfin residents to engage in gardening and experience overall well-being while growing their own fresh produce, herbs, and flowers. The NC State Extension's [Collard Greens and Common Ground: A North Carolina Community Food Gardening Handbook](#) shares that "Community food gardens boast a long list of benefits, from improving access to fresh food to building stronger neighborhoods. Community food gardeners and their families eat a wider variety and larger quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables, leading to an overall improvement in nutrition. The gardens' harvests also help reduce grocery bills. Some gardeners supplement their incomes by marketing a portion of the produce they grow. Being involved in a community garden also increases gardeners' physical activity and overall health. Gardening can reduce stress, muscle tension, and high blood pressure."



This project has already gained interest and support from Woodfin residents and community organizations. From multiple interest surveys completed in 2022 and 2023, 46 Woodfin residents have responded with interest in participating in the community garden. The majority of respondents supported a diverse use of a community garden space for growing produce for their own household, growing food to be shared with neighbors, and growing pollinator plants to support native wildlife. Survey participants also showed interest in learning about gardening or mentoring other gardeners.

The community garden will provide space for social engagement and community building. We expect that local businesses and nonprofits will provide support. In addition to participating in gardening, residents will also have opportunities for education in areas including environmental sustainability, soil science, nutrition and wildlife. As possible, the gardeners would provide mutual aid to the community by donating a percentage of what is grown in the communal garden area to those who do not have adequate access to fresh produce. Steering committee members are committed to the long-term vision of this project and plan to take responsibility for establishing the garden and cooperating with the town to maintain it.

Site Design

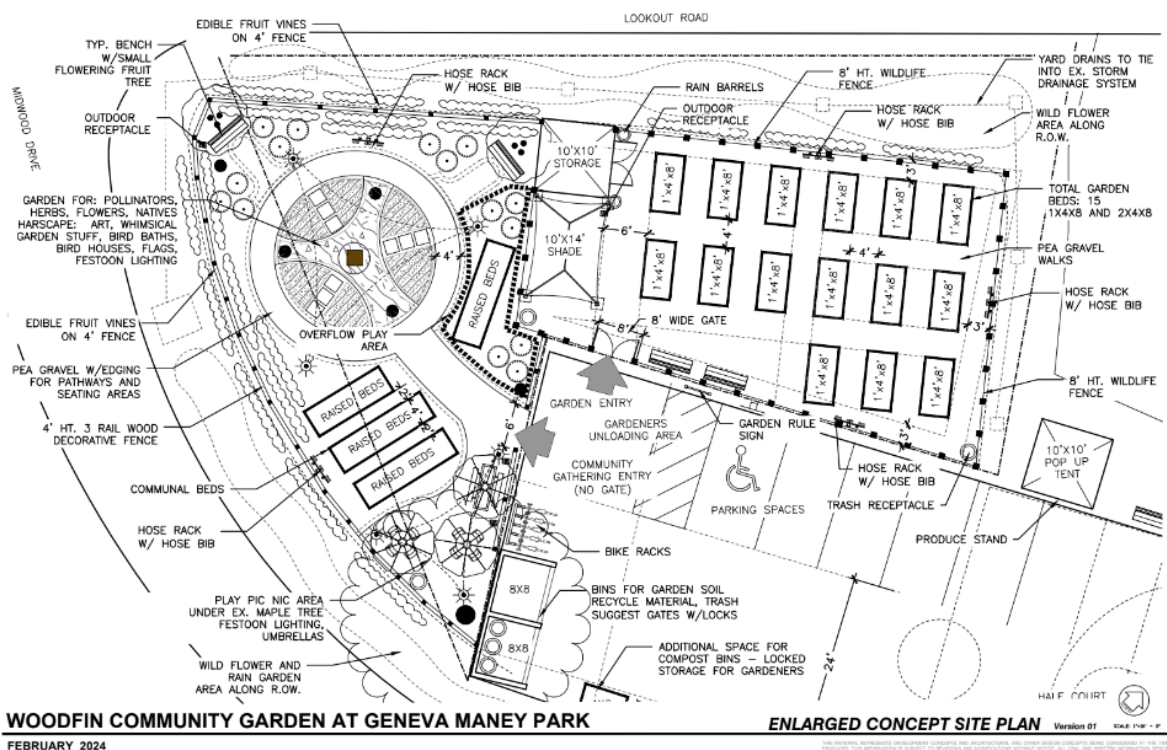
Currently Geneva Maney Park is home to a playground with outdated equipment and has been reported by neighbors to be very underutilized by the neighborhood.

This project would reinvent this underutilized space into a community garden. Part of the space would be divided into allotment-style garden beds that could be rented annually for a small fee by Woodfin residents who wished to grow food for their families and pursue their own gardening projects. Produce grown in the allotment beds will be harvested by the individuals renting the spaces, who will be encouraged to donate excess to other community members. The rest of the garden would include a diverse range of garden beds and spaces to be gardened collaboratively by volunteers and community members. Any interested resident or local volunteer can participate in the community area by attending regularly scheduled work days. This space will be a location for learning and cooperation and will also be used for demonstrations and educational events. Produce grown in the community area will be harvested and shared by volunteers and participants and donated to community members in need. In addition to seasonal produce, the community space will include fruit shrubs and native plants that support wildlife. The garden will be designed with a goal of being accessible to residents of all ages and abilities for gardening and as space to connect with community members. Seating areas will be strategically placed in the shade of the existing large maple tree at the corner.

The image below is the most recent satellite view of Geneva Maney Park with estimated measurements completed by Steering Committee members:



The image below is a professionally rendered concept site plan donated to the steering committee in support of the garden proposal. This represents one possible layout for the garden:



[A larger version of this concept with inspirational images is available.](#)

Town of Woodfin Contributions

The success of this project is contingent upon the Town of Woodfin's cooperation with the following action items:

Site Preparation:

- Removal of playground equipment and black plastic mulch barriers currently on the site.
- Removal of old/degrading landscaping fabric on the site. Currently some fabric is visible and some is covered by mulch or grass. Having this material breaking down into the soil of the garden would be a health risk. Removal by hand would be challenging and time consuming for volunteers and ultimately incomplete. It seems feasible while equipment is available for removing playground structures it could also be used to scrape away the top layer of the site and remove this material.
- Minor grading of the site after the removal of playground infrastructure and landscaping fabric to fill in any holes left by removal and smooth major disruptions to the area that is currently flat. To assure the garden area is draining properly away from site and into the drainage ditches on all sides (towards Lookout Rd and Midwood Dr). * positive surface drainage for site
- Spread 6"-12" of mulch on all of the flat surfaces of the site. We are not asking that the town provide ongoing mulch, but only an initial layer to cover the bare ground after equipment removal to prevent erosion and help the garden get off the ground.
- Install a spigot with a locking feature at the location of the water fountain that previously existed on the site with a concrete or gravel pad surrounding. Garden members and volunteers will be responsible for securing the spigot after use to prevent misuse.
- Assess the safety of the fence and perform any improvements or repairs so that the site will be safe for children participating in garden activities. A focus area is around the stormwater drainage area near the large gate on Midwood Dr. If feasible, consider fence improvements and/or modifications to reduce wildlife (deer/bear) access to the garden.
- If required, approve a permit for a small storage shed for tools to be located on the site. The shed and other garden infrastructure will be donated or purchased with grant funding.
- Support in developing a sign and message board/kiosk with garden information and guidelines that met the requirements for Town park signage. If possible, support in identifying a company to produce a sign that fit town requirements. Financial support in developing a sign would be appreciated, but it can also be added to the startup garden budget.

Ongoing Support:

- Promotion of Community Garden events on Town Website and Social Media accounts and inclusion in Town Newsletter.
- During the growing season each year (April-Oct) providing a portable toilet in the parking area of Geneva Maney Park unless/until a permanent bathroom facility is constructed.
- Provide trash and recycling services and maintain (mow) the areas outside of the fence boundary.
- As mentioned above, we are not asking the town to provide ongoing mulch services, only a one-time mulch spread over the site after playground equipment removal. However, if the Town was able to provide loads of mulch to the garden in the future for garden members and volunteers to use at a lower cost than retail, it would be appreciated.

Budget

The table below summarizes an estimated budget for the Woodfin Community Garden project. The lower range represents the essential components needed within the first year to establish the garden. The higher end includes materials and improvements that could be added gradually as additional grant funding becomes available.

Item	Cost Range
Garden bed infrastructure (blocks and boards for allotment raised beds, blocks for community bed borders, planting mix)	\$1,500 - \$2,500
Pathway infrastructure (main gravel pathway through garden, 2' fencing to define garden zones)	\$300 - \$600
Tools and Equipment (hose, gardening tools, etc.)	\$250 - \$500
Storage shed for garden supplies (lockable shed with rainwater catchment system)	\$1,000 - \$2,200
Picnic Tables and Benches	\$0 - \$600
Shrubs (blueberry bushes and rain garden plants)	\$0 - \$500
Signage	\$250 - \$500
ESTIMATED TOTAL	\$3,500 - \$7,250

The following is a list of grants we are eligible to apply for that we plan to pursue after receiving town approval:

- [Buncombe County Tipping Point Grant](#)
- [Buncombe County Community Recreation Grants](#)
- [WNC Community Enhancement - The Community Foundation of WNC](#)
- [B.W. Wells Stewardship Fund - North Carolina Native Plant Society](#)
- [Go Grants - NC Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission](#)
- [Environmental Grants - NCDOT](#)
- [Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program - EPA](#)

Community Partners

The following is a working list of community partners that have expressed interest in supporting the Woodfin Community Garden project. Support may include and is not limited to grants and monetary donations, materials donations, design and planning advice, community outreach, and volunteer labor.

- Bountiful Cities
- Asheville GreenWorks
- Buncombe County Master Gardeners
- French Broad River Middle School
- Western North Carolina Food Systems Coalition
- UNC Asheville

The Woodfin Community Garden Steering Committee will continue to reach out to local organizations and local businesses to seek support and sponsorship.

Woodfin Community Garden Steering Committee:

woodfincommunitygarden@gmail.com

Katie Cox, Woodfin Resident and
Homeowner
29 Green Oak Rd
Woodfin, NC 28804
earth2katie@gmail.com

Zoe R. Codd
AmeriCorps Volunteer Specialist,
Town of Woodfin
zoec.pp@childrenfirstbc.org

Lily Dancy-Jones, Woodfin Resident and
Homeowner
34 Parkwood Avenue
Woodfin, NC 28804
lrdancyjones@gmail.com

Carol Shurtz Dodd
Senior Landscape Designer
carol.s.dodd@gmail.com