



Cultivating Our Community is beautifying Genesee County!

- **SOMETHING GOOD IS GROWING!** From downtown Flint to neighborhood parks, city sidewalks to suburban streets – wherever you look in Genesee County, you will see an exciting idea take root. We're nurturing a whole new way of promoting our community.
- **THE SEED HAS BEEN PLANTED.** Throughout our area, everyone is pitching in! We're coming together to build hope and to beautify the place we call home. A beautiful, vibrant visual landscape is blossoming in this community!
- **JUST IMAGINE . . .** a spring bursting with bright daffodils and flowering trees...a whole summer full of blooming black-eyed Susans and daylilies...magnificent displays of colorful leaves and ornamental grasses to fill each fall, with a touch of evergreen to provide color through the winter. **IT CAN HAPPEN!** Families, friends, neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and organizations are joining together to make our community more beautiful than ever.

More than just a program, Cultivating Our Community is a growing demonstration of what happens when people who care, come together to work... literally... from the ground up.

One of the many aspects of this program that we're excited about is the selection of a plant palette – a group of plants chosen for their hardiness, salt tolerance, drought resistance, and year round interest, which are being used in the Cultivating Our Community gardens. They include favorites such as daffodils for spring color, day lilies and purple coneflower, and shrubs such as arborvitae and service berry. Replicating the plants in each garden gives a welcoming, coordinated and uniform look to the city's landscapes.

More than 40 partners have adopted gateway sites and agreed to maintain the new gardens for five years, which is critical to the success of this program. Even more impressive, more than 100 organizations in the community have agreed to use the Cultivating Our Community plant palette or are directly involved in the maintenance of one of the gateways.

By the end of June, 15 gateway gardens had been planted in the City of Flint and five were planted in Burton, Clio, Davison, Flushing and Grand Blanc. This fall Cultivating Our Community will install the final gateways at the entrances to five Flint elementary schools.

We are especially pleased to be able to have Applewood's program coordinator, Erin Caudell, dedicate much of her time this year working with Karen West, program director at Keep Genesee County Beautiful, and hundreds of community volunteers involved in the project.

They are talented and resourceful, and with your help, they are going to keep the momentum going. They have an amazing ability to get people enthused and involved.

By the way...if you see any of them walking toward you with trowels in hand, be aware that you are about to be recruited to do a little gardening... Keep your knee pads handy!

The Ruth Mott Foundation is very proud to be a partner of this remarkable program, along with Keep Genesee County Beautiful and the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce. This is exactly the kind of effort Mrs. Mott wanted her foundation to support. She would be gratified to see so many "good things growing!"

Take a look at some of the exciting activities and partnerships that are emerging this year for Cultivating Our Community

Cultivating the Flint Farmers' Market & Red Ink Studios

Have you seen the beautiful gardens along Burton Street and East Boulevard Drive? The Ruth Mott Foundation gave a grant of \$74,000 for several of these plantings which border the Flint Farmers' Market and Red Ink Studios. Look for a lovely sitting area, sculpture garden and tree boulevard. A demonstration garden features Michigan wildflowers, turf alternatives, a rain garden and plants that help break down gasoline and other pollutants in stormwater runoff.

Begun in mid-May, this was the first of the gateway gardens planted for Cultivating Our Community. The Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce, Cars 108, Flint Farmers Market, HealthPlus of Michigan, and MTA are also sponsors of the site. They helped install the gardens and have committed to maintain them for five years.

Nurseries participate

Several area plant nurseries have supported Cultivating Our Community by stocking the plant palette selected for the community-wide plantings. They also provided free to the public the Cultivating Our Community Plant Wheel Guide, which identifies and describes the plants.

The easy-to-use wheel guide also suggests additional plants suitable for shade and sun, plus seasonal maintenance information. Thanks to:

Bordine Nursery

Grand Blanc, MI 48439

(810) 655-5588

www.bordine.com

Bundschuh Landscape Center

Burton, MI 48519

(810) 743-6941

Evergreen Green House

Grand Blanc, MI 48439

(810) 606-5105

Frost Gardens

Flint, MI 48507

(810) 655-2326

Haddon Nursery, Inc.

Fenton, MI 48430

(810) 869-4856

Jenny B's Garden Party

Clio, MI 48420

(810) 687-7742

www.jennybgarden.com

Walker Farms & Greenhouse

Burton, MI 48519

(810) 743-0260

www.walkersfarm.com

WoJo's

Davison, MI 48423

(810) 658-9221

www.wojos.com

Chamber Support

Members of the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce have taken an active role in supporting Cultivating Our Community because they know it is helping enhance the image of Genesee County. Details matter when it comes to an image. By beautifying our gateways, business storefronts, and street corners, this community looks inviting to customers, encourages business development, and energizes commercial districts.

Throughout the year, the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce will bring beautification ideas to the business community through articles in *Inside Business*.

\$3-million from MDOT to beautify expressway gateways

A \$3-million highway enhancement project has been allocated by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for Flint highway enhancements. The City of Flint project began in the fall of 2006 with the installation of new fencing along I-475 from Bristol Road to Carpenter Road. The remainder of the project is expected to be completed in 2007 and will include the construction of gateway enhancements at the primary entrances to downtown Flint along I-69 and I-475.

These improvements feature the Cultivating Our Community plant palette and provide a positive visual impact 24 hours a day.

Genesee County Parks & Recreation Plants the "Seed" at County & City Parks

Genesee County Parks and Recreation has enthusiastically supported Cultivating Our Community by featuring gardens at the entrances to county parks that use the plant palette.

They also sponsor the original Max Brandon Park Entrance gateway site and entrances to For-Mar Nature Preserve, McKinley Road-Flushing Park, and the Carpenter and Bray Road bike trails.

Genesee County Road Commission, Landbank, Nursery Association and Master Gardeners join in!

The Genesee County Road Commission is working with Cultivating Our Community in several ways. The Commission will re-landscape the front of their building on Oakley Street using the Cultivating Our Community plant palette and will work with Keep Genesee County Beautiful to suggest to commercial and residential developers a horticultural criteria that uses the plant palette and selected trees.

The Genesee County Land Bank is using the Cultivating Our Community plant palette with its Side Lot Program this summer. They will also develop demonstration sites on selected vacant lots in the downtown area featuring rain gardens, urban agriculture and turf alternatives.

The Genesee Area Landscape and Nursery Association used the Cultivating Our Community plant palette in their spring landscape display.

The MSU Extension Master Gardeners will promote Cultivating Our Community by providing their expertise and service to several initiatives including overseeing the installations of the downtown Flint gateway sites. Drop by the Farmers' Market Saturday October 8 and 15, when they demonstrate bulb planting.

Master gardeners will also be at public events at Applewood in August and September to answer questions and provide tips for beautification projects. MSU Extension will develop a demonstration garden at their headquarters located on Pasadena Avenue in Flint.

Area Youth to Participate through the Amistad Horticultural Project

Youth from the Broome Center's Amistad Horticultural Project are involved with Cultivating Our Community gateway sites as part of their summer program. Participating youth volunteer to provide maintenance duties for gateway sites at Harrison and N. Saginaw St., ML King and Fifth Avenue, and the Max Brandon Park entrances.

Beautification Education at Applewood

You can learn more about beautifying your neighborhood through Cultivating Our Community promotions at Applewood Events. Stop on by!

- **Saturday, August 11, 2007**

- Summer Fun Day
 - 10:00am to 5:00pm

- **Friday & Saturday, September 28 and 29, 2007**

- Fall Harvest Festival
 - 10:00am to 5:00pm

Thanks to Keep Genesee County Board members:

Linda Barber, *Flint Township Volunteer*
Gordon Barden, *Village of Otisville Volunteer*
Ron Butler, *United Way of Genesee County*
Larry Casler, *Genesee Intermediate School District*
Erin Caudell, *Ruth Mott Foundation-Applewood*
Dan Emerton, *UAW Local 599 - Environmental Committee*
Greg Gaines, *Mr. Rogers Program*
Gary Haggart, *Shelter of Flint*
Kay Kelly, *Kearsley Park - City of Flint*
Michael Kelly, *Mott Community College*
John McGarry, *City of Flint Volunteer*
Roxy Moreno, *Genesee County Parks and Recreation*
Linda Patrick, *MSU Extension*
Cary Rouse, *Michigan Department of Transportation*
Dale Scanlon, *Citizens Nuisance Task Force*
Sheila Taylor, *Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission*
Renee Zientek, *UM - Flint University Outreach*

For more information:

www.KeepGeneseeCountyBeautiful.org

Check out this site for information on KGCB programs, a yearly interactive calendar of clean-up and beautification projects, and a toolbox of useful ways to beautify neighborhoods.

www.CultivatingOurCommunity.org

This site includes information on gateway sites, sponsors, “How-to” Guides, helpful tips to beautify neighborhoods, businesses, and homes, the Cultivating Our Community plant palette, and updated information on the selected Cultivating Our Community gateways.

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