

Garfield Sculpture Park Proposal Narrative Proposal

Most Wanted Fine Art (MWFA) in collaboration with the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), seeks to breathe new life into Garfield's green spaces through the captivating power of sculpture. But it's not just about art; it's about fostering deep community engagement, weaving together creativity, education, and social transformation. Central to this project are the large-scale sculptures strategically positioned within Garfield's greenzone, which encompasses approximately 30 acres of largely undeveloped land. These sculptures aren't just pieces of art; they're dynamic focal points meticulously crafted to evoke contemplation, spark dialogue, and forge connections. Each sculpture will tell a story, addressing themes ranging from environmental sustainability to cultural diversity, mirroring the values and aspirations of the community. Through a series of workshops, participants get hands-on experience with the living components integrated into the sculptures. From urban gardening to permaculture, these workshops immerse community members in sustainable practices, nurturing a sense of environmental stewardship and pride.

Recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as an Environmental Justice Area (EJ), Garfield exhibits significant disparities in income and racial demographics, with approximately 43.6% of residents living below the federal poverty line and an average of 80.33% being non-white minorities. The project seeks to promote environmental justice priorities and empower the community to enact positive change.

For the Garfield Green Zone Sculpture Project, careful site selection is key. After thorough consideration of various locations across Garfield, three sites are chosen. Each site is equipped with a 5-foot by 5-foot cement pad, providing a sturdy foundation. The first sculpture will be installed by renowned Garfield artist Jason Sauer, while another engages local youth in a collaborative effort integrating living components. The third sculpture will be chosen from a diverse group of applicants. Together, these sculptures not only enhance aesthetics but also foster dialogue, reflection, and community engagement.

As the community sculptures take shape and the rotating sculptures are chosen from applicants, they are installed at carefully selected sites across Garfield. These installations mark the beginning of a transformation, turning previously overlooked areas into vibrant hubs of creativity and community engagement. Each sculpture becomes a beacon, drawing residents and visitors alike to explore, reflect, and connect with their surroundings in new and meaningful ways.

The journey begins with meticulous planning and preparation, collaborating with local stakeholders to identify the perfect sites for sculpture installations and laying out a comprehensive project plan. Next comes the artist selection and commissioning phase, where a diverse array of artists, including community members and renowned figures like Jason Sauer, are tasked with bringing the project's themes to life through their creations.

The project kicks off with community workshops, providing immersive experiences where participants delve into the world of living components. Here, they learn how to cultivate edible plants alongside the artwork, embracing sustainable practices. Concurrently, specialized youth engagement programs begin, offering a supportive environment for young individuals involved with the magistrate courts. Through these workshops and mentorship programs, participants are empowered through artistic expression and skill development. From mastering welding techniques to understanding solar power integration, they gain practical skills and environmental awareness, fostering personal growth and rehabilitation. Moreover, youth are given hands-on

experience in urban gardening and cultivating edible plants alongside the artwork, enriching their understanding of living components.

The sculpture program additionally aims to bridge the Penn Ave Arts & commercial district with the community, promoting interconnectedness and cultural engagement. Integrating art along Penn Avenue, a hub of the 25-year arts initiative, with the emerging Greenzone program, encourages exploration and connection. Visitors stroll through the scenic Greenzone, transitioning from art to nature, emphasizing the link between art, community, and environmental stewardship. This approach enhances appreciation for both the cultural vibrancy of the arts district and the natural beauty of the Greenzone, fostering meaningful connections among residents and visitors.

Through these coordinated efforts, the Garfield Green Zone Sculpture Project aims not just to revitalize green spaces, but to inspire environmental stewardship, empower the community, and create a lasting legacy of positive change.