

OLoP & CCE Native Plant, Pollinator and Butterfly Community Garden

Project Objective

To establish and perpetually maintain the **Native Plant, Pollinator and Butterfly Community Garden** at Our Lady of Pity in Staten Island, with the assistance of Citizen's Climate Education, Staten Island Group.

[Google Album](#)

Community Benefits

- **Educational Opportunities:** The garden will serve as a **living classroom** for Our Lady of Pity's children and the wider community, offering hands-on learning about **local ecology, plant identification, insect life cycles (specifically butterflies), and environmental stewardship**.
 - **Community Engagement:** It will foster a sense of **shared purpose and pride** among parishioners and local residents by providing a collaborative volunteer effort for planting, maintenance, and monitoring.
 - **Aesthetic Improvement:** The garden will transform an existing space into a beautiful, vibrant, and **visually appealing sanctuary**, enhancing the overall atmosphere of the church grounds.
 - **Health and Wellness:** It will provide a **peaceful and restorative green space** for reflection and enjoyment, contributing to the mental and physical well-being of the community.
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Environmental Impact

- **Biodiversity Support:** The garden directly addresses the decline of critical pollinator populations by providing essential **nectar and host plants** (like Milkweed for Monarchs). This supports the **full life cycle** of butterflies, native bees, and other beneficial insects.
 - **Ecosystem Services:** By promoting pollination, the garden helps ensure the reproduction of many local plant species, which are vital for **food production** and the overall stability of the local ecosystem.
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- **Stormwater Management:** The use of native plants and rich soil improves **water infiltration** and reduces surface runoff, thereby decreasing the amount of pollutants entering local waterways and contributing to better **stormwater management**.
- **Habitat Creation:** It acts as a **critical stopover and feeding station** for migrating insects and birds within the urban landscape of Staten Island, helping to connect fragmented natural habitats.
- **Reduction of Chemical Use:** The emphasis on a natural, native plant garden reduces the need for harmful **pesticides and synthetic fertilizers**, leading to healthier soil, cleaner water, and a safer environment for both wildlife and people.

Partnership and Guidance from Citizen's Climate Education (CCE) Staten Island Group

- The Citizen's Climate Education (CCE) Staten Island Group, primarily an advocacy and education organization focused on climate solutions, will provide guidance to the garden effort by **integrating the project into the broader context of climate change mitigation and local environmental action**.
- Their contribution will primarily focus on **education, community engagement, and promoting best practices** that link local action to global climate solutions.

CCE Staten Island's Guidance Areas

Guidance Area	Specific Contribution to the Garden Project
Climate Solution Education	The group will help the project team and community members understand how planting native pollinator gardens is a tangible form of climate change mitigation and adaptation . They will explain the link between habitat loss, biodiversity decline, and climate change .
Native Plant Advocacy & Best Practices	They will advocate for the exclusive use of native, non-cultivar plants to ensure maximum ecological benefit for Staten Island's native pollinators. They may connect the team with local experts, such as the Native Plant Society of Staten Island or NYC Parks Plant Ecology Center and Nursery , for species verification and sourcing.
Pesticide-Free Commitment	CCE will provide guidance on the importance of maintaining a pesticide-free garden to protect pollinators, aligning with their focus on a healthy environment. They will promote the use of Integrated

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Guidance Area	Specific Contribution to the Garden Project
	Pest Management (IPM) strategies that favor natural or organic controls.
Community Outreach & Storytelling	They will help craft the narrative around the garden project, framing it as a successful, local climate action story. This includes providing expertise on how to document and communicate the garden's ecological and educational impact to the wider public and local leaders.
Volunteer Mobilization & Training	They can assist in recruiting and training volunteers on the environmental significance of the garden. They will also educate volunteers on effective advocacy techniques to encourage others in the community to start similar projects.
Connection to Green Infrastructure	CCE will likely advocate for using the garden as an example of Green Infrastructure , demonstrating how native plants and healthy soil improve stormwater management —a critical issue that is exacerbated by climate change.

- By partnering with CCE Staten Island, the Our Lady of Pity Community Garden becomes more than just a beautiful space; it transforms into an active, **educational tool for climate resilience and environmental advocacy** within the Staten Island community.

Long-Term Objectives (2026 & Beyond) for the Pollinator Garden

The successful establishment of the garden in 2025 will transition into a focus on **sustainability, expansion of impact, and community integration** for 2026 and subsequent years.

I. Continuation Objectives (Sustainability & Maintenance)

These objectives ensure the long-term health and viability of the 20ft x 15ft garden space.

- **Objective 1.1: Achieve Self-Sufficiency:** By **Spring 2026**, the garden's maintenance team will reduce the need for external material purchases (soil amendments, mulch) by **implementing a comprehensive on-site composting program** using yard waste from the church grounds.
 - *Metric:* Less than 25% of necessary mulch and soil amendments purchased externally.

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- **Objective 1.2: Establish a Perpetual Care Team:** By the **end of 2026**, recruit, train, and formalize a dedicated, multi-generational **"Pollinator Patrol"** maintenance crew composed of 4 adults and 8 children/youth volunteers, ensuring year-round, reliable stewardship.
 - *Metric:* A documented list of trained volunteers with assigned, rotating weekly maintenance duties.
 - **Objective 1.3: Continuous Habitat Enhancement:** Annually, dedicate at least 10% of the maintenance budget to **introducing three new native plant species** that extend the bloom season (early spring or late fall), thereby guaranteeing a reliable food source for pollinators from March through October.
 - *Metric:* Documented growth of the species list and observation of pollinator activity in new plants.
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II. Propagation Objectives (Expansion & Outreach)

These objectives focus on extending the garden's benefits beyond the immediate church grounds and into the Staten Island community.

- **Objective 2.1: Implement the "Seed/Seedling Sharing" Program:** By **Spring 2026**, propagate and distribute **100 native pollinator-friendly seedlings or seed packets** grown from the garden's stock to parishioners and community members, encouraging the creation of satellite pollinator habitats across Staten Island.
 - *Metric:* Distribution records and follow-up surveys showing successful establishment of 50% of shared plants.
 - **Objective 2.2: Establish an Annual Educational Workshop:** Host at least **one annual public workshop** starting in **Summer 2026** focusing on "Gardening for Climate Resilience and Pollinators." This will leverage the partnership with Citizen's Climate Education (CCE) and utilize the garden as a demonstration site.
 - *Metric:* Attendance of at least 30 non-parishioner community members at the workshop.
 - **Objective 2.3: Attain Recognition and Partnership:** By the **end of 2027**, apply for official certification and recognition from at least **two national or local programs** (e.g., Monarch Waystation, National Wildlife Federation Certified
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Wildlife Habitat) to validate the garden's ecological value and attract further grants/donations.

- *Metric:* Submission and approval of two external habitat certification applications.

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III. Resource List for Material Donation (subject to change)

Contacting the following Staten Island-based resources can help secure donations of plants, compost, soil, and tools for the ongoing project.

Establishment Type	Name / Contact Point	Reach Information	Potential Donation
NYC Parks Dept.	GreenThumb Office (NYC Parks Community Gardening)	Phone: (212) 602-5300 or Email the relevant Community Engagement Coordinator (check the GreenThumb staff page for Staten Island assignments).	Seeds, Gardening Advice, Workshops, potential access to GreenThumb resources.
Federal Depot (Compost/Soil)	DSNY - Staten Island Compost Facility	Phone: (917) 830-0076 or Location: 450 West Service Road, Staten Island, NY 10313.	Free compost and mulch for NYC agencies and non-profits (must pre-register).
Private Nursery	Wiesner Bros. Nursery	Phone: 718-761-5141 or Location: 2402 Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10314.	Discounts or in-kind donations of plant material, especially shrubs and trees (focus on their community values).
Private Nursery	Greenside Up Garden Center	Phone: 718-967-5039 or Location: 3334 Amboy Rd, Staten Island, NY 10306.	Inquire about end-of-season plant donations or discounts for non-profit community projects.
Specialized Plant Resource	Long Island Native Plant Initiative	Website: Fill out their Grant Application form	Small batches of locally ecotypic

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Establishment Type	Name / Contact Point	Reach Information	Potential Donation
	(LINPI) (Includes the Greenbelt Native Plant Center's Regional Seed Bank on SI)	on their website for projects.	(native) plants for approved public projects.
Large Retailer (Depot)	The Home Depot (Staten Island East)	Phone: (718) 818-9334 (Ask for the Store Manager/Pro Desk to discuss community donations). Location: 545 Targee St, Staten Island, NY 10304.	Tools, gloves, wood/materials for borders, and in-kind donation of gift cards or materials.
Corporate Grants			Grant Dollars for Plants, seeds, and equipment purchased

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