Northland Public Library FOUNDATION

In support of Northland Public Library

NORTHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Learning Garden

Case for Support

Northland Public Library FOUNDATION

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Mission

The mission of the Northland Public Library Foundation is to build financial support through community fundraising to enhance the programs and growth of Northland Public Library.

Vision

The vision of the Northland Public Library Foundation is to provide funding for the initiatives of the Library's strategic plan and have a strong presence in the communities we serve through the support of individuals, Library users, Library volunteers, private foundations and corporate partners to ensure that our Library remains the center of our community and is prepared for the opportunities of the future.

NORTHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Northland Library enables, encourages and empowers lifelong learning and discovery

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden



OVERVIEW

This project seeks to establish a safe and sustainable garden to provide an outdoor learning environment that will encourage hands on learning for all ages. It will serve the needs of our residents to create, explore and discover more about their inner and outer worlds.

Children are at the heart of Northland Public Library. From our acclaimed children's programming to our extensive children's collection, it is clear that the Library considers the education and advancement of youth a high priority and a lasting value to the community.

Over the years, the NPL staff has brought children outside for programs and activities as much as possible. As our education system puts increased emphasis on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) skills, our top-notch children's department staff quickly realized that getting kids outdoors would increase the STEAM opportunities available to them while improving their physical well-being. From that seed of an idea, the Learning Garden concept grew.

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden

NEEDS STATEMENT:

The outside environment provides endless opportunities for young people to expand their knowledge through exploration and discovery. Northland Public Library staff members have brought children outside for activities - which enhance our ability to provide programs in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics - but do so infrequently because of the lack of safe, appropriate space. A Learning Garden will provide that space while meeting other needs, as well.

We are excited that the Learning Garden will feature sensory aspects, a unique offering in Allegheny County. Sensory gardens are important for those dealing with sensory sensitivity or deprivation issues, including those who are autistic, coping with mental disabilities, or recovering from brain injuries and strokes.

FUNCTION & USES:

- ❑ STEAM programming
- ❑ Sensory stimulation/mitigation
- ❑ Story time programming
- ❑ Discovery and exploration of the natural environment
- ❑ Increase nutritional literacy
- ❑ County-wide destination
- ❑ Special events/activities

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden

PROJECT OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

Increase awareness of local environment: This will be done not only through STEM programs reflecting native plants, birds and insects, but by the existence of the garden itself. Information on seasonal changes in the garden will be made available through traditional and electronic formats. Increased knowledge of our "backyard" habitat leads to awareness of the global environment.

Increase nutritional literacy: This will be done through programming and booklists reflecting lessons learned in the garden as well as informative signage throughout the garden. "Dirt-to-dish" lessons bring nutrition lessons to life, and encourage children and adults to be mindful eaters.

Sensory stimulation: Using all the senses, touch, taste, smell, sight, and sound are good for neurological development. This will be accomplished through a variety of garden features including herbs, flowers, and plants selected for their scents and textures, building materials of different textures, water features etc. Programs will be designed to explore these features. Sand, water and dirt provide a chance for elemental play, which is simultaneously calming and energizing.

Increase civic and social literacy: Programming will present civic related issues of being environmentally responsible citizens of our community. Group activities for all ages will present many opportunities for developing social literacy skills in a non-threatening environment. Learning to work together to plant, weed, water, and then patiently wait for plants to grow.

Improve gross motor skills: This will be accomplished through a variety of structured and unstructured activities such as planting, digging, watering etc.

Develop play skills: There will be many opportunities to develop play skills using the sand and water features, garden games etc. A garden enables unscripted, open-ended play, which develops imagination and creativity in children.

Expand experiential learning: Our garden programming will focus on providing hands on opportunities for participants to help with as many aspects of the garden as possible, such as planting, tending/maintaining, harvesting, winterizing etc.

Augment Northland Public Library's position as a community destination: The unique programming offered will draw in residents from many backgrounds. Working together with community partners will allow Northland to provide a space for the partners to showcase their services and resources. There may be other gardens in the area, but a garden in the context of a library is special – Northland's garden will be fiction and non-fiction, fairytale and farming, art and science in a way that nature centers and demonstration gardens cannot duplicate.

Expand understanding of the natural world: See all of the above.

Increase basic literacy: Garden programming will incorporate basic literacy teaching, utilizing our print and electronic collections for reading and writing activities.

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden

Our Innovative Approach to Inclusiveness: Landscaped Sensory Nooks

We all talk about how to offer programs to young people (and in our case, adults, as well) in ways that truly have positive outcomes. As we began planning the Learning Garden, we realized there was a group of people for whom learning options - and those positive outcomes - were limited or compromised in some way. From those discussions, we shaped a vision of the Learning Garden and its sensory components.

We talked with a mom whose severely autistic son loved coming to the library, but wasn't able to easily join programs. Despite the best efforts of library staff and the mother, a boisterous library program isn't ideal for a child with sensory processing challenges.

The incorporation of some unique sensory elements within the Learning Garden will serve the youth and adults in our community who struggle with sensory processing challenges. Those on the autism spectrum, for example, will benefit greatly from the Learning Garden's sensory aspects. We put together an advisory group of educators, practitioners, parents and others who can help us build a space that truly helps the people who need it most. They were most excited about our innovative **Landscaped Sensory Nooks**.

Ryan, the autistic boy, loves being outdoors and - when he can - he loves being around other kids. The Learning Garden at Northland proposes a solution that lets Ryan benefit from a program and join in at his own pace without missing a thing.

That innovative solution is found in the Landscaped Sensory Nook concept being pioneered by Northland Public Library. The nooks are semi-circular areas partially surrounded by low shrubs, each containing a bench or soft mosses and other sensory stimuli that is either calming or engaging. We envision each of the landscaped sensory nooks as being different from one another. One might be aimed at producing a low sensory experience, so its colors, textures and smells would be monochromatic, soft, unobtrusive. In there, we might plant lamb's ear, various parsleys and mosses. Another might seek to be calming and feature shades of blue with lavender and chamomile planted nearby. Yet another nook might be stimulating, with bright colors and the strong scents of mint, rosemary, lemon balm and thyme.

The open end of the nook opens toward the Learning Garden's pavilion, allowing kids like Ryan to hear and see what is going on while feeling secure within the nook. When he is ready to venture closer to the program and its participants, he can move toward the others. If he feels safest in the nook, he still can enjoy the program.

The Landscaped Sensory Nooks provide a level of adaptability and inclusion not found in any other library or parks program. It not only can help people throughout southwestern Pennsylvania, but we anticipate that it could be a model for other organizations around the nation, exponentially helping those with sensory processing issues. Furthermore, the distinctive features of the nooks also can provide therapeutic benefits for children suffering from emotional anxieties, such as from experiences with bullying.

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden

History of Northland Public Library

Open since 1968, Northland Public Library has over 300,000 items in its collection including books, magazines, newspapers, eBooks, eAudio, eMagazines, eVideo, eMusic, DVDs and CDs. The library provides programming for people of all ages, as well as a quiet place to study, read and learn.

Northland is the second largest library in Allegheny County. The geographic area served, the population base, collection and circulation are second only to the Carnegie Library System in Allegheny County. Northland is also a member of the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) a system of 46 independent public libraries with more than 70 locations that work together, share resources and cooperate to provide a high level of public service to county residents. The library receives 60 percent of its funding from the five municipalities it directly serves.

There are approximately 74 staff members plus 189 volunteers who work in a variety of areas including circulation, programming, reference, technical services and administration.

Quick Facts

- Northland Public Library has served our five municipalities for over 50 years.
- Northland is a positive influence on the lives of youth in our community, as evidenced by those who tell us so:

  "Kaylee LOVES Ms. Kim and the CSI club… Thank you so much to Ms. Kim and Northland Library for creating a program that fosters hopefully future generations of scientists." – Heather Collins
- Northland Public Library has nearly 37,000 cardholders and circulated almost one million items in 2015.
- More than 1,100 programs are presented by Northland every year.
- Northland welcomes people of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances.
- Child safety is paramount to us; Northland is 100 percent compliant with state required background checks.
- LED lighting and other initiatives are helping Northland become more energy efficient.
- Northland Public Library provides a safe place for discussion, learning, solitude, growth, and exploration of diverse topics.
- Northland Public Library is a positive example of collaboration among communities; five municipalities oversee and contribute to Northland's operations.

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden

BOARD MEMBER LISTS AND BIOGRAPHIES OF KEY STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS

Northland Public Library Authority Board Members

President:	Tom Kosmala	The Borough of Bradford Woods
Vice President:	Irene Caliendo	The Town of McCandless
Treasurer:	Heidi Coltin	Marshall Township
Secretary:	Dana Getz	The Town of McCandless
Member:	Casey Sample	Ross Township
Member:	Karrie Lukin	Franklin Park Borough
Member:	Dan DeMarco	Ross Township

Northland Public Library Foundation Board Members

Officers:

President: Robert J. Tate, Esq.
Vice Presidents: Alice Beckett-Rumberger
Treasurer: Charles Mazur
Secretary: Rita Martin

Members:

Alice Beckett-Rumberger
Edward A. "Tony" Dills
Joanne Kelly
Jennefer Bartholomew
Olivia Glotfelty-Scheuering

Northland Public Library Key Staff

Amy Steele, Executive Director

Amy has more than 30 years of experience in government, academic, corporate and public libraries and has been at Northland in different roles for 15 years. She enjoys searching for the elusive answer to challenging reference questions and continuing to develop Northland's Local History website. Amy is committed to serving the needs of the residents of Northland's communities, serving on several community boards and advisory councils for CCAC – North Campus, North Allegheny School District and the Pittsburgh North Regional Chamber as well as participating in the Buses for Perry Highway campaign. She also works with many inspiring community organizations, to connect residents of all ages to community resources for lifelong learning and discovery.

Robert Lukitsch, Director of Finance and Support Services

Bob recently joined Northland to lead the Finance and Support Services departments. He brings a wealth of experience garnered from 30 years overseeing finance and administrative functions in the health care and philanthropic sectors. His experience includes construction, maintenance, housekeeping, laundry and food service responsibilities, supervision of Information Technology and Human Resources departments, as well as the oversight of over 35 "clean" annual audits as the Business Manager for the McCune and Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundations. He has served on a number of Finance and Audit Committees over the years, including 16 years with Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania, also having chaired this Committee for three years while serving on their Board as Treasurer. Bob is a lifelong resident of the North Hills and enjoys serving the community he has called home for so many years.

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden

WAYS TO GIVE

Named Gifts

$100 to $100,000

Northland Public Library has prepared a wide selection of named opportunities to recognize donors, who may choose to provide their own names or honor/memorialize the people who matter to them. A named gift continues in perpetuity for the life of the Garden, according to parameters indicated on your pledge form.

Pledged Gifts

Any amount of $300 or more.

Northland Public Library welcomes your gift in pledged installments of up to three years, beginning with a minimum total pledge of $300 or more. Pledges for named opportunities begin at $1000. Installments may be paid annually or quarterly as the donor wishes. Monthly pledged gifts are available as recurring gifts.

Recurring Gifts

Minimum $10/month

Your recurring gift is a wonderful help to Northland Public Library by providing a consistent stream of revenue in the form of a monthly donation through your credit or debit card. Recurring gifts begin at $10 per month and may continue for 12 to 36 months or beyond at the donor's pleasure.

One-time Gifts

Any amount

Northland Public Library serves a diverse community and recognizes the wide array of income levels among our patrons and donors. We have gratefully accepted bequests, major gifts from long-time donors, and gifts from friends who have formed family foundations. Many times, we receive gifts of a few dollars from dear patrons who live on fixed incomes but value the library with full hearts. Your gift in any amount is treasured, and we thank you very much!

The Northland Public Library Learning Garden

CAMPAIGN NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

Garden Naming Rights *(named for the life of the Physical Space of the Garden)* * $100,000

Pavilion *(named for the life of the Physical Space of the Pavilion)* * 60,000

Storage Shelter *(named for 10 years or the life of the Physical Space of the Storage Shelter, whichever is less)* * 20,000

Garden Wall *(named for 10 years or the life of the Physical Space of the Wall, whichever is less)* **(Not available; fulfilled)* 15,000

Lawn/Amphitheater Seating *(named for 10 years)* * 12,000

Landscaped Sensory Nooks *(named for 10 years or the life of the Physical Space of the Wall, whichever is less)* **(1 of 4 committed to date)* 10,000

Circular Tree Bench **(Not available; fulfilled)* 5,000

Water Feature * *(Not available; fulfilled)* 3,000

Tree (each) **(Not available; fulfilled)* 2,500

Garden Gate (each) * *(1 available;)* 2,000

Garden Bench * *(Not available; fulfilled)* 1,000

Raised Planter Beds * *(Not available; fulfilled)* 1,000

Compost Barrel/Area * 1,000

Rain Barrel/Gutters * *(Not available; fulfilled)* 1,000

Specialty Discovery Gardens (each) *(Not available; fulfilled)* 500
(Fairy, Dinosaur, Futuristic, Bunny)

Musical/Sensory Elements (each) *(Not available; fulfilled)* 400

Garden Elements: Statues, Gazing Balls *(Not available; fulfilled)* 250

Plantings/Houses for Birds, Bees, Bats & Butterflies *(Not available; fulfilled)* 200

Patio Brick *(Not available; fulfilled)* 150

Fairy/Elf/Gnome Features *(Not available; fulfilled)* 100

** Gifts may be made as pledges payable over three years.*