## Planning a Vacant Lot Project with



# LOTS TO LOVE

Evaine K. Sing, RLA, LEED AP GTECH Strategies November 7, 2015

GREENSPACE ALLIANCE



✓ Lots to Love Projects (102) > Address **Project Status** Idea Pittsburgh In progress Implemented Base layers ✓ Vacant Properties Side Yards Publicly owned Privately owned Uptown FORBES AVESONO FORBES AVE ✓ Municipalities ☐ Pittsburgh Neighborhoods GINIA AVE ☐ Pittsburgh Council Districts CARSON ST E CARSON ST Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access, LocalData

ABOUT

RECLAIM

RESOURCES

There's LOTS TO LOVE in the Pittsburgh region.

Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access, LocalData

GREENSPACE ALLIANCE



Bailey John South Side South Side

✓ Lots to Love Projects (102) > Project Type

Flower Garden

Trail | Pathway

Park | Parklet

Rain Garden | Stormwater Project

Food Garden

Playspace

Public Art

Green + Screen | Infill

Greenway | Wooded Lot

Bike Infrastructure

Base layers

✓ Vacant Properties

Side Yards

Publicly owned

Privately owned

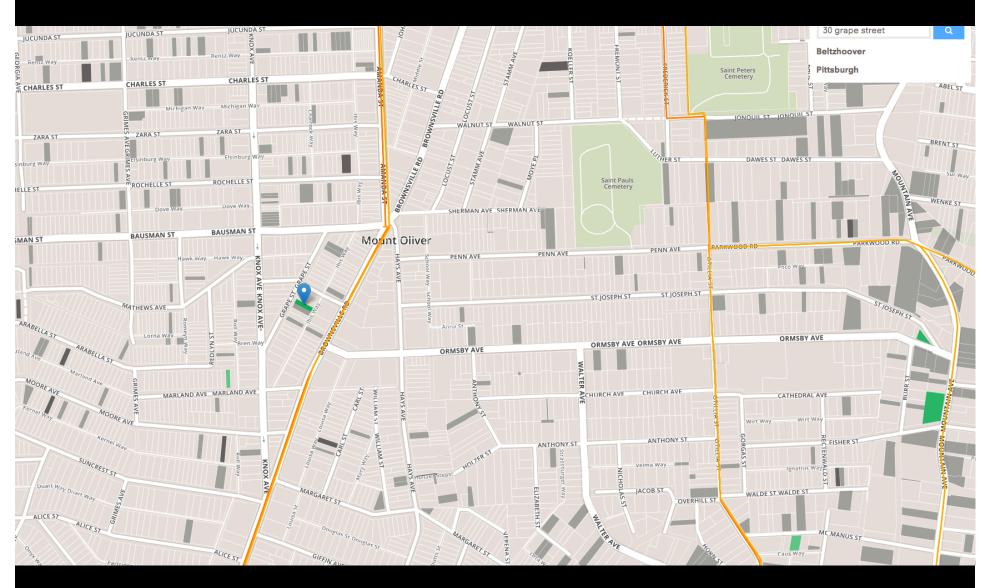
✓ Municipalities

There's LOTS TO LOVE in the Pittsburgh region.

ABOUT

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RESOURCES

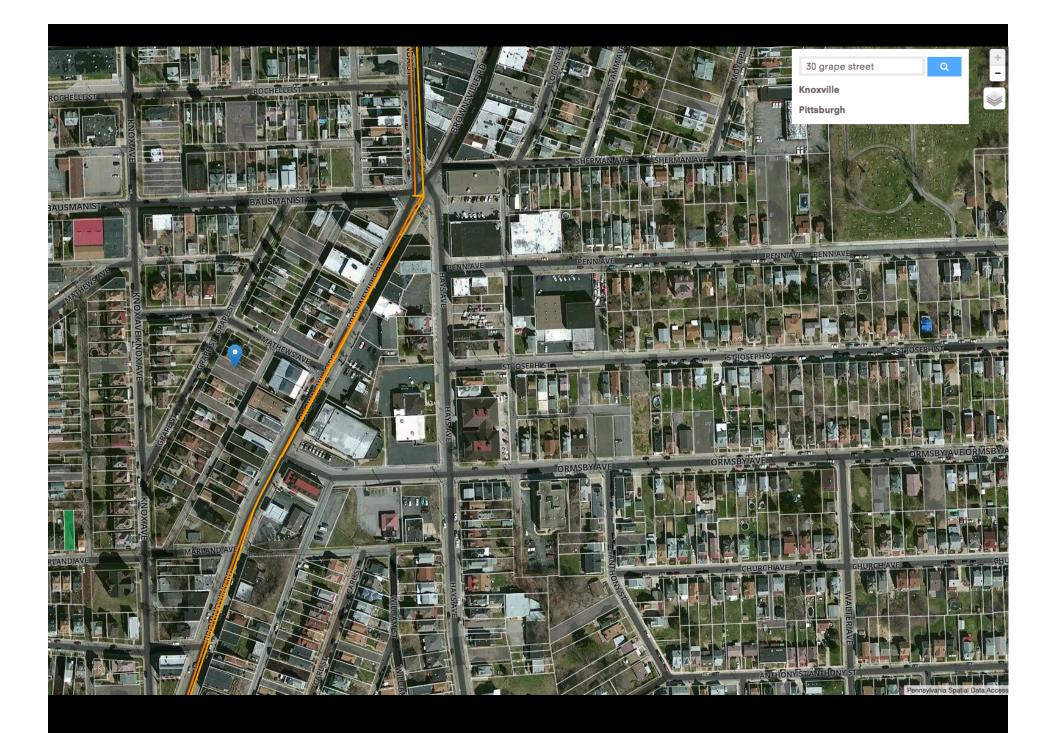


Dark Gray = Publicly Owned Vacant Light Gray = Privately Owned Vacant Green = implemented project OR Side Yard

Non Vacant parcel info as well



Can type in address, neighborhood, or municipality to locate





#### 403 ARABELLA ST

Parcel ID 0033B00229000000

Municipality PITTSBURGH - 30TH WARD
Use VACANT LAND

Property Owner CITY OF PITTSBURGH
Is the property delinquent? No

#### 32 GRAPE ST

Parcel ID 0033C00101000000

Municipality PITTSBURGH - 30TH WARD

Use VACANT LAND

Property Owner PISO LINDA F

Is the property delinquent? No

Parcel ID 0033B00137000000

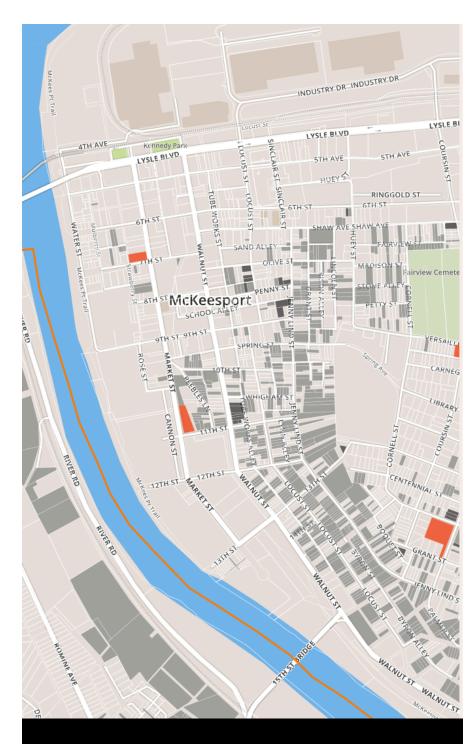
Municipality PITTSBURGH - 30TH WARD

Use SINGLE FAMILY

Property Owner MCALEER FRANCES <BR>LINKES MARY ANN<BR>MCALEER DA

Is the property delinquent? No

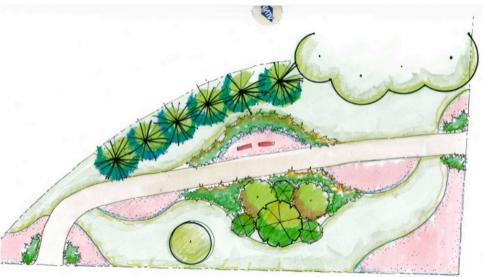




#### Unknown Location

@ Feb 10th 2015 - 5:29pm





What stage of project are you registering? An idea for a lot.

Tell us about your idea: A butterfly and bee garden which will also serve as an entrance to the Great Allegheny Passage as it runs through McKeesport.

What do you still need to make this idea a reality?: Volunteers yes

What do you still need to make this idea a reality?: Site Access yes

What do you still need to make this idea a reality?: Materials yes





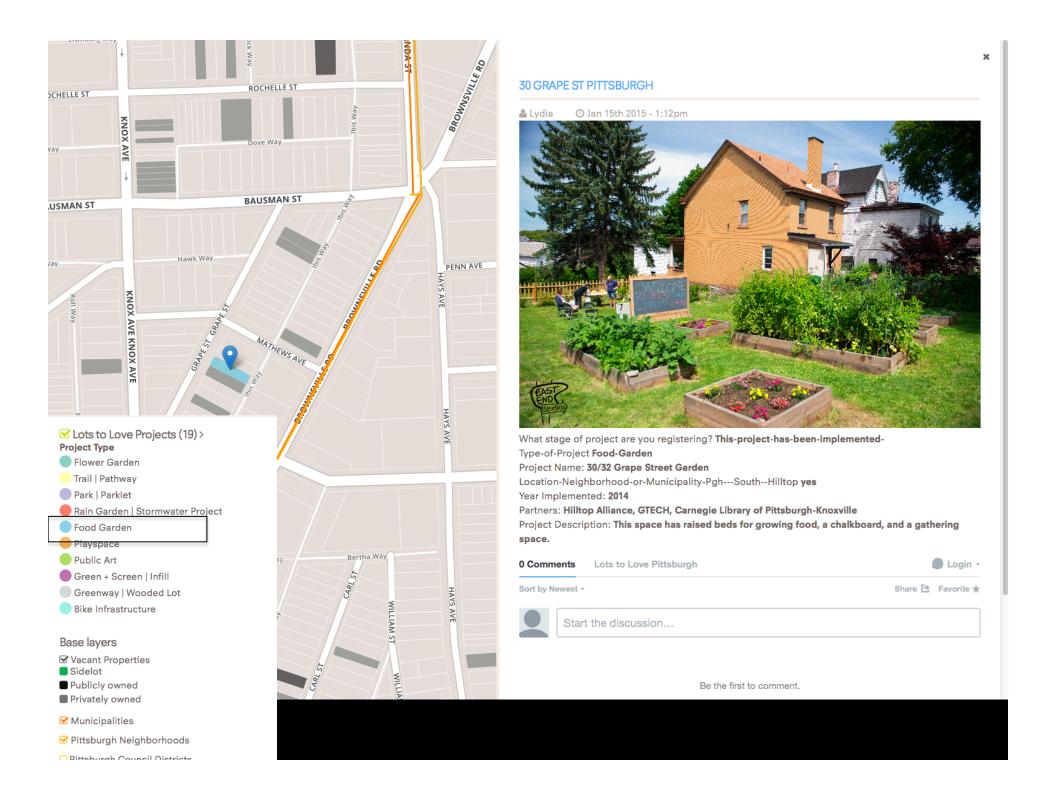
**DISQUS** 

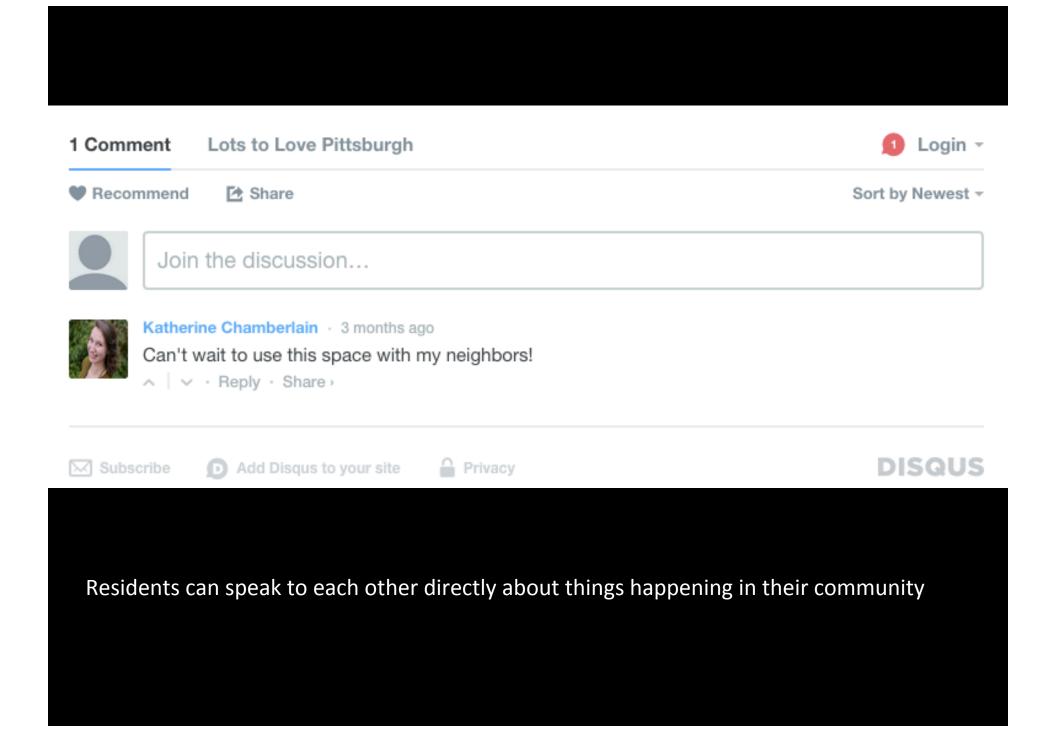
#### 0 HURRELL ST

Parcel ID 0307G00395000909 Municipality MCKEESPORT - 3RD WARD Use VACANT COMMERCIAL LAND

Property Owner REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MCKEESPORT Is the property delinquent? No







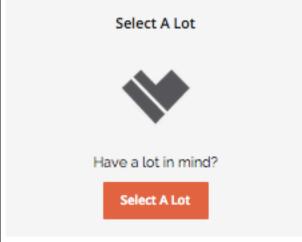
### There's LOTS TO LOVE in the Pittsburgh region.

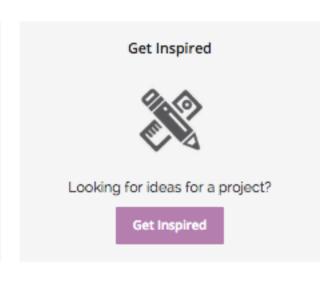
In fact, there are over 45,000 vacant lots in Allegheny County alone, many of which have negative impacts on our communities.

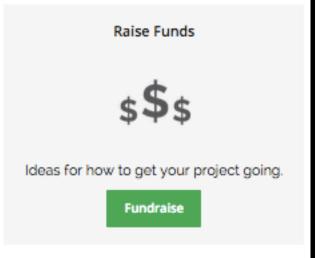
Join us as we work to reclaim them, one lot at a time.

### Want to join the Lots to Love community?

**Click Here to Register** 







## **ABOUT**

#### WHAT IS LOTS TO LOVE?

Lots to Love is a guide for <u>community organizations</u> and residents who are interested in transforming vacant lots into well-loved spaces. As you explore this site, you will find resources and ideas to do just that. You will also find information about many organizations that are already strengthening and greening the Pittsburgh region.

The map on the home page details every vacant lot in Allegheny County. If you're looking for a particular vacant lot, you can search by dragging and zooming on the map, or type in the neighborhood, municipality, or address. When you click a lot on the map, you will see its unique identification number, ownership and tax delinquency status.

You will see some vacant lots in red, blue, and green. These lots are where communities have already begun a greening project. If you'd like to add your own vacant lot project to the map, you can register here.

The map featured on this website utilizes data from the Allegheny County
Assessment, City of Pittsburgh Real Estate Department and Department of City
Planning, as well as community organizations and people like you!

#### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Vacant land causes a long list of issues, including a decreased tax-base for the surrounding neighborhood, public health issues, social isolation, and environmental hazards. In particular, vacant land has become a legacy of Pittsburgh's economic shift that places a great deal of burden on the City. Within the City, vacant land is not only an economic challenge, but also a geographical and organizational one. These properties are highly dispersed, vary in size, and differ in title status. As such, the challenge facing the City of Pittsburgh and its residents often rests in finding viable interim uses, preserving future opportunities, and crafting long-term solutions all while streamlining these processes for interested individuals and groups.

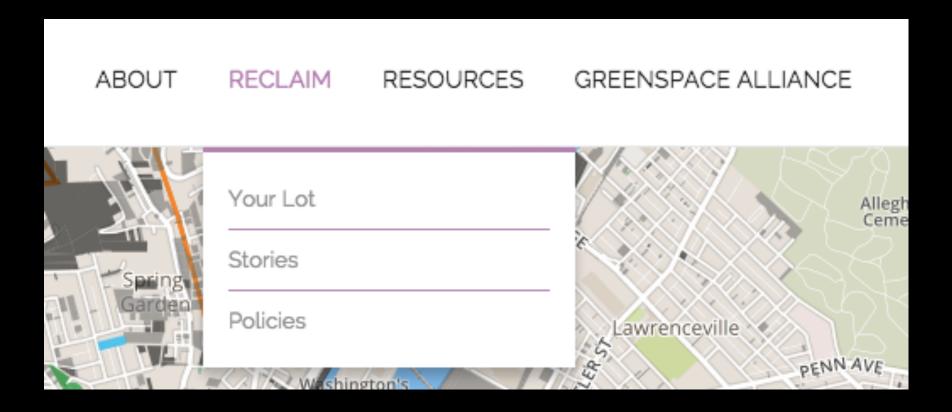
As a result, GTECH Strategies – along with the City of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Greenspace Alliance – have developed this resource. Lots to Love will act as a centralized resource for anyone seeking information about the process for community driven greening projects, with a special focus on vacant parcels throughout the county.

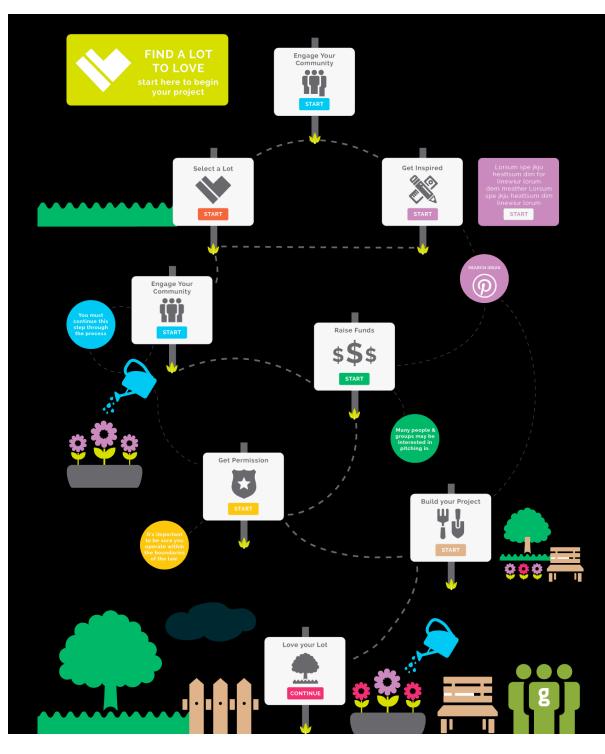




GREENSPACE ALLIANCE

## **RECLAIM**





## YOUR LOT

- Engage Your Community
- Select a Lot
- Get Inspired
- Raise Funds
- Get Permission
- Build your Project
- Love Your Lot

## Select a Lot



## Get Inspired

- Goals of the project
- Capacity for the work
- Suitability of the lot
- Resources available





#### DESIGN CONCEPT IDEAS TO USE AS A STARTING POINT

Below are a list of design concepts that you can use as a starting point. Remember to consider what you've learned during your lot research, and use your creativity! For even more ideas, visit our Pinterest page.



#### Clean & Green

cost: low workload: low time: low



#### **Parklet**

cost: moderate workload: high time: moderate



#### Flower Garden

cost: low workload: low time: moderate



#### Playspace

cost: high workload: high time: moderate



#### Food Garden

cost: high workload: high time: high



#### Pop Up Events

cost: low workload: low time: low



#### Gateway

cost: moderate workload: moderate time: moderate



#### Public Art

cost: high workload: moderate time: low



#### Green + Screen

cost: high workload: moderate time: high



#### Rain Garden

cost: high workload: high time: moderate



#### Wooded Lot

cost: moderate workload: moderate time: moderate



#### Trail

cost: moderate workload: moderate time: moderate

### Rain Gardens and Stormwater Management

Home » Your Lot » Get Inspired » Rain Gardens and Stormwater Management









A rain garden is a garden built specifically to capture stormwater runoff and let it seep slowly into the soil rather than running into the sewer system. When stormwater (runoff water and snowmelt) is absorbed into the ground, it filters and replenishes aquifers. However, much of the land surface in urban areas is covered by impervious, non-penetrable surfaces (like buildings and pavement) that prevent stormwater from being absorbed into the ground. Thoughtful landscape planning can help capture or divert stormwater during storm events. By controlling stormwater where it falls, the quantity of runoff will decrease.

#### More Facts about Stormwater

- Stormwater that does not seep into the ground flows into a combined sewer system or ends up directly in our streams and rivers. When it rains heavily or snow melts rapidly, the combined sewer system can overflow, resulting in the contamination of streams and rivers.
- A combined sewer system combines both sanitary sewage and stormwater in one piping system. When the capacity of the combined sewer system is exceeded, the excess flow is discharged into rivers and streams. Effective stormwater management can prevent the combined sewer system from overflowing.
- As little as one-tenth of an inch of rain can cause raw sewage to overflow into our rivers and streams in Pittsburgh.

- Stormwater that does not seep into the ground carries fertilizers, dirt, pesticides, grease, litter, and other pollutants into our streams and rivers.
- > Stormwater runoff is nationally the most common cause of water pollution
- > When the combined sewer system overflows, Allegheny County issues river advisories if the water is too contaminated for contact. On average, nearly half of the days during the regular boating season are under advisory.
- > 90% of Allegheny county residents use Pittsburgh's rivers as the main source of drinking water.

#### Process

- 1 To design your lot to capture stormwater, the qualities of the vacant lot being used will have to be considered. Check out the site assessment page to see how different aspects of the site will affect how you will build your project. Because it takes some expertise to design a lot to capture stormwater, it's a good idea to get input from an organization dedicated to stormwater issues, like Nine Mile Run Watershed Association, Stormworks, or Three Rivers Waterkeeper. For larger projects, it is necessary to seek help from an organization because any larger changes can affect the flow of water outside of your lot. Before going to one of these organizations, consider what stormwater issues exist right around your lot. Are there spots where water sits on the ground? Is there a roof nearby with a downspout that runs into the sewers? Below are some examples of strategies you may use:
- Rain Gardens or Bio-retention Cells: A <u>rain garden</u> is a planted recession that diverts runoff water from impervious surfaces, like rooftops and parking lots, around it into the ground, instead of the nearest storm drain.
- Rain Barrels and Cisterns: A rain barrel, or cistern, is a container used to collect and store rainwater, typically from rooftops via gutters and downspouts. Rain

#### Benefits

- > Keeps stormwater out of the sewer
- > Keeps rivers cleaner
- > Adds visual interest to a vacant lot
- > Can increase neighborhood awareness of stormwater issues
- > Habitat for native plants and wildlife

#### Suitability and Considerations

To do a Rain Garden or Stormwater Management project, the qualities of the vacant lot being used will have to be considered. Check out the lot assessment page to see how different aspects of the lot will affect how you will carry out your project

Vacant lots that have drainage issues or are adjacent to (and downhill from) impermeable surfaces. Check out the <u>vacant lot</u> you're considering when it's raining if you're truly seeking to implement a project that will contribute to the stormwater management plan at a larger scale.

For more information, check out 3 Rivers Wet Weather's website.

## Raise Funds



## Raise Funds

### Raise Funds

Home » Your Lot » Raise Funds

Before you begin fundraising for your project, make sure you have a clear idea of your projected projected budget. Consider all of the different people that can benefit from your work, as well as the organizations that would support the goals of your vacant lot project. What is the best way to work with those people and organizations to fundraise for your vacant lot? There are four common ways that you can raise money for your project, including crowdfunding, applying for grants, and requesting donations, and getting sponsorships. For instructions and resources for each, follow the links below.



#### Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding: Crowdfunding is a way of raising money by collecting small amounts from many people, typically via the internet.



#### Grant

Grant: A grant is an amount of money given to a person or organization that does not need to be returned at any point. A grant typically requires an application and some follow-up reports.



#### Donation

**Donation**: A donation is simply an amount of money that is given in charity.



#### Sponsorship

Sponsorship: Funds given to an organization or group in return for access to the commercial potential associated with that organization and/or event. blog



## ioby brings neighborhood projects to life, block by block.

start a project

find a project »

### **GTECH**

GTECH and ioby are partnering to support GTECH Ambassadors who are looking for funds to support their work and are interested in running a crowdfunding campaign in spring 2015. Participating Ambassadors will have access to crowdfunding training webinars, and one on one support from ioby staff throughout their campaigns.

GTECH Strategies (Growth Through Energy + Community Health) cultivates the unrealized potential of people and places to improve the economic, social, and environmental health of our communities in Pittsburgh, PA.





Мар



#### Library District Gateway Garden

My specific request that I am fundraising for is this. I would like to have a Little free Library as the centerpience in this gateway garden in order to engage the community to interact within the garden space.

NEEDS: \$0 of 491 + VOLUNTEERS



#### Biggs Hillside Garden

The Biggs Hillside Garden is a project of ReClaim Northside, transforming a vacant lot into a tranquil garden space. Neighbors can stop and sit in the garden or pass by going up and down the Biggs Stairs.

NEEDS: \$0 of 220 + VOLUNTEERS



#### Perry Hilltop (Perry South) Gateway Beautification Project

Steps to be taken at the site:

- · Plant shrubs & perrenials
- · Create walkway and gathering space
- · Install seating & other improvements

NEEDS: \$0 of 515

## **STORIES**

A chance for people to learn from each other and share their success

#### Lots to Love Stories



### Help Support the Reservoir Retreat and ReClaim Ambassador Dana

by Evaine Sing  $\,|\,\,$   $\,$  Crowdfunding, Flower Garden, ReClaim Ambassador, Vacant Lot Project  $\,|\,\,$   $\,$  0

Dana is transforming a former reservoir site into a flourishing community space. The space will utilize recycled materials for seating and art pieces. She envisions her friends and neighbors using the space to have a picnic, walk their dogs or stroll alongside the flowers...

Read More



#### Historic Knoxville Incline Overlook

by Evaine Sing  $\mid$   $\clubsuit$  ReClaim Ambassador, Trail  $\mid$  Overlook, Vacant Lot Project  $\mid$   $\clubsuit$  0

Cara Jette was a GTECH ReClaim South Ambassador in 2013-2014. This was the project completed through the Ambassador program with support from the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association, neighbors of the site, and broader Allentown residents. From 1890 to 1960, the Knoxville Incline served...

Read More



#### Vacancy in my Community: McKeesport Library Neighborhood

by Lydia Yoder | 🛦 ReClaim Ambassador | 🗪 o

Shari Holland, ReClaim McKeesport Ambassador "A garden should make you feel you've entered privileged space — a place not just set apart but reverberant — and it seems to me that, to achieve this, the gardener must put some kind of twist on the

#### **SEARCH**

Enter Keyword



#### **RECENT BLOG POSTS**

Home » Lots to Love Stories

- > Help Support the Reservoir
- > Historic Knoxville Incline Overlook
- Proposed Urban Agriculture
   Zoning Code: FAQs

#### **CATEGORIES**

- > Collaboration
- > Crowdfunding
- > Flower Garden
- > Food Garden
- > Greenspace Alliance
- > Pop Up Event
- > ReClaim Ambassador
- > Trail | Overlook
- > Vacant Lot Project



BOUT RECLAIM RESOURCES GREENSPACE ALLIANCE

### Surprising Effects of Community Gardens

Home » Vacant Lot Project » Food Garden » Surprising Effects of Community Gardens



#### Surprising Effects of Community Gardens

🚠 Food Garden, ReClaim Ambassador | 🗪 0

A community garden is a wonderful idea for a <u>vacant lot</u>. The benefits outside of fresh produce, became very real to Lisa Freeman after founding the Manchester Growing Together Community Garden in 2011. Just a few blocks from her home in Pittsburgh's Northside, the garden has had a lasting impact not only on her, but the surrounding community as well.

#### Gardens Are a Tool for Crime Prevention

"Elements that we assume as bad became part of the community — part of the garden. It has a redemptive value. They were pulled into this Lisa had a hard time ignoring the illegal activities happening on the corner near her garden. She would walk past young men selling drugs while hers arms were full of compost and tools. Instead of overlooking their behavior, she began to ask them for their help. Soon those that were engaged in illicit activities became garden volunteers.

#### SEARCH

Enter Keyword

Go

#### RECENT BLOG POSTS

- Help Support the Reservoir Retreat and ReClaim Ambassador
- > Stand up for Transportation Day
- > Greenspace Trolley Tour
- > Historic Knoxville Incline Overlook
- Proposed Urban Agriculture Zoning Code: FAQs

#### CATEGORIES

- Collaboration
- > Crowdfunding
- > Flower Garden
- > Food Garden
- > Greenspace Alliance
- > Pop Up Event

## **POLICIES**

- Land Banks
- Community Land Trusts
- Conservatorship
- Consent Decree

## RESOURCES

ABOUT RECLAIM RESOURCES GREENSPACE ALLIANCE Events Alleg Organization Directory Member Badges PENN AVE Glossary



ABOUT RESOURCES GREENSPACE ALLIANCE RECLAIM

LEGEND:

Classes and Lectures Volunteer Events

**EVENTS IN** SEARCH Date Search

FIND EVENTS

VIEW AS ∰ Month

### Events for July 2015

#### « June

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
Volunteer Dsy, McKeesport Ambassador Julie Fleckenstein	McKeesport Ambassador Picnic	Volunteer Day, ReClaim Northside Ambassador Angela Williams	Volunteer Day, McKeesport Ambassador Sharon Soles			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
				Green Playces: Northside Day 1		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26

• EXPORT MONTH'S EVENTS

**Add Your Event** 



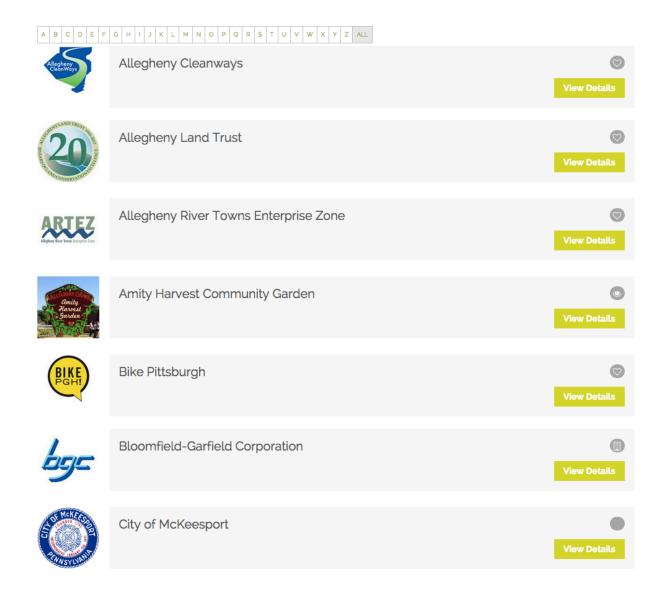
ABOUT

RECLAIM RESOURCES

GREENSPACE ALLIANCE

### Organization Directory

Home » Organization Directory





### City of Pittsburgh, Office of Community Affairs

414 Grant Street, STE 541 Pittsburgh PA 15219

412-255-4773

Ohttps://www.facebook.com/ocapgh

Type: Government

The City of Pittsburgh's Office of Community Affairs (OCA) is here to serve the residents of Pittsburgh. For updates on city programs and initiatives, follow us on Facebook, Twitter (@OCApgh), and look for our posts on Nextdoor.com.

**EMAIL US** 

#### **SERVICES**

Outreach

😋 Resource Provider

#### **EXPERTISE**

No areas of expertise specified.



**EMAIL US** 

### **GTECH Strategies**

6587 Hamilton Avenue, #1W Pittsburgh, PA 15206

- 412.361.2099
- Ohttp://www.gtechstrategies.org

Type: V NonProfit

Growth Through Energy and Community Health (GTECH) cultivates the unrealized potential of people and places to improve the economic, social, and environmental health of our communities. We work county wide addressing land use issues using vacant land as a platform for to engage communities and distribute capacity so they can take ownership of the solutions.

#### **SERVICES**

- Consulting
- 14 Design
- Implementation
- Outreach
- Planning
- Technical Assistance
- Uvolunteer Coordination

#### **EXPERTISE**

- ☆ Community Development
- ♣ Greenway/Trail
- Planning
- Stormwater Management
- □ Sustainability
- Urban Agriculture



Copy & Paste the iFrame below into your site to embed the Lots To Love Badge:

<a href='' title='Lots to Love' ><img src='http://www.lotsto
love.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/LTL\_Badge-300x300.jpg' a
lt='Lots to Love Badge' title='Lots to Love' width='' height
=''/></a><br/>><a href='http://www.lotstolove.org/'></a>



Copy & Paste the iFrame below into your site to embed the Greenspace Alliance Badge:

<a href='' title='Greenspace Alliance Member' ><img src='htt
p://www.lotstolove.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Greenspace
\_Alliance\_BADGE=300x300.jpg' alt='Greenspace Alliance Member'
' title='Greenspace Alliance Member' width='' height=''/></a
><br/><a href='http://www.lotstolove.org/greenspace-alliance/'></a>



- 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania
- · Allegheny Cleanways
- Allegheny Commons Initiative
- Allegheny Land <u>Trust</u>
- Ambassador
- An Ambassador is an active community resident participating in GTECH's education and training programs to address issues in their neighborhoods. To meet GTECH Ambassadors
  - Ambassadors, follow this
- Anchor Institution links
- BikePGH
- Bioretention
- Bioswale
- Catalyst
- Charrette
- City of Pittsburgh Art Commission
- City of Pittsburgh Legal Department
- City of Pittsburgh Real Estate Division
- City Planning
- Coalition
- Collaboration
- Community Advocacy
- Community Based Organization
- Community Capacity
- Community Development Corporation

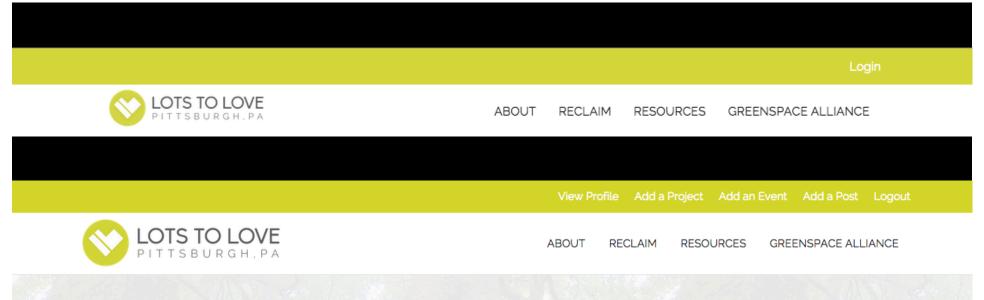
## **GREENSPACE ALLIANCE**

ABOUT RECLAIM RESOURCES GREENSPACE ALLIANCE

Home » Greenspace Alliance

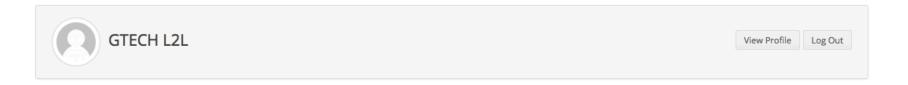
### Want to join the Lots to Love community?

**Click Here to Register** 





Home » Log In



#### **QUICK LINKS**

- > About
- > Your Lot
- > Blog & News
- > Organization Directory
- > Greenspace Alliance
- > Member Badges
- > Glossary

#### **GET OUR NEWSLETTER**

Sign up to get updates by email.

**Enter Email Address** 

Signu

#### RECENT TWEETS



#### **EVENTS**

#### Green Playces: Northside Day 1

July 17 @ 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

#### Green Playces: Northside Day 3

July 31 @ 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

View All Events



#lots2love

LotstoLove.org

lots2lovepgh@gtechstrategies.org

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