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**Detroit Future City Reaches 50-Grantee Milestone for Vacant Land Revitalization**

DETROIT – This year, Detroit Future City (DFC) will award over $50,000 in grants to eight Detroit-based organizations to support transforming vacant Detroit land into well-maintained landscapes. Since beginning its Working with Lots Program in 2016, DFC has awarded grants to 50 different organizations, including this year’s grantees.

The Working with Lots program provides technical assistance, education and funding for Detroiters to transform vacant land in their communities into intentional landscapes and productive community spaces, utilizing The Field Guide to Working with Lots. The Field Guide is an online toolkit that provides a valuable resource to guide Detroiters through the process of repurposing vacant land into beautiful neighborhood gardens and park space, even in a post-COVID-19 world.

“DFC and our Field Guide team are really proud to continue our efforts towards a sustainable, greener Detroit through our Working with Lots program,” said Pier Davis, DFC Working with Lots program manager. “The coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated just how important it is for communities to have accessible outdoor green spaces, which contribute to physical and mental health and well-being. We are taking extra precautions this year to make sure all of our grantees have a safe, healthy and successful implementation season.”

A number of environmental studies prove a correlation between lower rates of anxiety, depression, and crime rates in landscaped environments. And as with most of the Working with Lots grantees, Bryden Central Block Club has already seen how creating intentional outdoor areas improves neighborhood well-being.

“Beautiful areas change how you feel, they improve your health,” Ashaki Johnsonof Byrden Central Block Club says. “By adding the beauty of trees and flowers to a neighborhood, you can make changes on a psychological level, and encourage more positive social interactions between adults and children. Our grant from DFC’s Working with Lots program will help us create more calm, and change the atmosphere of our community.”

The 2020 Working with Lots Grantees are:

* Located in the East Davison Village neighborhood, **20 Books, Inc**. is a community-based nonprofit that uses literacy and blight clean-ups to grow and support the community. They will implement the *Side Lot Solutions lot designs*, which will transform three separate sites within a half-mile radius.
* From a food pantry to clothing donation, **Auntie Na’s House** has been a huge support system for the Westside community for a long time. This year, they are using their grant to implement the *Mounds of Fun lot design*, which uses topography to create a fun, interactive area for kids of all ages.
* Located in Detroit’s Distrct 6, the **Bryden Central Block Club** empowers its community through insightful workshops and events related to environmental and political issues. They will implement a *custom lot design* that will address the need for outdoor recreational space.
* **Canfield Consortium** is a community group that continues to improve the East Canfield community in becoming a flourishing and economically-sound neighborhood. Returning to the program for the third year in a row, the group will implement the *Forest Patcher lot design*, which transforms an existing forested space into a naturalized amenity for the East Canfield community.
* The **Mushroom Factory** grows gourmet fungus-based foods for restaurants and farmers' markets. This small business on Detroit’s Eastside will implement the *Storm Soaker lot design*, which uses engineering and natural elements to manage Detroit’s increased rainfall onto the cement.
* **Detroit Hives** is a nonprofit that transforms vacant lots into urban bee farms.
* **Emerald Isles Community Development Corporation** is a community development organization driven towards environmental quality, protection, and beautification in East English Village.
* **Northend Christian Community Development Corporation** is a community development organization that continues its work to activating vacant storefronts and extensive urban agricultural projects in the Northend Neighborhood. They are best known for the Oakland Avenue Farmers Market, the first agricultural urban landscape in Detroit’s North End.

These last three organizations will implement the *Perennial Propagator lot design*, a show-stopping display that hosts dozens of perennial flowers that spread and can be divided for other projects.

The Working with Lots program is supported with funding from the Kresge Foundation and Bank of America Charitable Foundation. For more information about the DFC Working with Lots Program and this year’s grantees, visit www.detroitfuturecity.com/wwl-2020 or connect through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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**About Detroit Future City**

Detroit Future City (DFC) is a nonprofit organization committed to catalyzing long-term sustainability and quality of life in Detroit. The organization partners with residents, government, and private stakeholders through data-driven strategies to promote the advancement of land use and sustainability, as well as community and economic development. For more information, please visit <https://detroitfuturecity.com/mission/>.

**About Detroit Future City’s Working with Lots Program**

The Working with Lots Program inspires land stewardship in Detroit through educational resources and annual grant awards. The Field Guide to Working with Lots provides instructions and ideas for landscape designs to transform vacant land into community assets. For more information, visit <https://dfc-lots.com/about/>.