



connections

FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Linking Greenville's Neighborhoods to Jobs and Open Space

City of Greenville, South Carolina

June 2014, Issue No. 27



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FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability
Spotlight

Less Lawn and a "Greener" Garden

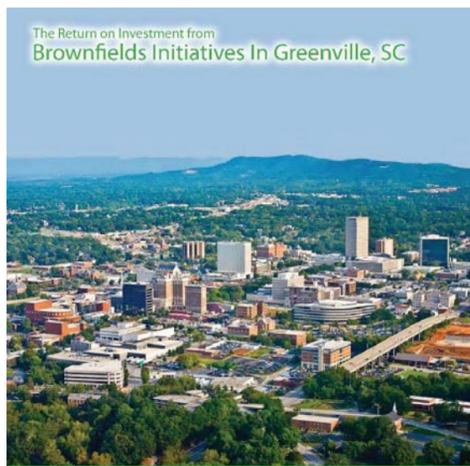
by
Jaclin DuRant

Community Appreciation Celebration

Tuesday, June 24
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Kroc Center

The Connections for Sustainability Project began three years ago. Since the start of the project, we have completed city-wide studies of housing and transportation, a plan for a potential park, and the West Side Comprehensive Plan. We've built a greenhouse from plastic bottles, brought in nationally acclaimed speakers, developed a West Side Brand, completed a market study, and produced children's books. We've held meetings, fairs, and outreach events where countless numbers of granola bars were consumed. And, none of what we've done would have been possible without the amazing support that we have received from our community. So, for our final celebration, we want to take a moment and look back at the many accomplishments of the connections project and thank everyone who has dedicated their time and effort to helping us strengthen Greenville's connections as we worked to link quality jobs, neighborhoods, and open space.

Please click [here](#) to add this event to your calendar.



Brownfields grants traditionally have a great return on investment!

Brownfields Grant Awarded

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced in late May that the City of Greenville would be awarded \$400,000 over three years to assess local brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance,

pollutant, or contaminant. The City will focus these funds on the West Side to help implement some of the changes called for in the West Side Comprehensive Plan.

The City is very excited to receive this very competitive grant. This funding allows us to continue the work started with past brownfields funding (the last brownfields grant we received was awarded in 2009), as well as continue some of the work of the Connections project. We expect to continue this e-newsletter in quarterly installments. We also expect to continue the Sustainable Cinema quarterly.

Greenville's brownfield funds will be spent with guidance from the Brownfields Task Force, a steering committee of about 12 residents, many of which have experience with the Task Force during past brownfields grants. If you are interested in being a part of this committee, we would welcome your involvement. All that is needed is a commitment to meet during lunch once per quarter, and a willingness to learn more about brownfields. Please contact Christa Jordan at 467-4428 to learn more.

"Not only are these funds protecting the environment and public health by helping communities clean up blighted toxic waste sites, there are new job growth opportunities for local economies to leverage through these investments," said Gina McCarthy, EPA Administrator. "With cities looking at how to combat the impacts of climate change, it's more important than ever

Why is it that when so many people think "yard," the first image that comes to mind is a large expanse of mown, manicured grass? Grass is not the only option for a beautiful yard, and there are many benefits to installing a garden instead of grass.

Grass uses a lot of resources: water to keep it green, fuel and man power to keep it trimmed, and chemicals to keep it healthy. Switching your grass to garden beds may seem time consuming and expensive, but if done correctly, it can save money in the long run. Here are some tips for making the switch:

Plant native trees, shrubs, and flowers. Native plants are adapted to living in our climate, so they need less water once they are established. In addition, native plants provide shelter and food for beneficial insects like pollinators and natural enemies which will naturally keep pest populations down, reducing the need for chemical pesticides.

Mulch to reduce weeds. Instead of using herbicides to keep weeds out of your beds, add mulch. Mulch has the added benefit of increasing the infiltration of water into the ground and reducing water loss. Make your own mulch by using shredded leaves, pine needles, bark, and other yard waste from your own garden. Make sure to keep the mulch away from the base of trees and shrubs and less than 2 inches deep over plant roots so that you don't accidentally harm your larger plants.

Collect rainwater to reduce runoff and save money. Rain barrels can be connected to downspouts to collect rainwater from your roof and then later used to water your garden, saving water and money. Hooking up a drip irrigation system to your rain barrels will help get the water where it needs to go with minimal evaporation and waste.

Know your site and your soil. Planting the right plants in the right spot will help ensure the success of your garden for years to come. If you have a low depression where water pools, a rain garden may be a great idea. In drier, sandy soils, a rock garden or xeriscaping with drought tolerant plants may be more appropriate. Do your research and soil testing first to save money and time down the road.

Be creative. There are so many options for a sustainable, beautiful outdoor space. Consider paths and patios made with pavers, gravel, or mulch, which are permeable options that allow water to soak into the soil and reduce runoff. Think about which animals you'd like to share your

for communities to innovate new ways to retrofit formerly polluted, unused sites for renewable energy use."

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. In 2002, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act was passed to help states and communities around the country clean up and revitalize brownfields sites. Under this law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

A total of approximately \$23.5 million is going to communities that have been impacted by plant closures. Other selected recipients include tribes and communities in 44 states across the country; and at least 50 of the grants are going to HUD-DOT-EPA grant recipient communities.

space with and add bird baths, butterfly bushes, and native flowers accordingly. Statuary, container gardens, raised fire pits, and more can all transform your yard into a beautiful living space. Check out resale stores and yard sales to maximize your budget and reduce waste by purchasing these items gently used.

Whether you're planting herbs, vegetables, flowers, or a mixture, replacing your grass with garden beds can lead to a beautiful, sustainable yard that you will enjoy for years to come.

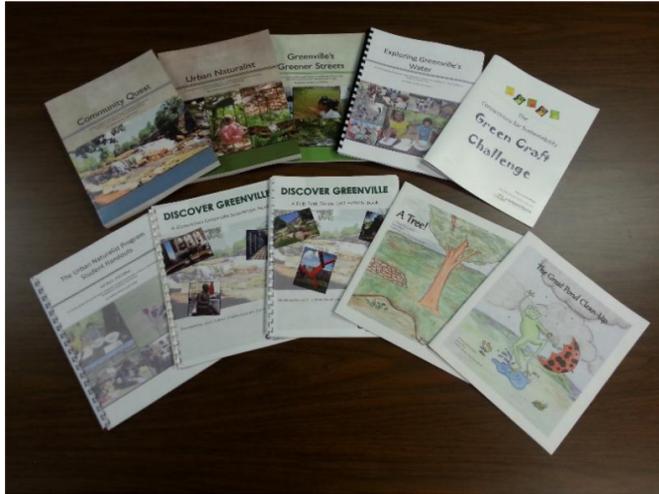
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Email us:

connections@greenville.gov

Call us: 864.467.4570

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The Livability Curriculum covers the many facets of sustainability, all from the perspective of living here in the City of Greenville.

Livability Curriculum

Have you ever wondered how you can enrich your child's learning about nature and community, the spirit of giving and responsibility? If so, take a look at one of the many resources developed by our Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant. Each lesson, activity, or article is written specifically for residents of the City of Greenville and addresses these issues using local examples. Take a young friend on a scavenger hunt of the downtown, and maybe you will also learn a little about the local history of the City. All of the resources are written for a range of audiences, and include field tested and fun learning opportunities for all ages!

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