

11.0 Recreation, Open Space and Environment

The Lansdowne Steering Committee has identified environment, open space and recreation as important issues in their community. Since these topics are certainly interrelated, they can be comprehensively addressed in this chapter of the plan. This comprehensive approach offers a variety of programs to address the multitude of problems and opportunities identified within the Lansdowne neighborhood. These programs were developed with special attention paid to the desires of community residents as expressed in community meetings, residential surveys, neighborhood conditions surveys, census data analysis and various interactive exercises at monthly LSC meetings.

According to the residential survey, eighty-five percent of neighborhood residents felt that the incidence of illegal dumping was a serious problem in their community. During the SWOT analysis, many community members listed trash and the abundance of stray animals as some of the other major problems they felt affected Lansdowne. While completing a cognitive mapping exercise during one of the Steering Committee's monthly meetings, residents also identified the abundance of open space as one of the many positive aspects of their neighborhood, while recognizing that these areas posed a significant opportunity to create beautiful community spaces like shared gardens.

Therefore, this plan focuses on the need for cleaning, improving and creating parks as well as the beautification of the neighborhood. In addition, the residents identified the need for a community center as well as recreational activities for all members of the community. The following programs have been created to specifically address the needs that have been identified in the Lansdowne neighborhood. They are listed in order of priority and feasibility of completion. The programs can be undertaken in any order as Lansdowne Steering Committee priorities may change. The first step to be taken by the Lansdowne Steering Committee is to form a subcommittee, the Recreation/Open Space, Environment (ROSE) subcommittee, to carry out the programs that are enumerated below.

Programs:

- 1. Neighborhood Cleanup Days**
- 2. Streetscape Beautification**
- 3. Community Gardens**

4. **Code enforcement campaign**
5. **Creek Restoration/Walking Trail**
6. **Park Activities**
7. **Park Beautification**
8. **Community Center**
9. **Animal Control**

11.1 Neighborhood Cleanup Days

Program Description:

This is a very flexible project that would allow a variety of neighborhood projects to be completed. One Saturday per month, volunteers would gather to complete a project identified in the neighborhood, such as clearing litter from a lot and planting a community garden or completing a Streetscape Beautification project.

Rationale:

Currently, there is a lack of park upkeep and a major problem with illegal dumping in the park areas and vacant lots in the community. Neighborhood Clean Up Days will be the first step toward the beautification of neighborhood parks, and will re-enforce a sense of community.

Leading Agency and Potential Participating Agencies:

- ?? Lansdowne Steering Committee, along with NTAC and designated block captains, will all be involved by recruiting people to participate.
- ?? Volunteers should come from within the neighborhood, but ESLARP students can also assist
- ?? The leisure studies department at the University of Illinois can also be utilized.

Activities:

1. The Lansdowne Steering Committee, specifically the ROSE subcommittee, will be responsible for identifying projects for community cleanup days
2. ROSE committee obtains the equipment to complete these projects, as well as organizing volunteers to complete the tasks. Tools can be gathered from participants garages and missing items can be bought and store by LSC. Donations for plants and tools should be solicited at local hardware stores and nurseries.

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3. The city of East St. Louis Park district should be requested to pick up yard waist and other trash or provide dumpsters.
4. If residents wish to follow a Neighborhood Cleanup by starting a community garden or planting flowers along streets within the community, refer to either the Community Garden program or Streetscape Beautification program, which are both detailed below.

Required Resources:

For activities related to clean up days:

- ?? gardening tools
- ?? gloves
- ?? trash bags
- ?? wheelbarrows
- ?? lawn mowers
- ?? Plants etc.

These supplies can be donated from local businesses or shared among residents. The Lansdowne Steering Committee, and more specifically the ROSE committee, could create a “Shared Tool Shed” for projects such as park upkeep, community gardens and streetscape beautification. These “community tools” could be stored at a designated location, perhaps at the NTAC office, for use on neighborhood projects. Also, individual residents could “check out” these items for use in personal projects, if they are unable to purchase their own. Larger items such as dumpsters and lawn mowers are required to be supplied by the Park District.

Funding Needs:

Supplies needed include trash bags, gloves, gardening tools, plants and mowers. For those items not currently owned by residents or obtained through donation, such as lawn mowers, ESLARP and NTAC can be of assistance in lending out tools and assist in grant writing to acquire the needed tools.

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Potential Funding Sources:

Many of the activities in this program can be accomplished with very little money. If the Steering Committee (assisted by NTAC) campaigns aggressively, they would probably be able to secure most of the necessary items through donation.

Technical Assistance Providers:

Very little outside assistance would be required for this project. If necessary, students and faculty from the Horticulture, Leisure Studies, Landscape Architecture, Architecture, and Urban Planning departments from the University of Illinois may be called on for additional assistance.

Timeline:

This project can be implemented immediately, and will occur one Saturday every month. If community participation is adequate, and projects are continually being identified, the Steering Committee can increase the frequency of this program as deemed necessary.

11.2 Streetscape Beautification

Program Description:

The main goal of this program is to beautify the major thoroughfares of the Lansdowne neighborhood by making simple and affordable landscape improvements. One of the easiest ways to accomplish this would be to plant flowers, foliage, and shrubbery along the most heavily traveled streets in the neighborhood. This program could be accomplished through the implementation of another ROSE Program—"Neighborhood Cleanup Days." One of these Cleanup Days could be devoted to working on a particular street in Lansdowne and focusing neighborhood efforts on improving the appearance of that thoroughfare.

Rationale:

The Streetscape Beautification program would accomplish one of the main goals laid out by the Lansdowne Steering Committee—to increase community residents' involvement in their neighborhood. This program would also aid other program areas that are addressed in this plan (i.e. crime and infrastructure issues) by slowing down the speeding traffic. This program is being implemented to provide aesthetic improvement to the community, involve children and other residents, thus increasing the exposure of the Lansdowne Steering Committee in the

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neighborhood. It will also serve as an example of a successful physical improvement to the neighborhood.

Model Programs:

Residents in attendance at Lansdowne Steering Committee meetings mentioned a successful streetscape improvement program in neighboring Jefferson County. The program was called “Slow Down and Smell the Flowers” and aimed to decrease the speed of passing motorists by creating something pleasant to look at along the streetscape.

Leading Agency and Potential Participating Agencies:

- ?? The ROSE subcommittee within the Lansdowne Steering Committee will serve as the lead agency of this program. They will be responsible for identifying the streets which will be improved and decide on a timeline in which to accomplish the project.
- ?? Gateway Greening is a nonprofit organization located in the St. Louis area dedicated to community development. Since 1984, Gateway Greening has helped transform neglected and abandoned lots into productive gardens and beautiful landscaped areas.

Activities:

1. Within the ROSE committee, a specific person/group of people must be designated to acquire and organize the supplies needed (plants and gardening tools) for the project from a local nursery or gardening store.
2. Volunteers must then be gathered to do the work of preparing the ground and planting the flowers. The ROSE committee might choose to identify groups, as well as individuals, that would like to take on the responsibility for the improvements of a specific street. For example, a group of church members might take responsibility for the street their church is located on, or an elementary school-class making claim to the street in front of their school.
3. It is also essential that a water source be identified and readily accessible to the locations chosen for this type of beautification.
4. Additionally, a maintenance schedule should also be identified so that the plants can be weeded and watered on a regular basis by the group that has been identified as responsible for that area. This source could be a resident or a class of schoolchildren who adopts a block to have under their care. This “Adopt a Block” strategy could really be one of the highlights of the Streetscape Beautification program. It would get

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various groups in the community involved and assign them personal responsibility for the enhancement of a specific area of the Lansdowne neighborhood.

Required Resources:

Volunteers must be gathered together and organized. They must be made aware of which streets are next to be beautified and informed about when the work will be done and how they can help. Volunteers may come from some of the following groups:

- ?? Schoolchildren
- ?? Church members
- ?? Senior citizens
- ?? Block residents

The site and supplies for the garden must also be obtained before this work can begin.

This could occur through donation (by businesses or residents) or sharing of tools by the people who are committed to working on a specific street (Refer to “Shared Tool Shed” idea under Neighborhood Clean Up Days program). Some of these items include:

- ?? Gardening tools
- ?? Gloves
- ?? Trash bags
- ?? Wheelbarrows
- ?? Lawn mowers
- ?? Bulbs
- ?? Seeds
- ?? Flowers
- ?? Foliage
- ?? Shrubbery

Funding Needs:

If community members currently own the garden implements necessary to complete the work needed, no funding would be needed to purchase these tools. Planting costs can be kept relatively low if gardeners plant flowers/vegetables using seed packets, which general cost

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under a dollar apiece. Flowers and plants might also be secured through donations by local nurseries. This could be achieved if the community group promises to post a sign of advertisement for the donating businesses next to the completed landscaping. This would provide the business with very prominent advertising in the community. If any of these items cannot be secured through donation, grant funding could possibly be utilized to obtain the necessary supplies.

Potential Funding Sources:

Gateway Greening, the organization spoken of earlier, provides resources and training to neighborhood groups who believe in their communities and want to reclaim them from urban decay. Their contact information is:

Gateway Greening, Inc.

P.O. Box 299

St. Louis, MO 63166

Phone: (314) 577-9484

Fax: (314) 577-9435

gateway.greening@mobot.org

Technical Assistance Providers:

- ?? Gateway Greening would be an excellent source of assistance for this type of program.
- ?? NTAC (Neighborhood Technical Assistance Center) will provide any assistance necessary for any grant writing and funding solicitation for activities related to neighborhood beautification through community development.
- ?? If necessary, students and faculty from the Horticulture, Leisure Studies, Landscape Architecture, Architecture, and Urban Planning departments from the University of Illinois may be called on for additional assistance.

11.3 Community Gardens

Program Description:

The “Community Gardens” program has been created in an effort to both beautify the Lansdowne neighborhood as well as to draw residents together to improve their community.

Rationale:

There are many vacant, trash filled lots located in the Lansdowne community. Many neighborhood residents feel that these spaces are detrimental to the appearance and image of their community, present safety hazards for their children, and draw stray animals into the neighborhood. If a community garden project could be implemented, it would not only improve the look of the neighborhood, but also provide an opportunity for the improvement of community relations and resident cooperation through garden maintenance.

Model Programs:

Clinton Community Garden is located on West 48th Street between 9th and 10th Avenues in New York, New York. The site of this community garden was formerly a vacant lot, filled with abandoned cars. In 1977, a group of nearby residents decided to change the space into a community garden consisting of 5' x 8' individual gardening plots. Paths were created through the garden and fences were erected around it for protection. All work done in the Clinton Community Garden is done by volunteers and is managed by a Steering Committee whose members volunteer to serve either a one or two-year term. In order to obtain a key to the garden, you must live or work within their catchments area. In 1984, Mayor Ed Koch donated the land to New York City's Parks and Recreation department, awarding it parkland status-a first for a community garden. More information about this garden can be found at its website: <http://www.clintoncommunitygarden.org>

Browning Elementary School Community Garden is located at 607 Northwood, an inner city neighborhood in Houston, Texas. Shell Oil Company sponsored the garden in fall 1996 through the program Say Yes to a Youngster's Future. The garden has been integrated into the elementary school curriculum and is maintained by the students with the aid of a parents' group. Both groups enjoy the vegetable crop harvest that includes: tomatoes, peppers, okra, cabbage, cauliflower, peas, beans, carrots, sweet potatoes, lettuce, collards, cucumbers, onions. This garden also includes a “wildscape” area planted with perennial grasses and flowers and contains

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a small pond. Such an area provides a healthy ecosystem, attracting lots of good bugs and wildlife.

Leading Agency and Potential Participating Agencies:

- ?? The ROSE subcommittee will be responsible for the initiation of new community gardens as well the organization of volunteers.
- ?? Grade school classes provide an excellent manpower resource for community gardening programs. It might be possible to have each grade or classroom responsible for the care of one small section in a large community garden, or have their own small garden that they are responsible for planting in the spring.
- ?? During the summer months upkeep of the community garden can be accomplished by senior citizens, teachers, or children involved in summer school.
- ?? An agency that might be useful during the inception and funding stage is Gateway Greening. Since 1984, Gateway Greening has helped transform neglected and abandoned lots into productive gardens and beautiful landscaped areas.

Activities:

1. The ROSE subcommittee would identify specific vacant parcels and their owners, and assess the feasibility of creating a community garden at that location.
2. Then the committee must acquire the materials by which to create a garden (i.e. gardening tools, seeds, fertilizer, etc).
3. Volunteers must then be gathered to do the work of creating the garden space.
4. Additionally, a maintenance schedule should also be identified, complete with a list of people and their responsibilities and a timeline for task completion. This type of information is listed in step-by-step, easily understandable categories (at the following website:

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/kindergarden/child/com/com.htm>)

Some of the information included is the formation of planning committee, choosing a site, preparing and developing the site, garden organization, insurance, organizational considerations, management, troubleshooting and resources.

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The Washington State University site (<http://gardening.wsu.edu/>) has an extensive “library” in which there is ample information on lawns, landscaping, weeds, indoor plants, fruit trees, plant problems, vegetables, composting, etc. A very helpful link to “Basic Gardening Skills” (bottom of page) provides assistance with plant sanitation, soil management, watering, pruning, topsoil, weed control and much more. Before the community garden project is combined with the Farmer’s Market a soil study must be done to test the soil for contaminants.

It is also essential that a water source be identified and readily accessible to those working at the community garden location in order that it can be watered regularly (at least once a week). The “Urban Harvest” website (<http://www.jumpnet.com/~arjun/UrbanHarvest/>) provides extensive information on how to start and run community gardens. The site also advertises many free pamphlets that are available for order (i.e. “How to Recruit People & Increase Community Participation”)

Required Resources:

To have a successful community garden, there needs to be significant community involvement. If only one person does all the work, a “community” garden has not been achieved. Volunteers must be gathered together and organized so that they know what they are supposed to do and when they are supposed to complete their assigned tasks.

- ?? Schoolchildren
- ?? Church members
- ?? Senior citizens
- ?? Block residents

The site and supplies for the garden must also be obtained before work can begin. These items might include:

- ?? Spades
- ?? Hoes
- ?? Shovels
- ?? Wheelbarrows
- ?? Fertilizer
- ?? Plant markers
- ?? Wooden stakes

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- ?? String (to mark of various sections of garden)
- ?? Plants
- ?? Bulbs
- ?? Seeds

These materials could be acquired through donation (by businesses or residents), borrowing from other organizations, renting, or by sharing the tools currently owned by the people who are committed to working in a specific garden (Refer to “Shared Tool Shed” idea under Neighborhood Clean Up Days program).

Funding Needs:

If the owners of the vacant property have no problem with the land being used as a community garden, there will be no land purchase price contributing to the overall cost of the garden. If community members currently own the garden implements necessary to complete the work needed, no funding would be needed to purchase these tools. Planting costs can be kept relatively low if gardeners plant flowers/vegetables using seed packets, which general cost under a dollar apiece. If any of these items cannot be secured through donation, grant funding could possibly be utilized to obtain the necessary supplies.

Potential Funding Sources:

Gateway Greening, the organization spoken of earlier, provides resources and training to neighborhood groups who believe in their communities and want to reclaim them from urban decay. Their contact information is:

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The Urban Harvest website also offers a pamphlet entitled “Funding Opportunities for Community Gardens.” (<http://www.jumpnet.com/~arjun/UrbanHarvest/publications.htm>) Contact with these organizations can be made through coordination of Lansdowne Steering Committee members with people at NTAC in order to inquire about and secure funding sources.

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Technical Assistance Providers:

- ?? The Gateway Greening Program. With the assistance of NTAC, the Lansdowne Steering Committee should contact this group and find out how to cooperate with the Gateway Greening Organization
- ?? Students and faculty from the Horticulture, Leisure Studies, Landscape Architecture, Architecture, and Urban Planning departments from the University of Illinois may be called on for additional assistance.
- ?? The Soil Conservation program at the University of Illinois combined with other agencies can check the soil suitability for growing edible vegetables for the proposed Farmer's Market.

Timeline:

Community gardening is a project that can be started immediately. Once a committee is formed to deal with this issue, research on which lots are appropriate and available for this purpose can be started. Acquiring materials and funding will require coordination with NTAC, but research on this topic can be undertaken immediately after a site has been designated. Community gardening is an on-going project, requiring regular maintenance by those involved.

11.4 Code enforcement campaign (CEC)

LSC must establish formalized and consistent participation in citywide Code Enforcement issues to guarantee that the needs of Lansdowne are represented in a larger forum. A representative from LSC should serve as a liaison in ESL CAN, updating residents on the status of code enforcement efforts and informing ESL CAN of additional violations within the neighborhood.

The Lansdowne neighborhood can then serve as a 'model' or as a testing ground for a Strategic Management Plan for the enforcement of city building and sanitation codes.

Rationale:

Continuous pressure must be applied to City Officials until codes are actually enforced and violators are cited and penalized. Consistent participation in large numbers stemming from specific neighborhood concerns will further drive home the message to city officials. The Code

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enforcement campaign (CEC) would create a model schedule for routine inspections throughout the neighborhood. A set number of inspections would be conducted in Lansdowne each month and the findings would be publicly posted. These findings would then be systematically tracked to monitor the city's progress in enforcement efforts and violator's compliance.

The underlying rationale is that building and sanitary code violators must be held accountable for their actions. The residents of Lansdowne have voiced their strong displeasure of the enforcement efforts of the city and demand that city codes be strictly adhered to.

Lead Agency and Participating Agencies:

?? ESLCAN

?? LSC

Activities:

1. Vigorously support the efforts of ESL CAN with heavy LSC participation in ESL CAN meetings
2. Seek to enhance the capabilities of ESL CAN by advocating stronger, more formal relationships between each neighborhood group and ESL CAN
3. Identify a representative from LSC to work closely with ESL CAN specifically on Code Enforcement issues directly affecting the neighborhood
4. Residents of Lansdowne should immediately contact the Lansdowne ESL CAN representative once new dumping is discovered.
5. Representative can then organize the residents to consistently and immediately document new instances of illegal dumping and submitting the documentation to the ESL CAN database
6. Publicize LSC's efforts to implement CEC in the media as a new idea for better code enforcement
7. Request one on one meetings with each City Council Person to discuss this program and garner their support.
8. Collect petitions in support of CEC
9. Mobilize Lansdowne residents and ESL CAN to carry the petition to City Hall to apply pressure on city officials to adopt a more proactive system of inspections.
10. Once CEC is implemented, actively track the progress of the Code Enforcement Inspectors, and publicize their actions

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11. Seek documentation of citations and fines imposed on violators in Lansdowne
12. Publicize the names, addresses, and photographs
13. Evaluate the success of this program after 6 months and finally, seek to expand the CEC program to additional neighborhoods and eventually throughout the city.

Required Resources:

- ?? Commitment of at least one LSC member to act as a liaison to ESL CAN.
- ?? Massive mobilization of residents to demand the adoption of CEC at City Hall
- ?? Clear and accurate documentation of every site in possible violation of city codes in Lansdowne

Funding Needs:

- ?? \$400 – Contribute to ESL CAN financially to support Code Enforcement publicity needs, ie. Phone calls, mailings, flyers, posters ... etc.
- ?? \$500 – Purchase of proper equipment (ie: camera) to properly document new violations
- ?? \$400 – Raise support for the petition, door-to-door canvassing ... etc.

Technical Assistance Providers:

- ?? ESLARP Faculty
- ?? UIUC Law Clinic
- ?? Land of Lincoln Legal Services
- ?? ESL CAN
- ?? NTAC

Staffing and Organizational Requirements

- ?? Liaison to ESL CAN to represent Lansdowne in the organization
- ?? Volunteers to monitor neighborhood for new illegal dumping sites

Timeline:

Efforts should be initiated in the spring of 2000, and continued until desired results are achieved.

11.5 Creek Restoration/Walking Trail

Program Description:

This idea was proposed in an effort to restore and beautify a creek that formerly ran through Lansdowne. The area to be restored was once a creek but was engineered so that the water was directed underground by pipes. This added more open space on which to build homes in order to accommodate the growing housing demand in the community. Today however the land former covered by the creek is again vacant and it would be a major improvement to the recreational value of the area to reopen it. See the map below for the position of the original creek. This map shows the conditions in 1911. For further information please visit the web page created by U of I design students based on feedback from LSC members in the spring semester of 2001. The web page can be found on: <http://www.eslarp.uiuc.edu/arch/ARCH372-S01/groups/k/index.htm>



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Rationale:

The underground pipes are now beginning to deteriorate and will soon be unable to function properly. In addition, the area is also located in a flood zone. The combination of these issues could result in increased flooding problems in the neighborhood. Lansdowne could solve this problem by bringing the water flow back above ground by getting rid of the underground pipes and carving out a new creek path over the one that was originally located. The neighborhood could take advantage of this aesthetic opportunity, by promoting the restored creek as a natural recreational area.

Leading Agency and Participating Agencies:

Since engineering analysis will be required for this project, it is not something that residents can accomplish on their own. The Lansdowne Steering Committee will have to cooperate closely with the NTAC office in order to find qualified analysts, as well as locate the grants that are available for completing this type of endeavor.

Activities:

1. NTAC must initiate contact with organizations that are capable of assessing the engineering feasibility of this project.
2. NTAC and the Lansdowne Steering Committee must initiate contact with organizations that are willing to fund this type of project.
3. If funding is approved, design schemes for the aesthetics of the creek, the possible addition of a walking trail, as well as ideas about amenities and lighting can be gathered from neighborhood residents to include their thoughts on the project.

Required Resources and Funding Needs:

To be determined after engineering analysis is completed.

Potential Funding Sources:

Since the creek constitutes a public safety and drainage issue, the city's Public Works department may be required to become involved. Also, a portion of the land may already be an endangered species habitat, so an organization such as Wetland Reclamation may help to fund the program.

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Technical Assistance Providers:

NTAC will locate the specialists necessary for the completion of this project. There may be a possibility of cooperation with the University of Illinois Engineering College.

Timeline:

This is a long-term project. Phases will include research, analysis, excavation, restoration and beautification.

11.6 Park Activities

Program Description:

This project focuses on the desire and need for local entertainment and recreation in Lansdowne. Program activities will be planned and held in the parks to bring people together. These events can be held in parks during the warmer months of spring and fall, and throughout the summer.

Rationale:

There is currently a need for recreational opportunities in Lansdowne as identified by residents in Lansdowne Steering Committee meetings. These activities will serve as a venue for neighbors and families to spend time together and utilize park space.

Leading Agency and Participating Agencies:

The Lansdowne Steering Committee will be the leading agency in this program. The ROSE subcommittee will be responsible for expanding current events, publicizing them to the neighborhood, contacting block captains and providing assistance to hold small activities in area parks, contacting local schools to involve children, contacting local community colleges/businesses for a career fair event, and securing donations of food and entertainment.

Activities:

1. First the ROSE committee needs to decide on the events to hold during the year and develop a calendar of these events. Large events such as a summer festival or concert featuring local bands and talent can be held along with smaller events in area parks. Also, many events can be centered on holidays. A Halloween parade of elementary school children could be held through the community or a park, promoting a fun and

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safe way to celebrate the holiday. A back-to-school picnic could also be held so that parents and children could come and meet each other as well as the teachers. Additionally, this type of activity would provide a forum to learn about opportunities and resources such as after school programs and tutoring. Furthermore, some sort of "School's Out" type of celebration could be held in May, since that month marks the end of the school year and the beginning of summer fun. This event could cater to older children by having information for students about summer jobs as well as university and community college options. The community could have a career fair of sorts, with representative from universities, trade schools, and local business owners recruiting local youth talent. Other events (barbecues, festivals, etc) could be held on, or close to, Labor Day, Memorial Day, and the Fourth of July.

2. Contact existing recreation activities such as the fishing rodeo in Jones Park and work with the coordinators to expand the current event
3. Contact local children/seniors and others to participate in events
4. Contact local bands and talent for festival or concert in the park
5. Contact local colleges/businesses for the career fair
6. Contact local businesses/restaurants for donations of food
7. Organize volunteers for the day of the event so it runs smoothly
8. Publicize events throughout neighborhood
9. Assist block captains in organizing barbecues in smaller parks to get to know their neighbors. This could be coordinated with a clean up day or park upkeep.

Required Resources:

- ?? Volunteers are needed to help coordinate the events
- ?? Entertainment
- ?? Donations of food
- ?? Grills
- ?? Charcoal
- ?? Other items will be necessary depending on the event type

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Funding Needs:

Smaller events coordinated by block captains can be potluck with residents sharing food. This would cut down the cost of an event significantly. Funds will be needed for larger event to pay for entertainment and supplies that are not donated.

Potential Funding Sources:

Possible funding sources include local businesses or radio stations that could help sponsor a larger festival or concert.

Timeline:

Planning for events can begin immediately. Activities such as a barbecue in an area park need little time to organize. Larger events such as a neighborhood festival with bands will have a longer timeline and need an increased amount of funding and publicity.

11.7 Park Beautification

Program Description:

This project, led by block captains, would identify parks in the area and schedule people to be responsible for their maintenance, on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. This program will also identify public spaces that would benefit from the planting of additional trees.

Rationale:

The East St. Louis Park District is underfunded and understaffed and the parks in the area therefore suffer from lack of upkeep. Residents have expressed a need for existing parks to be beautified through trash removal and increased vegetation, picnic tables and playground equipment. Currently, there are a few individuals that help to clean up the parks in the area, but these areas would benefit greatly from a more collaborative effort. Through the completion of simple projects like litter removal and lawn maintenance, the appearance of area parks would be greatly improved.

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Leading Agency and Participating Agencies:

- ?? The ROSE subcommittee, within the Lansdowne Steering Committee, will serve as the lead agency of this program. They will be responsible for identifying the park areas that require maintenance or increased vegetation, and decide on a timeline in which to accomplish the particular project.
- ?? The East St. Louis Park District can provide materials like mowers as well as dumpsters for trash removal.

Activities:

1. First, the ROSE committee members would identify public spaces that need additional maintenance.
2. Then the committee must acquire the supplies needed (gloves, trash bags, etc). If dumpsters are required, the city is required to provide them, but they are only available certain days of the month, so the committee must coordinate their maintenance effort with a day that the dumpsters are available to them.
3. Many of the open spaces in the community would also benefit from the planting of additional trees. Committee members must be designated to acquire and organize the supplies needed (plants and saplings) for the project from a local nursery or gardening store. Trees could be obtained for this program through city subsidy, grant funding, or by donation.
4. Also, volunteers and tools will be needed to prepare the ground for the planting (Refer to “shared tool shed” idea under Neighborhood Clean Up Days program).

An idea for the spring kickoff for this project could be a special Earth Day (April 22nd) event. This could involve cooperation with the National Arbor Day Foundation in an effort to educate the community about the benefits of planting trees.

Required Resources:

- ?? Gloves
- ?? Trash bags
- ?? Spades
- ?? Hoes
- ?? Shovels
- ?? Lawn mowers
- ?? Dumpster
- ?? Wheelbarrows
- ?? Saplings
- ?? Plants
- ?? Bulbs
- ?? Volunteers

Funding Needs:

The park cleanup projects will require very few resources other than manpower. The only costs will be for things such as trash bags and gloves. For projects more focused on increasing vegetation, tools and plants must be obtained through donation or be purchased.

Potential Funding Sources:

Encourage the possibility of plant donation by local nurseries by promising to post a prominent sign advertising their business close to where the vegetation is planted.

Technical Assistance Providers:

If necessary, students and faculty from the Horticulture, Leisure Studies, Landscape Architecture, Architecture, and Urban Planning departments from the University of Illinois may be called on for assistance.

Timeline:

Project can be implemented immediately.

6.8 Community Center

Program Description:

The purpose of this program is to build a multi purpose community center for the neighborhood. This center would serve as the headquarters for the offices of the Lansdowne Steering Committee. It will have activities for all age groups including seniors, adults, and children. It can house senior activities, job training/computer center, after-school programs, and cultural programs. Other programs that can be held in the community center include holding leadership training workshops, “know your rights/laws” workshops, “how to be a homeowner” workshops, and “dealing with public officials” workshops. The community center should be located at a highly visible and accessible location within the neighborhood. Existing spaces should also be considered, including those needing rehabilitation. This would decrease total expenses as new construction costs could be avoided.

Rationale:

Residents have expressed a need for a place of gathering in the neighborhood. The center would provide community based services in one central location. By combining office space with recreational space it will provide a variety of uses for the building throughout the day and evening.

Leading Agency:

The leading agency in this program is the Lansdowne Steering Committee.

Participating Agencies:

- ?? NTAC
- ?? U of I Design and planning students
- ?? Other organizations in the neighborhood that might be interested in utilizing the space.

Activities:

- ?? The ROSE committee needs to determine a central site within the neighborhood for the location of the community center. As stated above, an existing location that fits the needs of the community will cut down on construction fees
- ?? Determine what is needed to fulfill the needs in terms of space and facilities through research of similar facilities in other neighborhoods. Keep in mind that it would be

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optimal to house many of the neighborhood based services such as child and senior daycare.

- ?? Develop ideas of programs to be held in the community center and possible organizations for rental of space
- ?? Investigate funding for construction and operation of a community center
- ?? Apply for Community Facilities Loan Program, see below
- ?? Locate, acquire and rehabilitate the site for the community center
- ?? Research current grants and loans available

Examples of possible programs, complete with available funding opportunities are listed below:

Anti-drug Program

An example of a program that can be held in the center is an anti-drug program to reduce substance abuse among youth. Up to \$100,000 in funding is available for a program of this type. <http://ocd.usda.gov/nofa.htm>

Youth build Program

Another program that can be held in the center is a Youth build program designed to assist young adults in completing high school while providing them with construction training. This program can be combined with housing initiatives in cooperation with local builders to provide the training to the young adults. The maximum grant is \$700,000.

<http://ocd.usda.gov/nofa.htm>

Community Facilities Loan Program

This program provides loans for communities to develop facilities for public use in towns of not more than 50,000 people. Borrowers may use the funds to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and public services, such as community buildings and child care centers. Borrowers may also use the funds to operate the facilities. Approved projects will include plans for taxes, assessments, revenues, fees, or other sources of money that will pay for operation, maintenance, and reserves, as well as retire the debt.

www.afterschool.gov

The Talent Search program identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career,

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and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to the postsecondary school of their choice. Talent Search also serves high school dropouts by encouraging them to reenter the educational system and complete their education. The goal of Talent Search is to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds who complete high school and enroll in the postsecondary education institution of their choice.

Funds flow directly to grantees and may be used to provide academic, financial, career, or personal counseling including advice on entry or re-entry to secondary or postsecondary programs; career exploration and aptitude assessment; tutorial services; information on postsecondary education; exposure to college campuses; information on student financial assistance; assistance in completing college admissions and financial aid applications assistance in preparing for college entrance exams; mentoring programs; special activities for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders; and workshops for the families of participants.

www.afterschool.gov

21st Century Community Learning Centers

This program provides grants to assist inner-city and rural public schools, working in collaboration with community organizations and other educational youth development agencies, to provide out-of-school time programs which expand learning opportunities for children within a safe and healthy environment, and provide an array of services that benefit the community at large.

Grantees are required to carry out at least four of the following activities: literacy education; senior citizen programs; child care, integrated education, health, social service, recreational, or cultural programs; summer and weekend school programs in conjunction with recreation programs; nutrition and health programs; expanded library service hours; telecommunications and technology education; parenting skills; support and training for child care workers; employment counseling, training, and placement; services for individuals who leave school before graduation; and services for individuals with disabilities.

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Children, Youth and Families at Risk

Programs can use funds for training, after-school and summer programs, mentoring, school enrichment, resource centers and support groups for adults, and community forums.

www.afterschool.gov

Required Resources:

- ?? Volunteers
- ?? Building purchase/rent and rehabilitation or new construction
- ?? Staff will be needed in the building to manage the events and maintenance.
- ?? Materials for after-school programs
- ?? Computers will be needed in the computer room.
- ?? The University of Illinois Law School and NTAC can give technical assistance on issues of liability for the community center

Funding Needs:

All programs need funding for staff, materials, and building costs.

Potential Funding Sources:

United Way St. Louis Metro, possible funding for senior day care (314) 421-0700

<http://ocd.usda.gov/nofa.htm>

www.afterschool.gov

www.stw.ed.gov

11.9 Animal Control

Program Description:

The program is designed to decrease the stray dog population in Lansdowne. It is a long-term project that will be carried out with help from the Humane Society, County Animal control, UIUC College of Veterinary Science, and volunteer spay and neuter clinics.

Rationale:

The community has emphasized, through residential surveys and the SWOT exercise, the need for action to be taken to address the stray dog problem. The stray dogs have been increasing in population in Lansdowne and threaten the health and safety of all residents.

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Model Programs:

Mobile spay and neuter clinics in which veterinarians volunteer or provide their services at a low cost to a community which is in need of their services.

Leading Agency and Participating Agencies:

The Lansdowne Steering Committee will be responsible for research on stray dog problem, contacting Humane Society and County Animal Control, and publicizing to the public days for spay and neuter clinic and alternatives for unwanted animals.

Activities:

1. Contact County Animal control, find out when they come to Lansdowne and publicize those days
2. Contact the Humane Society to find out what services they can provide.
3. Investigate the feasibility of mobile spay and neuter clinics by searching these websites:
 - ?? <http://www.saveourstrays.com/howto.htm>
 - ?? <http://www.spayusa.org/>
 - ?? <http://www.saveourstrays.com/links.htm>
4. If such programs are deemed realistic, possible days and locations for the occurrence of these clinics must be decided upon and advertised throughout the community in order to encourage widespread turnout. This would ensure the sterilization of as many animals as possible.
5. A database of phone numbers can be compiled to include in the neighborhood directory, such as who to call to report stray dogs, what to do if you are bitten, who to call to get your dog spayed/neutered and vaccinated, and who to call to adopt a dog.

Required Resources:

- ?? Equipment for spay and neuter clinics, van, tools, medicine
- ?? Volunteer veterinarians/students
- ?? Educational materials about animal control
- ?? Contact phone numbers for information on stray problems

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Funding Needs:

Some of the required funding will go to publicizing what is available to ameliorate the problem of stray animals. Additional funding will be needed to pay a veterinarian for conducting a spay and neuter clinic unless one is found who is willing to donate his/her services.

Potential Funding Sources:

The Humane Society County as well as Animal Control is possible sources of funding for this project. If veterinarians agree to perform their services pro bono, funding would not have to be located for this expense.

Technical Assistance Providers:

The stray situation is one that unfortunately cannot be handled by the Lansdowne Steering Committee. They can however investigate and coordinate the efforts of the Humane Society, County Animal Control, and any veterinarians who become involved. Also the University of Illinois School of Veterinary Medicine can be contacted regarding possible mobile spay/neuter clinics in Lansdowne.

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Timeline:

This is a long-term project that incorporates education for residents on the importance of animal control, with information about mobile spay and neuter clinics, as well as animal adoption.