



YEAR IN REVIEW 2022

GROW GREATER ENGLEWOOD YEAR IN REVIEW 2022



Greetings Community,

2022 brought so many lessons and advancements for Englewood and West Englewood—and for us at Grow Greater Englewood. We have grown a dynamic, intergenerational team of dedicated and talented people, and we are developing our soon-to-be home—UJIMA HIVE: Community Resilience Hub.

Englewood Nature Trail

We advocated for and won the competitive RAISE grant to help plan and build the Englewood Nature Trail, a \$20 million grant to the City of Chicago. We will continue to advocate for secure matching dollars from the City of Chicago, which represents up to \$50 million. We will continue to leverage this opportunity to help improve our parks and transportation, and to provide more access to a local food economy.

As we embark on our work for 2023, we ask ourselves—what does it mean to design, build, and create beautiful, Black spaces? Englewood and West Englewood are legacy Black communities with a vibrant network of committed residents and families. That is our focus—to aid and connect more Black folks back to the land.

Englewood Agro-Eco District

The big Quality of Life Plan (QLP) vision to transform vacant lots into an urban agriculture zone and green space have matured into the Englewood Agro-Eco District. This means planning on improvements to the environment and the local economy by attracting industry and entrepreneurs back to this unique corridor that sits between two of the nation's largest railroads.

This also means designing and planning for the first-in-the-nation agro-eco district—using this unique framework to stabilize and grow a community impacted by every social and policy failure in our city.

Working for Greater Englewood

To date, we have launched multiple farms, supported local entrepreneurs, and sponsored and re-granted resources to other civic and service organizations across Greater Englewood. We have also planted and are supporting food growing for over 100 homes and families across the Greater Englewood community. We have advocated for policies that will support community wealth building, food equity, mobility, environmental impacts, and community development. We deepened our work around educating and supporting Black land sovereignty through the creation of the **Englewood Community Land Trust**.

We continue our commitment to work and refine our partnership and kinship with our **WE GROW** partners (**Imagine Englewood if, Teamwork Englewood, Growing Home** and **Metropolitan Family Services**). We are also working with **Time 21:36**, a coalition of public safety groups focused on reducing crime in beats across the 60621 and 60636 zip codes.

While there has been a mass exodus of Black residents in Chicago over the last 30 years, some fundamental questions remain.

- **How do we build Black spaces for the next generation of Black Chicagoans?**
- **Why would the next generation of Black folks want to live here? (*In fact, this is an issue across all of Black Chicago.*)**
- **Where can the diversity of our culture thrive?**

We know these are big questions, but we can continue to solve for equitable answers with even more hands. This is all-hands-on-deck. We CAN inspire and heal our communities. In 2023, we must continue to make space, to provide grace, to listen, and to demonstrate how we deliver changes to all of Englewood.

We are excited to engage and work with even more folks in Englewood and West Englewood, to be a beacon and to learn from our sister neighborhoods struggling in unique ways against the same forces.

In closing, we want to thank all of our supporters and funders that help make this possible. We are excited and proud that we get to continue to serve our community, and to **Grow** something **Greater** for a historic Black community that must be preserved, protected, and prepared for now and the future. **We know we can't grow without you!**

In solidarity,



Anton Seals Jr., Lead Steward, Grow Greater Englewood

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Englewood Village Farms

Englewood Village Farms is a collective of Black and Brown farmers dedicated to growing a local food system that builds farms and food-related businesses across the 59th Street corridor. Farms include:

- Catatumbo Cooperative
- Cedillo's Fresh Produce
- DuSable City Ancestral Winery & Vineyards
- Getting Grown Collective
- Sistas In The Village
- Urban Growers Collective

In 2022, the farms produced and provided food to help feed and heal our local communities. Build-out of current farm sites and land acquisitions continue to create opportunities for growing and agro-eco development.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Built** relationships with local agricultural groups to bolster food equity
- Facilitated** growing workshops at the Englewood Community Garden
- Hosted** community engagement events and provided free produce and goods to local organizations
- Partnered** with Growing Home to host a successful Urban Ag Crawl featuring tours highlighting EVF farm sites

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HIGHLIGHTS

Englewood Nature Trail

This project will transform the vacated rail corridor along 59th Street into a 2-mile naturalized space for residents. As part of the nation's first agro-eco district, the Trail will serve as a connector between Englewood's growing network of farms and foster local food access, community health and wellness, and business and job development.

In 2022, we deepened connections with community partners and elected officials, engaged the community, and received significant funding that allowed us to begin crucial preliminary work on the Trail.

- **Identified** architecture and landscape architecture firms to form a designated trail design team
- **Hosted** 5 public meetings to facilitate a community-driven process and gather ideas to inform the design and function of the trail and surrounding spaces
- **Formed** an inaugural cohort of community Block Stewards to canvass and keep residents informed of ENT progress, initiatives and opportunities
- **Studied** similar "rails to trails" projects, including a walking trip through Paris' adaptive infrastructure reuse projects to observe and identify which elements could be applied to the ENT's design

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Englewood Village Plaza & Market

As the main entry point to the Englewood Nature Trail and Englewood Village Market, the Plaza is a community activity hub and innovation space to advance cultural and environmental sustainability, highlighting and reflecting the rich contribution of Black culture to Chicago.

The Englewood Village Market continued to offer fresh local produce, food, goods, community resources, and music, art and dance activations. All Market activities are rooted in Black culinary and land traditions at the core of the community.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Welcomed** local organizations and groups to host gatherings at the Plaza, including play readings, live music shows, dance lessons, yoga sessions, and cooking and growing workshops
- Added** new Market vendors and established monthly live music lineup to continue our support and promotion of Black-owned businesses and goods
- Donated and distributed** a total of 600+ free CSA bags filled with fresh seasonal produce to Market patrons
- Hosted** the Market at the Englewood Music Festival, promoting the Market and GGE programs to thousands of attendees

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Backyard Gardens

The Backyard Gardens Program aims to expand urban agriculture and sustained green spaces in Englewood backyards and community gardens to provide residents access to organic produce, medicinal herbs, and flowers; ultimately improving community health and wellness.

In 2022, Backyard Gardens continued building on its solid foundation by growing capacity through infrastructure and team expansion, and deepening intergenerational relationships with residents.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Installed** 99 gardens in residents' yards
- Developed** a robust internship program and built a team of 6 interns that can now train and expand residents' ability to grow more food
- Nurtured** the development of a worker-owned revenue-generating garden installation and landscaping business

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Englewood Food Sovereignty Network

The Englewood Food Sovereignty Network (EFSN) is a collective focused on building a hyper-local food system that supports community food sovereignty for Black, Brown, and Indigenous people.

In 2022, EFSN explored Englewood's food economy to connect residents to fresh local food and resources. EFSN also continued to develop the EatpHreshChi website/app to offer direct delivery of free meals, produce, and goods from local restaurants and farms.



HIGHLIGHTS

- **Partnered** with 4 local food service organizations to produce free meals: B'Gabs, Doughboy's Chicago, Georgia's Food Depot and SanJustin's Kitchen
- **Donated** 7,000+ lbs. of fresh produce and distributed 3,600+ free meals to residents at Englewood community events
- **Engaged** 5 farming partners: Growing Home, Sistas In The Village, Urban Growers Collective, Cedillo's Fresh Produce and Black Oaks
- **Established** relationships with 2 local produce distributors: Midwest Foods and Fresh Picks

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HIGHLIGHTS

Englewood Community Land Trust

The Englewood Community Land Trust (ECLT) serves as a platform for residents to directly shape equitable development in their neighborhood through collective control and stewardship of land and resources in Greater Englewood. ECLT is working to stimulate and support the reuse of vacant land for urban farming, affordable housing, open spaces, and other community needs.

ECLT will operate as a democratically-governed non-profit organization of residents and local partner organizations committed to building a healthy, just, and vibrant Englewood.

2022 was spent building on its mission, organizing partnerships, and developing a community educational campaign on how a community land trust works.

- **Formed** initial board
- **Identified** 5 properties for acquisition
- **Incorporated** and applied for non-profit status
- **Launched** community engagement and participation campaign with 3 community meetings

THANK YOU

Big thanks to our partners and supporters!

16th Ward Alderman Stephanie Coleman

BA NIA Incorporated

Beehyve

Blackroots Alliance

Botanical City

Chicago Department of Development
and Planning

Chicago Food Policy Action Council

Chicago Park District

Englewood and West Englewood Residents

Greater Chicago Food Depository

Growing Home

Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN)

Imagine Englewood if

JIMA Studio

Metropolitan Family Services

Teamwork Englewood

Urban Growers Collective

Urban Tech Academy

**Special
thanks to all
our funders!**



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the Earth has weight



Symbol of providence and
the divinity of Mother Earth

ANANSE NTONTAN
spider's web



Symbol of wisdom, creativity
and the complexities of life

AKOMA
the heart



Symbol of patience
and tolerance

SESA WO SUBAN
*change or transform
your character*



Symbol of life
transformation

AYA
fern



Symbol of endurance
and resourcefulness