

The Chelsea Insider

CONNECTING THE NEIGHBORHOOD TO PUBLIC SAFETY

July 2024 Edition | Serving residents of Atlantic City from Texas Avenue to Annapolis Avenue



Chelsea EDC Beautification team: Halim Khan, Ahmed Ahmed, and George Tittermary (left to right)



IN THIS EDITION...

"Urban greening", defined as strategies that increase trees, parks, gardens, and other green spaces in cities, is having a moment. According to the Public Health Institute and Center for Climate Change and Health, "Urban greening and green infrastructure offers health, climate, and economic benefits." Trees and landscaping lower temperatures, boost property values, absorb floodwaters, clean the air, and reduce energy costs. Community gardens provide healthy food, foster social connections, and beautify vacant lots. Parks encourage physical activity and enhance mental health (www.climatehealthconnect.org).

Here is the exciting news for the Atlantic City community: significant efforts are underway to make Atlantic City cleaner and greener. From community gardens (13 citywide!) to flower boxes, new trees, and re-establishing the Hydrangea Trail (originally created in the 1940s), efforts are underway by government agencies, community organizations, and residents to beautify the City through landscaping, gardens, and urban agriculture.

In our ongoing public input sessions, Chelsea residents and businesses have made it clear they want clean streets and a beautiful environment. Beautification is a top priority, with school children specifically asking for "No trash on the streets and sidewalks," as well as more parks, better sports fields, and bike lanes.

Moreover, greening efforts extend beyond parks and vacant lots. Indoor farming is becoming a viable economy, repurposing vacant buildings, creating career opportunities, and providing fresh produce in a city ranked #2 in the state for food insecurity. Based on a recent survey, the majority of residents shop at local markets with limited fresh produce. Imagine fresh produce grown in Atlantic City available in corner markets for all residents to enjoy.

Beautification through greening is a strategy in the Chelsea plan, and in this edition, we talk about the ways we have put the plan into action, including weekly clean-ups, tree planting, flower planters, and art. We also provide information about citywide efforts to green the city.

CHELSEA ACTIONS

In line with Strategy 2.1: Engaging Residents through the Arts, Chelsea EDC continues to develop initiatives to enhance Chelsea's visual appeal. To date, the beautification team has planted a total of 57 trees in front of residents' homes, each meticulously chosen to complement the area while providing shade, improving air quality, and enriching oxygen levels for years to come. Moreover, the team has placed 46 planters in front of businesses, filling them with flowers and shrubs, and offering weekly maintenance. These white planters were generously donated by Colosseo AC Inc. and refurbished with assistance from CRDA.

In 2023, the beautification team with Lang's Garden Center planted flowers and shrubs at

the entrance corner of the Albany Bridge, extending a warm welcome to all residents and visitors with vibrant flowers and greenery, aiming to create an inviting atmosphere upon entering the city.

One of the team's major undertakings was the Texas Avenue Beautification Project. This project aimed to plant trees and flowers, address code violations, provide selected homes with exterior makeovers, and nurture relationships with residents. Through partnerships with the Atlantic City Public Works Department, the city's Shade Tree Committee, the receipt of a grant from NJ Tree Foundation, along with volunteers from the community, the team removed dead trees and planted 15 new ones, revitalized the Texas Avenue Park entrance with flowers, shrubs, and bricks, provided homes with free lattice installations, and cleaned the exterior walls of the Salvation Army while planting new hydrangeas in their flower beds.

GRANT PROGRAMS

A major priority in our 10-year Neighborhood Plan is to create more housing options for the residents of the Chelsea neighborhood and to support our local businesses. With the Home Buyers Assistance Program, Housing Rehabilitation Grants, and Commercial Facade Improvement Program, we are committed to bringing positive change to the community. These programs provide opportunities for first-time homebuyers as well as existing homeowners, along with resources to promote and improve local businesses.



Funded by Chelsea EDC, mural painted by local artist, De'Von Downes (Located at Montpelier and Atlantic Avenues)



2023 Winning Design for Sovereign Ave. School T-Shirt Contest "We Are Blooming into a Beautiful Neighborhood" by Rai Chowdhury

20% Down Payment Assistance for Chelsea Homebuyers

With available programs, owning a home could cost less than renting. You may be eligible for up to 20% of the purchase price plus closing costs when buying a home.

An example of the benefits of these programs is shared by Chelsea EDC's Homebuying Instructor, Frank Montufar. This past April, a Tropicana employee qualified for first-time homebuyer grant and down payment assistance programs to purchase a home in the Chelsea community for \$225,000. With the financial assistance available through the State of New Jersey, Atlantic County Improvement Authority, ACIA, and Chelsea EDC, the employee received \$65,600 in assistance toward the home purchase. Ultimately, her monthly mortgage payment was equal to the prior rent she was paying, with very little money out of pocket to purchase the home.

Requirements of the program include a household income limit of \$123,000, and a purchase price not to exceed \$481,000.

Commercial Facade Improvement Grant

With the aim of improving the visual landscape of Chelsea, the Chelsea EDC Facade Improvement Grant Program means business for the community. With support from state funding programs, Chelsea EDC can provide business owners with facade improvement grants. This initiative will help revitalize the neighborhood by enhancing retail and business facades.

These grants serve as a powerful tool, allowing owners to make highly visible improvements to buildings and storefronts. With the vision of stimulating local economies, the program is a valuable addition to the business community.



Business Assistance Grant Application

\$35,000 in Incentives Available for Home Rehab

The ACIA's Atlantic City Housing Rehabilitation Program offers owner-occupied residents a 0% interest, deferred loan of up to \$25,000 for major systems and weatherization upgrades. In addition, as part of Chelsea EDC's efforts to improve housing conditions and beautify the neighborhood, Chelsea residents with household incomes less than \$123,000 can benefit from up to \$10,000 in additional grant funding dedicated to exterior beautification.



Home Buyer Assistance Program Application



Homeowners Rehabilitation Program Application

Discover the positive impacts these initiatives have on our neighborhood's economic vibrancy and sustainable development. Apply today by scanning the QR codes or visiting our website at www.ChelseaEDC.org.

Become a proactive citizen and...



GovPilot/ GovAlert: Report Concerns



Click on the Report-A-Concern icon on the www.ACNJ.gov homepage or download the GovAlert App on your phone to have Geo-location capabilities.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

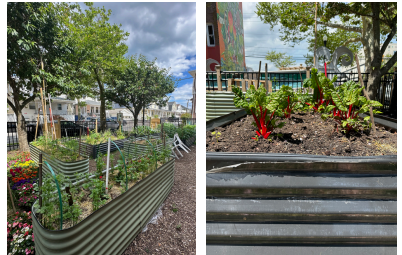
Community Gardens are Sprouting Throughout Chelsea and the City!

Ayana Plummer of the City's Planning Office partnered with C.R.O.P.S. (Communities Revolutionizing Open Public Spaces) and United States Fish and Wildlife in 2023 to create the Green Coalition of Atlantic City (GCAC). The purpose of the coalition is to create gardens and open green spaces throughout the city by prioritizing community partnerships. Since its beginning, the group has identified and mapped thirteen gardens in the city, fostered numerous community collaborations, and has grown to thirty-five participating organizations. GCAC encourages the full participation of residents, businesses, and civic organizations to revitalize the community. For more information, e-mail green_coalition@cropsnj.org.

Dover Park and Community Garden is a shining example of the opportunity to create a special place that changed a neighborhood for the better. Chelsea EDC is proud to have worked with the CRDA, the City, the Atlantic City Arts Foundation, and other agencies to renovate the park at Ventnor and S. Dover Avenues. Murals, picnic benches, Adirondack chairs, planters, and a beautiful arbor adorn the space. Residents walking by on a sunny afternoon in May were excited about the new space, saying:

"It's greener, it's neater, it's cleaner, and more fun."

"I saw my friends come here to hang out, it helps some of us to socialize."



Dover Community Garden

Sign Up to Become a Volunteer!



SCAN ME

<https://forms.gle/sCqEckr92J6DhA8>

Fill out this form to help keep our community cleaner and safer!



Chelsea
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Sponsor Spotlight



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Atlantic City Electric – Doing more than keeping the lights on

A subsidiary of Exelon Corporation, Atlantic City Electric delivers safe, reliable, and affordable electric service to approximately 560,000 customers – both commercial and residential -- in southern New Jersey.

Atlantic City Electric offers several programs to help businesses save energy and money. The Energy Solutions for Business programs provide opportunities for businesses of all sizes, from small shops to large commercial portfolios, to reduce energy usage. Options include the Small Business Direct Install program, custom equipment, building tune-ups, and more. These programs connect businesses with resources for long-term energy and cost savings.

The Prescriptive and Custom programs help you find energy-efficient improvements while reducing your operational costs. This program offers incentives for energy-efficient improvements, making it easy to receive rebates quickly on various electric equipment and technologies.

The Small Business Direct Install program specifically supports small businesses, non-profits, municipalities, schools, and faith-based organizations by guiding them through energy-saving opportunities and incentives. Customers can also benefit from 0% financing for energy-efficiency upgrades, with rebates and financing covering up to 100% of project costs.

Visit <https://homeenergysavings.atlanticcityelectric.com/business> for further information. Take advantage of these programs and save money! Atlantic City Electric is committed to powering a cleaner, brighter future for its customers and communities.

Chelsea EDC is a non-profit organization established in 2019 to increase economic opportunity in the Chelsea neighborhood of Atlantic City. Since then, we have been asking what would make the neighborhood better. Your answers make up 44 strategies outlined in the Chelsea 10-year Plan. In 2021, we started putting the Plan's strategies into action through exciting community events, impactful beautification and public safety programs, significant grants for homebuyers and businesses, local business marketing and promotion, and connecting residents with career opportunities. We hope you noticed our work and even participated in our programs!

For more information, www.ChelseaEDC.org/Plan



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