



ecosource
Growing a Green Community

Deep Roots

Strengthening neighbourhood food systems through
community gardening in Mississauga



Ecosource Community Gardens in Mississauga



1 **Churchill Meadows Community Garden**
3715 Thomas St.

2 **Hillside Community Garden**
1311 Kelly Rd.

3 **Ecosource Community Hub**
5070 Fairwind Dr.

4 **Iceland Urban Agriculture Teaching Garden**
705 Matheson Blvd. East

5 **Parkway Green Generation Garden**
4215 Central Parkway East

6 **Garden of the Valley**
1275 Mississauga Valley Blvd.

7 **Hancock Community Garden**
2171 Camilla Rd.

8 **Malton Community Garden**
7320 Darcel Ave.

9 **Forest Glen Community Garden**
3545 Fieldgate Dr.

10 **Small Arms Community Garden**
1352 Lakeshore Rd. East

A Growing Network 6.2

Ecosource manages 11 food growing spaces on public parkland in partnership with the City of Mississauga, including 9 community gardens and 1 large-scale 15,000 square-foot urban agriculture site.

In 2021, we expanded and installed 2 community gardens, including the new Cooksville Community Garden (opening in spring 2022).



Program Impacts 2019-2021

4 new/expanded
community gardens on
public parkland



26,160 lbs

of food grown by residents for themselves,
their families, and for donation to the
community

32%

increase in food growing space in
public parks



28,300

volunteer hours contributing to
supporting food security and
environmental stewardship

12,332^{6.2}

people engaged at the
gardens over 3 years



865

Education and volunteer
sessions held

Community Gardens are Essential

Focus on safely opening community garden spaces



Increased interest in food growing, resulting longer waitlists



Emerging food access needs for Mississauga residents

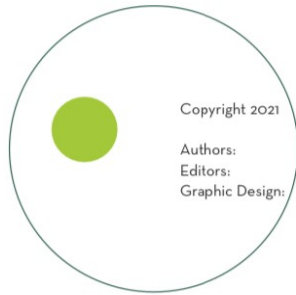


85% community gardeners report “food access” as a top reason for their participation



Deep Roots

Case studies on strengthening neighbourhood food systems through community gardening in Mississauga



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The Deep Roots project was generously funded by the United Way Greater Toronto

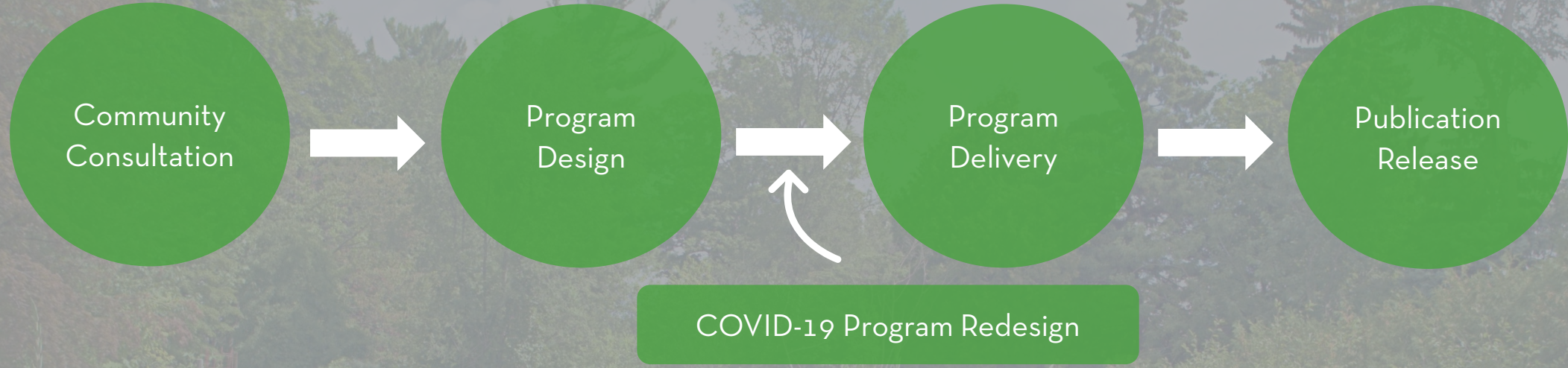
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Deep Roots:

A two-year initiative offering:

- 10 community-driven food projects;
- Customized programs to address food security issues that impact the residents we serve; and
- 10 case studies reflecting key learnings to build capacity for more food projects in Mississauga and beyond.

Process





Our Community Partners

Collaborating with a network of partners enables us to learn more about community needs and develop creative ways to reach more residents.



This list also includes: Malton Neighbourhood Services, Mississauga Master Gardeners, and Applewood Acres Secondary School.

Deep Roots Highlights



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Partners
Engaged

Photo courtesy of Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters



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Community
Consultations



Photo courtesy of Seva Food Bank

The Malton Community Garden

Malton Youth Food Leaders



The Forest Glen
Community Garden
SNAP Food Action Project

6.2

The Churchill Meadows Community Garden

Enabling Cultivators



Community Voices



“

By sharing these physical seeds, we aim to share imaginary, but powerful seeds, that encourage ...conversations about the food system in Mississauga.

- Marynil

“

The whole garden was a very spiritual and healing experience for me.

6.2

- Kandy



“

The garden has supported our Syrian refugee students with asense of belonging

- Ghada

Looking Ahead

- Launch Deep Roots Case Study Publication
- Continue partner engagement through Partner Action Circles, collectively supporting Urban Agriculture Strategy actions
- Integrate lessons learned through Deep Roots to support local food access and community engagement in 2022 and beyond

**Public
Launch:**
December 8,
2021

The Garden of the Valley

Overview:

The Garden of the Valley was the first community garden established on city parkland in Mississauga and had its grand opening in 2006 in the Mississauga Valley neighbourhood, located adjacent to the Mississauga Valley Community Centre. This garden has nearly doubled from its original size to include 40 resident plots and 7 smaller communal plots which produce food for local food banks.

The Hillside Community Garden

Overview:

The Hillside Community Garden was established to connect local residents and agencies to growing space in the Clarkson neighbourhood. It had its grand opening in July 2009 and was expanded



What We Did

For the Deep Roots project, Ecosource partnered with TBCA and Starlight Investments as part of the Burnhamthorpe Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program (SNAP). Ecosource led a local food action initiative for the SNAP Tower Program and Demonstration Project which supports climate change resilience and improved health and well-being of residents in urban high-rise towers. We engaged with residents in three local buildings by distributing food-growing kits for indoor growing during the Fall and Winter months. These kits supported residents with skills training and resources in order to optimize their limited growing space. We also installed 2 raised accessible beds on-site with hopes to start a gardening club when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

Ecosource continued to work with 1 space at The Forest Glen Community until their in-person garden program

Implications of Covid-19:

- Increased community need for
- Limited in-person engagement
- Limited capacity for in-garden by DBNC LINC participants

The Impacts

- 86 kits distributed
- 100 residents engaged through Burnhamthorpe SNAP
- 2 beds installed at a local high-rise apartment building and 9 beds installed at the community garden
- 5 students from the DBNC LINC program contributed 100 hours to growing and harvesting food
- 3 in-lobby table displays during COVID to connect with tenants and encourage involvement
- Development of a long-term sustainability plan for management of the garden

Community Voices



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For more information

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Questions?

