

**To: Albany County Department of Parks & Recreation**  
**Re: Municipal Park Improvement Initiative Grant**

**Project Proposal: extending water service, Yolles Contemplation Park, Philip Street**

**1. Executive Summary**

Yolles Contemplation Garden, a city-owned pocket park in at Philip Street where Myrtle Avenue and Bleecker Place come together, was once a well-maintained perennial garden with picnic tables, a bench and planters. People relaxed there and the neighborhood had small gatherings. Neighbors would also help tend to the Garden, however it is very difficult to do so because the absence of water service has been a major barrier to its upkeep.

The Mansion Neighborhood, known for its strong community engagement, is eager to reclaim and revitalize this space. The City, on behalf of the Mansion Neighborhood, is requesting a \$17,000 grant to cover the cost of extending water a water line to the site. With water access, residents plan to plant low-maintenance native perennials and shrubs, transforming the park into a vibrant community space once again.

**2. Chart with Anticipated Project Expenses**

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>
Extension of water service by Albany Water Department	\$17,000

**3. Benefits Statement**

Revitalizing Yolles Contemplation Garden will provide significant public value by restoring a sense of community and pride in the Mansion Neighborhood. The project will allow residents to reclaim a vital green space for relaxation, social gatherings, and community events. The presence of a well-maintained park will send a positive message that this neighborhood is valued, particularly to low-income residents who may not have access to private outdoor spaces. By planting native perennials and shrubs, the project will also promote environmental sustainability, requiring minimal upkeep while enhancing the natural beauty of the area. This restoration effort is not just about beautification, it's about equity—ensuring that all residents, regardless of income, have access to well-cared-for public spaces that contribute to their well-being and sense of belonging. The successful transformation of Yolles Contemplation Garden will foster a renewed sense of pride and ownership among the community.

**4. Overview Highlighting the Need for Assistance**

The key barrier to revitalizing the Yolles Contemplation Garden is the absence of water service, which is necessary for planting and maintaining the space. The Mansion Neighborhood community has shown its commitment to maintaining and improving public spaces through past projects, such as the revamp of the Philip Street playground and the active role in planning the new Lincoln Park pool. However, without the financial assistance to extend water service, their efforts to restore Yolles Contemplation Garden cannot move forward. This grant is critical to addressing the current deficits and enabling the community to revitalize this garden to its full potential.

### **5. Matching Funds**

There are no matching funds.