

Wyandanch

Community Advisory Board

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Upcoming Events

- **Wyandanch Family Day,**
Wyandanch Park,
June 14
- **Owl Discovery : A Wildlife**
Center of Long Island
Presentation,
Wyandanch Public Library,
June 12, 2-3:00pm
- **Summer Reading Kickoff,**
Wyandanch Park,
June 14, 9:00am - 5:00pm
- **Catholic Health Mobile Van,**
Wyandanch Public Library,
June 16, 10:00am - 2:00pm

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[NYSHECK.ORG/Wyandanch](https://nyscheck.org/Wyandanch)

Harvesting Hope A Garden Vision for Wyandanch



otsimo.com

By Simoni Dalal

A Garden Blooms in Wyandanch.

Imagine a sunlit afternoon in Wyandanch, where rows of kale, tomatoes, and peppers sway gently in the breeze. Children laugh as they chase each other between raised garden beds, their hands dirt-smudged but their faces lit with joy. Elders sit nearby on repurposed benches, sharing stories of how food used to grow in their grandparents' backyards. This is more than just a garden—it's a gathering place, a healing space, and a hub for connection. Here, families nurture vegetables, relationships and resilience.

This is not a fantasy. It's a vision grounded in the hopes of the Wyandanch CAB and the community's belief in food justice, environmental stewardship, and shared purpose. The garden represents more than fresh produce—it's a step toward reclaiming health, joy, and self-sufficiency in a neighborhood that has long battled food insecurity. Wyandanch, a community where the median household income hovers around \$88,000 and access to healthy foods is limited, needs sustainable food and nutrition solutions rooted in local strengths. The community garden is one such solution—a place where healing grows alongside herbs, and youth mature into leaders.

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STRENGTH IN SOIL: *SWOT & A VISION FOR THE FUTURE*

As a public health student and intern with the Wyandanch Community Advisory Board, I conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis to assess the feasibility and potential for a community garden in Wyandanch. My analysis also outlines local assets, gaps in resources, and a strategic plan for coming years.

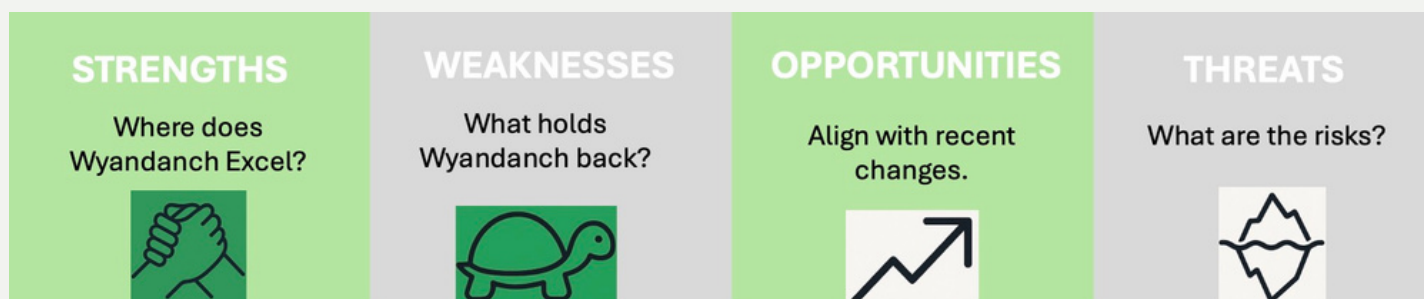
Wyandanch is rich in people power—residents are passionate, engaged, and eager to take part in initiatives that uplift their neighborhood. Strong local institutions like the Wyandanch Memorial High School, the Public Library, and many civic organizations are eager to support a local garden and educational programming for healthy families.

What are the key challenges this project will face? First, the community must obtain a suitable location for this garden. Second, the garden needs a nonprofit structure, to secure funding and nurture its future leaders. Third, financial resources are limited for start-up costs (fencing, tools, and irrigation systems) and annual operations. Early progress will depend on volunteers — a beautiful testament to community spirit. Long-term sustainability requires paid staff.

Fortunately, there are many sources of financial support. Grants are available through the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets and the Long Island Community Foundation that align with our mission of promoting food access and community wellness. Corporate sponsors such as Home Depot, Target, and Stop & Shop also have a history of supporting grassroots projects and could contribute funding or in-kind donations like garden materials. The CAB includes many valuable partners including Starflower Experiences, Creating Healthy Schools and Communities, Cornell Cooperative Extension. They can assist with technical training and securing resources.

Potential community weaknesses merit attention. Many families balance multiple jobs, leaving little time for consistent volunteerism. Without adequate community support, garden leaders may face fatigue and burnout. Without long-term planning and financial stability, even the most passionate efforts can falter. My analysis outlines a multi-year process for strengthening support to address these potential weaknesses.

There is broad support for a Wyandanch Community Garden that families can nurture, and sustain. A thriving garden will be a lasting symbol of community resilience and empowerment.



Graphic created by Scott Carlin and Simoni Dalal

BUILDING THE ROOTS: *CAPACITY AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT*

Turning this vision into reality requires an effective strategic plan and healthy collaborations. My report's capacity-building strategy can guide the garden's growth over its first three years.

The focus of Year 1 is deepening community engagement. This requires working hand-in-hand with local teachers, libraries, faith groups, and the Gerald J. Ryan Outreach Center. A new garden can recruit volunteers from schools, churches, youth organizations, and neighborhood groups. The community should host hands-on gardening workshops with experts from organizations such as Cornell Cooperative Extension. These efforts are about more than planting seeds—they're about building trust, knowledge, and shared ownership.

By Year 2, we will formalize our structure by establishing a nonprofit organization to manage the garden. This new organization would need its own Board of Directors composed of diverse community leaders—from local business owners to youth advocates. Guided by its mission, the nonprofit can apply for grants and sharpen its annual priorities. These successes will help ensure that this garden is not a temporary project but a permanent part of Wyandanch's landscape.

In Year 3, the garden will strengthen its partnerships with financial institutions and educational organizations, build leadership pipelines for local youth, and formalize its reporting systems. The goal is for the garden to be fully community-run, supported, and celebrated for generations to come.



agr.georgia.gov

FROM VISION TO VIABILITY: FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

A solid financial plan is essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Wyandanch Community Garden. I developed a three-tiered funding strategy that blends community support, grant funding, and corporate partnerships.

First, we should pursue grants from the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets, the Long Island Community Foundation, and the National Gardening Association. These funds will support infrastructure needs—tools, raised beds, water access, and fencing—as well as education programs. We can seek corporate sponsorships from businesses such as Home Depot, Target, and Stop & Shop. They have programs to support community wellness initiatives. These potential partnerships can provide in-kind donations for materials and funding for events and youth engagement.



Home Depot 2024 ESG Report, <https://corporate.homedepot.com/page/resources-reports>

To ensure sound financial stewardship, we should also collaborate with local banks. Chase Bank is in Wyandanch; FourLeaf Federal Credit Union (North Babylon) is a second option. By working with local certified public accountants (CPAs), we can ensure our financial transparency and trust. Excess produce from the garden can be sold or donated to support local families facing hunger. Students and young adults can gain sales and job training opportunities.

This plan isn't just about numbers—it's about nurturing roots that can weather any storm. With financial accountability, community trust, and a shared vision, Wyandanch will grow something beautiful and lasting.

Sources

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U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). QuickFacts: Wyandanch CDP, New York. <https://www.census.gov/>

Note: Otsimo (Page 1, photo) designs gamified educational apps for children with developmental or learning disorders.