



The Brentwood Community Garden, established by the Brentwood Community Gardening Group (BCGG), was a 2010 recipient of The Calgary Foundation's Neighbour Grants program. Due in part to this \$5,000 grant, the BCGG was able to construct the garden and work towards fulfilling their mission of promoting intergenerational community, sustainable gardening, and urban agriculture in the Brentwood neighbourhood of Calgary.

The shared gardening space saw a large outpouring of support, with a turnout of over 60 volunteers ranging from young to old, to participate in the ground-breaking and labour. The project has seen important collaborations between the Calgary Public Library, the Calgary Horticultural Society, as well as other communities interested in developing a similar project in their own neighbourhoods.

However, the strength of the Brentwood Community Garden was put to the test following a bout of vandalism from some local youth. While parents of the vandals offered to pay for damages to the plants, ornaments and garden beds, the BCGG felt that in the true sense of community spirit, the boys should assist in the clean up and help volunteers with tasks such as transporting dirt into some of the flower beds. Although reluctant at first, the boys worked extremely hard and the BCGG was so impressed that they offered the boys a small plot of their own in the community garden. By giving the young men a sense of ownership at the Garden, the BCGG felt that they had created "guardians" who worked to ensure no further acts of vandalism occurred.

The Brentwood Community Garden continues to bring together neighbours from various ages and walks of life, and has been able to engaged citizens in creating a vibrant community for all to enjoy. Now that Phase One of the Garden is complete, the BCGG plans to expand with another 15 to 17 beds this summer. More fundraisers, garden parties, potlucks and silent auctions will assist in raising money for these additional garden beds. BCGG will also continue working to engage both young and old gardeners. In cooperation with the Calgary Public Library, storytelling for children will take place at the Garden. Additionally, seniors will be invited to enjoy tea time at the Garden where they can socialize with fellow green thumbs!

The Calgary Foundation's Neighbour Grants offers grants up to \$5,000 to support resident-led projects that encourage neighbours, groups and public institutions to engage in dialogue and shared projects.