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## Newton ARPA Investment Investing in Neighborhood Parks & Gardens - \$300,000

Newtonians enjoy our many beautiful parks, green spaces and gardens throughout our villages. As we stayed closer to home and got outside for walks, runs and bike rides during the pandemic, our appreciation of these spaces increased, and made it even more apparent that we need more investments.

With these spaces providing community, tranquility and health, I'm allocating \$300,000 in ARPA funds for our Parks, Recreation and Culture staff (PRC) and residents to explore the possibility of a community garden at Spears Park and to supplement neighborhood-funded park projects in village centers and pocket parks, as well as within traffic islands. These funds will be used toward smaller-scale park improvements as well as bike racks, benches, waste receptacles, and signage.

PRC regularly works with an amazing group of volunteers. Businesses, community groups, and individuals volunteer and/or help provide financial support for the refurbishment and upkeep of Newton's many green spaces. Our neighbors are often creating plantings in traffic islands in roadway intersections, sidewalk garden beds, seating areas in village centers and around public buildings, and spearheading the work in smaller neighborhood parks. ARPA funds will be used to help supplement neighborhood-raised monies for these types of projects.

Spears Park, a small quarter acre green space, is along Washington Street at Walnut Park, near the Jackson School, in Nonantum. Thanks go to Ward Councilor Maria Scibelli Greenberg from Ward 1 who advocated for a community garden there. The study for Spears Park will examine options for a community garden with the goal of creating a public space that not only provides gardening opportunities but also adds beauty. The study will explore the projected size of the garden area and plots, accessibility, transit options, perimeter fencing and water, noise/light/ rodent considerations, and management and maintenance requirements.

A community garden in Nonantum would help balance availability across the City as our established garden is in Nahanton Park which sits in the southwest corner of Newton. Interested in helping explore Spears Park or for information about the community garden at Nahanton Park or how to apply for funding for your favorite neighborhood park? Email our team at [parks@newtonma.gov](mailto:parks@newtonma.gov).