

# New Upgrades to Mt. Airy Commons Thanks to Big Grant Award!

The wonderful city organization known as Keep Cincinnati Beautiful(KCB) has a grant program called Safe and Clean that “is designed to support and encourage community based efforts to improve safety and increased livability through neighborhood level problem solving approaches and projects.” Upon reviewing the grant guidelines, Mt. Airy CURE decided this would be a perfect opportunity to seek funds to make improvements to the community space at 5536 Colerain Ave known affectionately as Mt. Airy Commons. (Read More)



**Before and After**

It was decided that the grant application would have four elements. Clearing the undeveloped space behind the Commons parking lot of unwanted invasive plants, procuring picnic tables to install in the plaza area

along Colerain Ave., adding security lighting to discourage car break-ins in the parking lot as well as to highlight the vibrant mural on the Little Brothers building and improving the meandering pathway that runs through the beautiful mural garden area. As it turns out, we were enthusiastically approved by KCB for our full asking amount of \$21,000! We quickly got to work hiring contractors and ordering new treasures to add to the only true public friendly space within the Mt. Airy business district.

The impact of winning this grant award has already had a major impact on our neighborhood. The biggest change to this point is that the clearing of the rear of the property of invasive vegetation has allowed CURE to very quickly transform this space into a community garden. Six raised garden beds, a pumpkin patch and a pollinator garden have been established and volunteer days have been coordinated to make this happen. We also have many exciting future plans in the works including setting up a high tunnel to extend our growing season, establishing a fruit orchard and building a nature trail. The addition of the picnic tables, security lighting and rebuilt pathway has also resulted in increased pedestrian traffic through the Commons. Our board and community garden volunteers have been engaging with community members and are getting unanimously positive feedback and have seen positive growth in our volunteer base. We tell them that we are just getting started with this transformation.

The initial construction of this space starting in 2015 had the goal of greater community engagement and pride and hence it was called Mt. Airy Commons. By definition a Commons is “a public gathering place shared by the whole of a community”. We at Mt. Airy CURE feel strongly that the improvements made through this grant will be a giant step in making this a reality as we have established a beautiful spot for future community events.

Thank You Keep Cincinnati Beautiful! We invite all to come enjoy this beautiful space with us and watch as we continue to make improvements.