

# Isles announces arts and gardening opportunities

By **Dan Aubrey** - February 28, 2018



Isles, the Trenton community development and environmental organization founded in 1981, is inviting area artists and gardeners to roll up their sleeves and get their hands busy.

For artists there is an open call to submit proposals for the design and completion of two art projects located in the Creek to Canal Creative District.

A work in progress in itself, the Creek to Canal Creative District is the fruit of a 2016 year-long, citywide Trenton Arts in Focus planning project that engaged more than 750 people from the region in a discussion about how arts and culture can be drivers for downtown revitalization.

The Creek to Canal Creative District generally uses the Old Trenton Neighborhood boundaries of Perry Street to the north, Route 1 to the east, North Broad Street to the west, and East State Street to the south; however, the district extends to the areas reaching Assunpink Creek and the D&R Canal and other fringe areas.

Trenton Arts in Focus was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and New Jersey Manufacturers via the New Jersey Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit program. Isles and Passage Theater facilitated the planning process.

Isles is looking for proposals that will lead to the creation of two distinct outdoor public art works that reflect the spirit of the community or city at large.

One project involves a freestanding billboard at 147 Perry Street, at the intersection of Perry and Montgomery streets. The other is the side yard of the historic Higbee Street School (also known as the Nixon School) at 20 Bellevue Avenue, at the intersection of Fowler Street, adjacent to the Creek to Canal District.

The deadline for submissions is Thursday, March 15, and the project completion date is June 1. The available subsidy for each project is \$1,500. Any artist or team of artists interested in creating artwork may submit a proposal in accordance with the guidelines, found at [creektocanalcreative.org](http://creektocanalcreative.org).

Area gardeners have a bounty of opportunities to learn through the Isles community gardening project. It involves more than 70 Trenton community gardens, runs gardening education programs for city students, and participates in the Capital Farm.

It also provides a series of gardening awareness and community education programs that are starting with the new season. All programs are held at Isles' office at 33 Tucker Street unless otherwise noted.

On Wednesday, March 7, from 4 to 7 p.m. there is the Garden Information Session to help community members to get involved in backyard, school, or community gardening, and to learn about Isles' training garden.

Saturday, March 17, 9 to 11 a.m. is the season's "Community Garden Kickoff" meeting, where gardeners of all levels are invited to join up to start off the season.

On Fridays, April 6 and May 4, from 4 to 7 p.m., and Saturdays, April 7 and May 5, from 9 to 11 a.m., are the Community Garden Seed and Plant Distribution days, where gardeners can pick up seeds and fertilizer along with seedlings ready for planting. Bring your own cardboard box or seedling trays.

On Tuesday, April 10, there is a "Garden Plow" event, featuring an old fashioned plow team led by a team of horses or oxen, courtesy of Howell Living History Farm. The event runs from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Chestnut Avenue Garden (between Walnut and Greenwood avenues).

On Saturday, April 21, there is "Gardening Foundations: Part I – Back to Basics," an informal workshop focusing on soil, watering, planting, and trouble shooting. It is set for 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

On Saturday, May 19, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. there is "Gardening Foundations: Part 2 — Keep it Natural Topics," with topics including composting, simple bin construction, and involving worms to help make plants healthy.

Following on Saturday, June 2, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. is "Gardening Foundations: Part 3 — Tools & Techniques," introducing participants to tool car, watering, weeding, harvesting, and pruning.

And there is the start of summer, Friday, June 22, Summer Garden Social and pot luck, 4 to 7 p.m. 609-341-4729 or [isles.org](http://isles.org)