

## **Dunwoody Sunflower Project 2023**

### **Site Selection, Planting Guide, Maintenance Guide**

#### **April 1, 2023**

#### **Purpose/Roles and Responsibilities**

The purpose of this project is to install sunflowers in numerous Dunwoody “sites” (neighborhood entrances, businesses, churches, etc.) for summer blooms across the city.

- **Dunwoody Woman’s Club** is responsible for the overall management of the project, including seed funding, site recruitment, development of site list (with number of plants per site), site oversight, and communications.
- **The individual sites** are responsible for site requirements, site preparation, planting, and ongoing maintenance.
- **Dunwoody Community Garden and Orchard** is responsible for plant production, site selection and requirements specifications, and planting/maintenance instructions.

#### **Site Selection and Requirements**

These are the must-haves for every site:

- A flat, even space of at least 5’ X 5’ (for 5-6 plants), preferably well-tilled and with well-amended soil. Sites can be oblong or round, as long as there is room to plant following the recommendations in the Planting Guide (below).
- Site must be free of standing water or storm/rain/drainage runoff.
- Visibility to passersby – either on foot or by car
- Full sun for at least **6** hours a day
- A **near-by** water source (but not in the spray area of high-powered sprinkler systems)
- Mulch (wood chips or pine straw)
- Fertilizer (Recommended: GardenTone by Espoma) Available at all garden centers)
- Animal repellent (such as Liquid Fence) Available at garden centers
- Volunteers to perform Ongoing Maintenance (see Page 3)

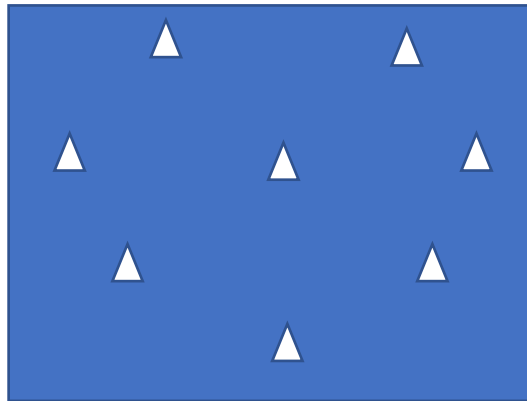
Once the site is selected, see the **Planting Guide** (below) to determine the number of plants needed.

#### **Plant Pick-up**

Sunflowers will be ready for pick-up on Monday, May 1 – Tuesday, May 2 from 10am – 4pm at the Greenhouse Complex in Brook Run Park (next to the Skate Park). There are two varieties of sunflowers. Depending on the number of plants you need you will be assigned a mix of the two varieties, along with detailed planting instructions.

### Site Preparation

- Measure and mark the planting site.
- Prepare the entire planting site by loosening/spading/tilling the area to a depth of 12". Amend with planting soil and a light organic fertilizer if needed.
- Determine and mark plant placement. Staggered/curved/swath placement is better than "soldiers in a straight line". Plants should be placed 18" – 24" apart (on centers). Here's an example:



Site approximately 5'X5', with 7 plants

### Planting Instructions:

NOTE: Your plants may be delivered in plastic nursery pots or in plantable containers. You'll receive **specific** planting instructions when you pick up your plants. The following information is general in nature but will give you an idea of what to expect.

- Using the pot bottom as a template, dig out each plant site. Tip: Press the bottom of the pot into the soil to ensure that the hole is wide and deep enough to hold the plant so that the plant pot soil is even with the surrounding soil.
- Gently invert the plant pot to release the plant. Place the plant into the planting hole, ensuring that the soil surface of the plant is even with or slightly above the surrounding soil. Backfill soil as needed and water gently and well.
- Once all plants are installed mulch the area with wood chips or pine straw, keeping the mulch approximately 2" away from plant stems.
- Treat the entire area with animal repellent (Liquid Fence) and plan to reapply as needed according to package directions.

## Ongoing Maintenance

- **Watering:** The sunflowers will require at least 1-2" of rain or water per week. Monitor rainfall and water if needed, especially if the plants show signs of wilting or during times of high temperatures. Ensure that the plants are not in the direct path of high-powered sprinklers! Drip systems are OK.
- **Deadheading:** Using sharp hand pruners, remove all wilted/spent flowers. This will encourage new flower production.
- **Fertilizing:** Optional after initial fertilization.
- **Staking:** Support branches with garden stakes if necessary (plants flopping over).
- **Protecting:** Re-apply Liquid Fence (according to package directions) if deer and rabbit browsing is a problem.

## FAQs:

### Q: Which sunflower varieties are we planting?

A: We have selected two sunflower varieties: Soraya and Gold Rush. Both of these varieties are branching, which means each plant will grow to 48" – 72", develops up to 25 stems per plant, with flowers that are 4"-6". For more information on these flowers, visit [www.johnnyseeds.com](http://www.johnnyseeds.com).

### Q: Will the sunflowers come back next year?

A: As sunflowers are annuals, they will not come back next year. However, there is a possibility that they may drop seeds that develop into new plants next year.

### Q: Are the seeds edible?

A: In this case, it's a qualified 'yes'. In order to produce more flowers, we're recommending deadheading the spent blooms instead of allowing the seeds to fully develop. If some spent flowers are left on the plant they may develop seeds – but they may not be the kind you buy in the grocery store. As the flower blooms diminish, we recommend that the bloom stalks be clipped and tied to fences or birdfeeders for birds to enjoy.

### Q: When should we pull up the plants?

A: These plants may continue to flower through late summer. When flowering diminishes or stops, or when they are no longer attractive, go ahead and pull the plants.

### Q: Who do I contact for help?

A:

Please email [kak1941@aol.com](mailto:kak1941@aol.com) for questions on site selection, plant pickup information, etc.

Please email [dcgobrookrunpark@gmail.com](mailto:dcgobrookrunpark@gmail.com) with questions about planting and maintaining sunflower plants.