



Metro  
Blooms

GROW. BLOOM. INSPIRE!

ANNUAL REPORT 2021







**Mission** Partner with communities to create resilient landscapes and foster clean watersheds, embracing the values of equity and inclusion to solve environmental challenges

**Strategic Areas of Focus**

Diversity, Equity,  
& Inclusion

Design + Build for  
Healthy Resilient  
Lands & Water

Community  
Relations,  
Engagement &  
Inspiration

Broaden Geographic Reach

Organizational Identities  
& Interconnections

Education &  
Community  
Resources

Partnerships in Community -  
Strong Interconnected  
Partnerships

Financial Sustainability  
& Accountability





# Redesigning Landscapes With Rental Communities

We worked with 6 rental communities to create outdoor spaces that heal our earth while meeting community needs. Residents were active decision-makers, and community priorities shaped each design. We hired residents as project stewards. Residents “dug in” during paid community planting events.

These projects are made possible by public and private funding, including government agencies like watershed districts, cities, and counties, foundations, property owners and donations.

Community organizations and resident leaders are vital partners, helping us connect with the people most impacted by the work.

## AUTUMN RIDGE



Autumn Ridge Apartments received the City of Brooklyn Park's 2021 Summer Blossom Award



*“It’s great having us all out here. This got us all outside on this beautiful day and all interacting with each other which we almost never do. And we’re doing community work!”*

*– participant, Autumn Ridge community tree-planting*

## BROOK GARDENS



Brook Gardens, Brooklyn Park: bee-friendly aster, stick trellis in nature play area



**148**

residents  
participated in  
project activities

**8**

rain gardens  
installed

**40**

trees  
planted

**843,000**

gallons of runoff  
captured annually



# Resilient Landscapes

## Metro Blooms Design + Build

Our growth was stretching the capacity of our non-profit and our ability to carry out our mission. So we created Metro Blooms Design + Build, a for-profit entity, to grow our design, installation and maintenance services while allowing our non-profit to focus on engagement, environmental justice, education, and partnership. The income from Metro Blooms Design + Build supports our non-profit mission.



A Design + Build project in Minneapolis  
Designer: Mike Morrison



Design + Build crew members

## Neighborhood of Rain Gardens + Pollinator Planting

Our neighborhood-focused programs make it easier for residents to get a rain garden or pollinator plantings in their yards. We leverage combined resources, partnering with cities and neighborhoods, watersheds and our long-time partner Conservations Corps MN & Iowa (which provides crews paid through the Clean Water Fund) to lower residents' costs and reduce practical challenges like excavating soil. In 2021, we piloted individual "rain garden refresh" visits with previous participants: we did basic maintenance together and provided resources for future care.





# Lawns to Legumes Individual Support

We managed an individual grant program for state residents to plant pollinator habitat as part of Lawns to Legumes, a Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) program. Lawns to Legumes received a 2021 Environmental Initiative Award for Large-Scale Sustainability Impacts.

*“Thanks for all the good you do for our environment. I built a successful rain garden through you years ago which is still thriving, and have started a prairie garden in one corner inspired by your bee lawn class. Excited to get the bee lawn in place this year.”*

– Linda, Lawns to Legumes grant recipient

**So far the program has resulted in the creation of more than 1.2 million sq. ft. of pollinator habitat.**



# DIY Workshops

We taught people earth-friendlier ways to make their yards more resilient to the challenges of climate change. We offered three workshop themes: Resilient Yards, Bee Lawns, and Planting for Pollinators. More than half of participants surveyed later planned on installing a rain garden!



# Blue Thumb - Planting for Clean Water

Blue Thumb is Metro Blooms' education program and a partnership of local government, landscape contractors, native plant nurseries and others committed to the promotion of native plantings, rain gardens, and shoreline plantings.



# Sustainable Land Care Training

We're growing a green infrastructure workforce and creating job and education pathways in the environmental field, especially in communities that lack quality training programs. After a pandemic hiatus in 2020, we revamped our training to add an online learning element. We provided training to 101 youths and young adults.



All about plant roots



# Commercial and Institutional Projects

We helped small businesses and institutions plan, access funding for and install rain gardens and other green infrastructure. These practices make them eligible for storm water credits on tax bills. In our own neighborhood, we engaged with small businesses along the 38th Street corridor in Minneapolis on projects featuring native plantings and pollinator-themed artwork (in partnership with Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center). We're planning future landscape redesigns for some participants. This was funded largely by the City of Minneapolis Great Streets program.

## 38TH STREET



Volunteers making pollinator-themed art, 38th Street, Minneapolis



Pollinator art sculpture in pollinator garden, 38th Street, Minneapolis

## ALL NATIONS CHURCH



Community planting day, All Nations Church, Minneapolis



16 volunteers turned out for the All Nations Church community planting day

*"I'm learning to appreciate native plants, like plants that attract bees and what the bees do for the earth... that's the knowledge I'm trying to pass down to the kids, to let them know how important these things are to our environment."*

— Bendu, member, All Nations Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Minneapolis

Note: We're now working with youth from All Nations and other local partners on sustainable land care training.

1

rain garden, native  
plantings and a bee  
lawn installed

450

native  
plants

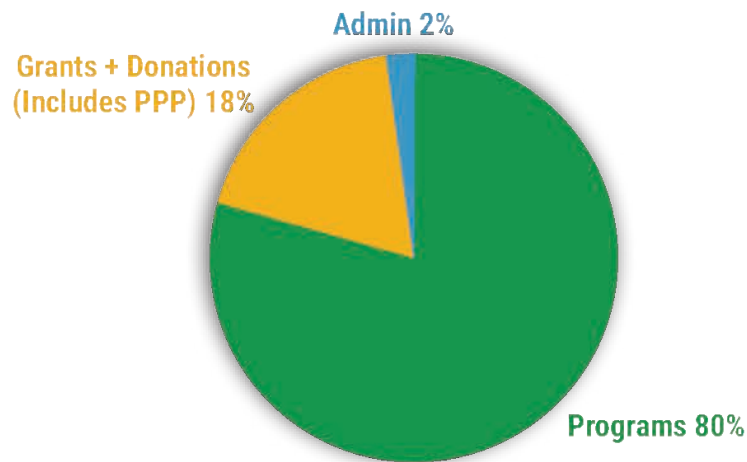
35,000

gallons of runoff  
captured annually

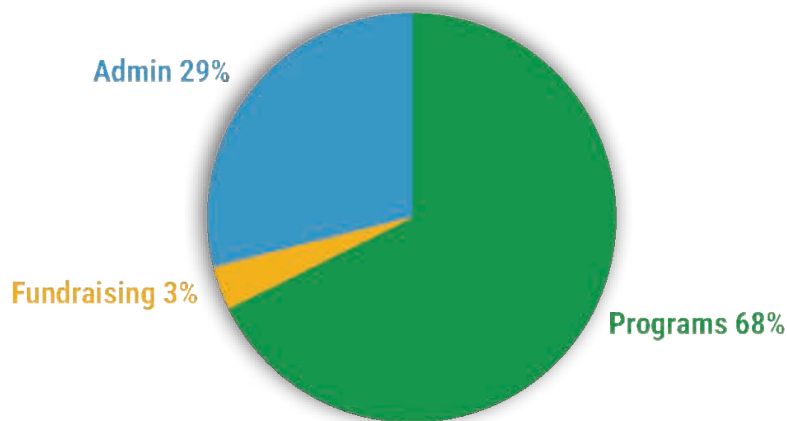


# 2021 Financials

## CONSOLIDATED REVENUE



## CONSOLIDATED EXPENSE



Consolidated financials include Metro Blooms, Property LLC, and Design + Build. We finished our building renovation in 2021 and launched Design + Build, leading to higher administrative costs than normal for us.

## Governance

### Board of Directors

Carol Kuechler, Chair  
Susan Nelson, Vice-Chair  
Norm Greenberg, Treasurer  
Randy Rau  
Travis Thein  
Megan Tenenbaum  
Steph Jacobs  
John Kinara  
Catherine Menick  
Jeanette Boit-Kania  
Alex Kim  
Beth Carreño, Blue Thumb Liaison

## Blue Thumb Partners

Anoka Conservation District  
B.E. Landscape Designs  
Capitol Region Watershed District  
Carver County Water Mgmt Org.  
City of Champlin  
City of Edina  
City of Elk River  
City of Shoreview  
Dogwood Designs  
Ecoscapes LLC  
Elm Creek WMO  
Field Outdoor Spaces  
Glacial Ridge Growers  
City of Golden Valley  
Heidi's Lifestyle Gardens & Growhaus  
Helping Hand Companies  
Hennepin County Environment and Energy  
JL Theis, Inc.

## Leadership

**Laura Scholl**, Executive Director

**John Bly**, Vice President of Property + Director of Operations

**Jennifer Ehlert**, Vice President of Metro Blooms Design + Build, Co-Director of Design

**Rich Harrison**, Registered Landscape Architect + Co-Director of Design

**Erika Schlaeager dos Santos**, Director of Community Relations

**Rebecca Rice**, Director of Blue Thumb

Kern Landscape Resources  
Landscape Alternatives, Inc.  
Landscape Direction, LLC  
Living Sculpture Tree Care  
City of Mendota Heights  
City of Minneapolis  
Minnehaha Falls Landscaping  
Minnesota Native Landscapes  
Minnesota State Horticultural Society  
City of Minnetonka  
Morning Dew Gardening  
Morning Sky Greenery  
Mother Earth Gardens  
My Garden Goddess  
Native Resource Preservation  
Organic Bob LLC  
Patio Town  
Pierson Garden and Landscape

Plaisted Companies, Inc.  
Ramsey-Washington Metro WD  
Reddy Rents  
Rice Creek Watershed District  
City of Rochester  
Sacred Space Gardens  
City of St. Louis Park  
Sherburne SWCD  
Shingle Creek WMO  
Trio Landscaping  
Twin City Seed  
Twin Lake Design Group, Inc  
VLAWMO  
Washington Conservation District  
West Mississippi WMO  
Zone 3 Gardens  
Metro Blooms Design + Build



## Our New Home

Our capital campaign continues for our building at 3747 Cedar Ave in Minneapolis. We're creating a small backyard that demonstrates practices we promote.



[metroblooms.org](http://metroblooms.org) 651-699-2426 [info@metroblooms.org](mailto:info@metroblooms.org)

## Supporters

We are so grateful for all levels of support our community provides. Some of our major supporters include:

McKnight Foundation	Mary Martini & Stuart Goldstein
Manitou Fund	Gregg Mekler
Mortenson Family Foundation	Jessica Miller, Gragons Wynd
Youthprise	Mike Miller & Lynn Herbert
Barr Engineering	Susan Nelson
JL Theis	Scott Moen, EcoBiz Law
MN Native Landscapes	Bruce & Bobby Nemer
Green Roofs for Healthy Cities	William North & Victoria Morse
Twin City Seed Company	Jane Pedelty
PaveDrain	Mark Pedelty
Reddy Rents	Bruce & Kristie Pietig
Allegra Marketing	Rachel Popken
Trio Landscaping	Rebecca Rice & Jim Berg
West Monroe Partners	Phil & Tammie Rosenbloom
Schroeder Family	Tim Sandry & Ellen Wersan
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Lisa Erb, Origin Media	Scott Smith, Taiyo International
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Carol Kuechler & Tom Tesch	Miranda Wilson
Cathy & Mark Lee	Bob & Debby Wolk

