



# Long Branch Green Team & Environmental Commission



## Spotlight Topic: Long Branch Community Garden

**Location:** 7<sup>th</sup> Ave between Broadway and Joline

Did you know that Long Branch has a Community Garden?

The mission of the Long Branch Community Garden is to promote organic gardening practices and healthy eating, provide fresh produce to local food pantries and nurture and encourage a love of gardening among its members and community partners. The garden is located on a right-of-way (ROW) that extends from Seventh Avenue to Lippincott Avenue. Various Utility companies have conduits, poles and wiring that run through the ROW. The ROW is approximately 635 feet long and 60 feet wide.



The site has approximately 55 individual plots and 5 raised container gardens for gardeners with special needs. There are also two larger community garden sites on the property from which produce is donated. Various vegetables, herbs, and some flowers are planted. The site has a utility/service building which was previously used as a modular classroom building at the Gregory Elementary School located on Seventh Avenue and Joline Avenue. It was donated to the city, rehabilitated and moved to the garden site. The building is used for community meetings, nutrition classes, training sessions, yoga and meditation and other purposes. Tools, equipment, furniture, supplies, recently purchased personal protection equipment (for Covid-19 protection), seedlings etc., are all stored in the building. A handicap port-a-john has been placed on the site and is left on site, excluding the winter season.

The site has outside water service to accommodate the gardens. The site also has video monitors that were installed in 2020. The Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) monitors the activities along with the garden specialist. OCED provides the gardeners with mushroom compost, wood chips for weed prevention and organic soil. Only organic gardening practices are permitted. In 2023 over 100 families were served from the site and more than 8,000 pounds of produce weighed, about 2/3 of which was given away to St James food pantry and Jersey Shore Food Not Bombs. Fresh produce was also given to the city workers in LB including the police and public works department. In 2023 the garden operated from April 22 through October 31, 2023. A combination lock has been added to the gate so gardeners can have free access.

Individual community garden plots are provided at no charge to residents. Anyone interested in a plot can contact the city's Office of Community and Economic Development.