

Green House proposal

1) I am a student with the CU Environmental Center where I am the sustainable foods coordinator. Our organization includes paid staff as well as volunteers. The CU Environmental Center educates, activates, and inspires the campus community to understand and engage in local and global environmental issues.

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3) Project Description

A greenhouse would be constructed on campus either on a building roof or on the ground. The roof of the UMC is one option for the location and would provide good visibility. Other options on the actual ground may be better locations.

The greenhouse would strive to connect the CU community with their food through hands-on gardening and farming. We would practice and teach organic gardening techniques and sustainable farming practices with closed loop recycling in the greenhouse in conjunction with composting and general sustainable practices in growing food.

The greenhouse would serve as a classroom to teach students where food comes from, who grows it and how food choices impact peoples' lives, health and the environment. Benefits of organic and local gardening can be emphasized in this hands-on situation along with information readily available to those who wish to learn more. An area displaying and providing resources on social and environmental issues associated with farming would be in the greenhouse special section or the environmental center's library.

Food grown in the greenhouse would be donated to local organizations in need of fresh produce (e.g. Boulder Homeless Shelter or other orgs.). Larger crops could also be served in the UMC when possible to promote the greenhouse and the idea of local food. It should be emphasized that this is a student run greenhouse, paid for by students and available to students.

Community gardens have proven to be a successful adventure connecting communities. Colorado's climate does not allow for year round community gardening, but a greenhouse would allow for a stable and continuous garden/learning center.

CU has been a leader in modeling student led environmental action. Sustainable food is an area that deserves much attention and is an effective way to provide students the opportunity to get their hands dirty while understanding the bewildering food landscape. Deeply rooted traditions involving the farming process year round and enjoying the bountiful rewards of sustainable gardening defines us and sets us apart. The greenhouse would serve as a place to come learn and grow for anyone that has the desire.

4) Project Scope and Timeline

The funds from this grant would go to purchasing the greenhouse and the necessary equipment to run it (vents, fans, etc.). Materials for planting and seeds would also be

purchased with the funds from local organic farms. The implementation timeline will mainly be impacted by the time it takes to find an appropriate location on campus and to get approval for the location. Maintenance and planning of the greenhouse would be the responsibility of the sustainable foods coordinator this year along with determining who will take care of the greenhouse in years to follow.

5) Detailed Project Budget

Quote from Ludy Greenhouses:

\$30.00/ft² - \$85.00

This includes labor, vent systems, heating systems, humidifying systems and glass or polycarbonate.

An appropriate size would be about 1,000 ft² putting the cost at between \$30,000 and \$60,000 for the greenhouse to be built

6) Environmental Impact

The greenhouse would have many different positive implications for the environment and would help the campus strive towards many goals addressed in the Blueprint for a Green Campus.

- “Create a culture of sustainability among all on campus through traditional and more inventive educational approaches.” This goal in the Environmental Literacy section of the Blueprint for a green campus is directly addressed by this project. It is a more inventive, hands-on approach for the campus to understand and participate in the process of sustainable farming.
- “Incorporate sustainable food option into UMC Food Services and Housing Dining Services”
An action step for this goal described in the blueprint is to “Expand and collaborate with the organic, permaculture garden on campus.” This is a large step in expanding the gardening options to year round production and learning and is a direct step towards the goal of sustainable living for CU.

7) CU Quality of Life

The greenhouse would provide a living classroom for the CU community and place to go to relax and enjoy gardening year round.

8) Saving Money

The greenhouse has the possibility of saving the school money when buying sustainable foods. When possible, larger crops could be used in the salad bar in the UMC.

9) Project Longevity

The greenhouse will continue to provide benefits for years to come. This year will be used to establish the greenhouse and make preparations for permanent maintenance in the future. Once the planting begins and a schedule for planting is worked out, it will be relatively easy to maintain.