

Clean Up and Community at the Art Lot Healing Space

This past Friday was a day filled with creativity, teamwork, and community care at the Art Lot Healing Space, as NIDC staff rolled up their sleeves for a hands-on day of work. The Art Lot is located at 1601 N 35th Street and is a peaceful part of the neighborhood. It is an open area meant for reflection, relaxation, and community connection, and on Friday it was ready for a makeover.

One of the first projects of the day was assembling a new park bench, which will provide a welcoming spot for residents to unwind. Some of the older benches in the space had clearly seen better days and after a few coats of paint, they looked refreshed and ready for many more years of use. The team also spent some time painting the peace poles located throughout the space. They are important symbols of unity and hope, and with the addition of bright paint and colorful details, we brought them back to life.

What truly made the day special was how the community showed up. As NIDC staff cleaned up trash and made small upgrades, neighbors and people nearby started to lend a hand. Some helped with trash, others helped cleaned up weeds, and one even took over the painting project to reach the parts others could not. With everyone's combined effort, the time passed by quickly and by the end of the day, the Art Lot looked completely transformed.

The effort reflected the team's ongoing commitment to nurturing neighborhood pride and creating public spaces that uplift the spirit. The final addition to the space will be a chess table that will provide space for community members to gather and compete at a beloved game. This project is part of NIDC's current efforts to continue to reinvest in the Healing Spaces and build a stronger community across Milwaukee.



Local artist, Dan Kirchen, adding a Little Free Library to the Space



NIDC staff, Angela Mitchell Reid, and a community member working together to clean up the Healing Space



Community member painting Peace Posts



NIDC staff, Nora Graham, and the granddaughter of the Garden Leader for the space working together to paint Peace Posts