

# Proposal To Host

## Gold Trees Bloom: A Public Art & Youth Mental-Health Movement

City of Carmel, Indiana



Prepared by:

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[GoldTreesBloom.com](http://GoldTreesBloom.com)

## Executive Summary

**Gold Trees Bloom** is a life-sized public art installation and emotional wellness movement designed to foster community healing, creativity, and social connection—particularly among youth. Launching in Carmel, Indiana in **2026**, the inaugural theme will be **Gratitude**.

Through a powerful mix of artistic design, public engagement, and **youth mental-health awareness**, the Gold Trees Bloom experience transforms shared emotional expression into living beauty. By hosting this exhibit, the City of Carmel can establish itself as a national model for cultural innovation and compassionate community-building. —*becoming a powerful partner in creating space for reflection, healing, and hope.*

Together, we can offer something extraordinary to the public: a place where gratitude blossoms, where stories are shared, and where people of all ages can feel seen, heard, and connected.

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## 2026 Bloom Theme: **Gratitude**

Each Gold Trees Bloom installation is built around a single emotional theme—serving as the core concept for that year’s visual and participatory design. Youth Mental Health is our movement focus with the chosen theme driving that year’s Bloom design.

The proposed theme for **2026** is **Gratitude**.

All Bloom Leaves will be custom-designed in shape, color palette, and layout to reflect this theme. Participants are invited to write a short reflection of gratitude on their leaf—acknowledging something or someone they appreciate, a moment of beauty, or a feeling of thankfulness.



This shared theme unifies the Bloom visually and emotionally—creating a powerful forest of human appreciation that becomes more meaningful with each contribution.

## Art Installation Overview

Each **Gold Tree** is a **handmade, life-sized metal sculpture**, originally sourced as a reclaimed object and reimagined by the artist into a sacred symbol of renewal.

Attached to its branches are **hundreds of hand-twisted golden Leaf Stems**, made from anodized aluminum wire and placed by hand.

These stems hold the **Bloom Leaves**—custom-designed, weatherproof, recyclable paper leaves created by the artist to reflect the year’s emotional theme.

### How the Public Participates:

**Leaf selection:** Visitors select a Bloom Leaf from the **Leaf Collection Box** located on a pedestal near the tree.

**Personal Reflection:** On the writing side of the leaf, they write a short message tied to the year’s theme (e.g., "I'm grateful for...").

**Digital Interaction:** They may scan the QR code or take a photo of their message to share on social media.

**Leaf Return:** The personalized leaves are placed into the **Leaf Collection Box** beside the tree attached to the pedestal.

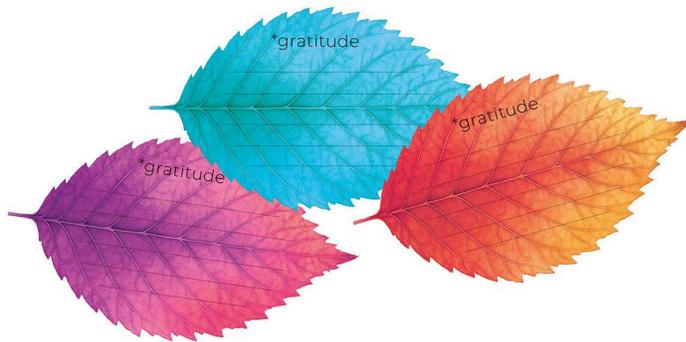
The **artist/caretaker** collects these personalized leaves each week, scans them into an online digital archive, and carefully clips them onto the tree to maintain a full, weather-responsive Bloom.

**Visitors do not physically interact with the tree**, preserving the reverence, visual harmony, and structural integrity of the installation.



# The Mental Health Movement Behind the Art

This installation is not just about art. It's about **what the art makes possible**.



## The Crisis:

### The Mental-Health Crisis Facing Youth Today

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2023 roughly **4 in 10 high-school students (≈ 40%)** reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. - [Source Link](#)
- In the same survey, about **20% of students seriously considered attempting suicide**, and nearly **10% attempted suicide**. - [Source Link](#)
- A 2025 analysis by child-health researchers finds that **nearly 1 in 5 (≈ 18%) adolescents age 12–17** had at least one major depressive episode in the past year — equivalent to millions of young people nationwide. - [Source Link](#)
- More broadly: Almost **one in three (≈ 31%) youth** now experience a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral problem. - [Source Link](#)

These statistics reflect a **growing, widespread mental-health crisis** affecting adolescents — despair, loneliness, depression, hopelessness, suicidal thoughts. The root causes are complex: social isolation, increased pressures (academic, social media, economic), disruption during pandemic years, systemic inequalities, and lack of accessible mental-health support.

Yet one protective factor repeatedly shown to help youth is **connection** — feeling seen, heard, included, and part of a community.

## **How Gold Trees Bloom Responds to This Crisis:**

Gold Trees Bloom — with its public, participatory, emotionally resonant format — is uniquely positioned to address several of the underlying issues in youth mental-health:

- **Community & Connection:** The installation invites people (especially young people) to contribute their own “leaf” — a personal thought, reflection, hope, or memory. This process helps combat isolation and fosters a sense of belonging.
- **Expression & Healing:** The act of writing, placing a leaf, viewing a living “forest” of collective emotional expression can be cathartic — offering a non-clinical, creative outlet for feelings of sadness, hope, longing, grief, or joy.
- **Visibility & Awareness:** By integrating with a digital platform (QR codes, registration, storytelling, social sharing), Gold Trees Bloom becomes more than a static art piece. It becomes a movement: a visible public statement that “you are not alone,” that others feel too, that mental-health struggles are common — and normal — and should be met with compassion, not stigma.
- **Intergenerational Bridge:** While youth mental health is the central focus, the themes are universal — adults, parents, seniors all have experienced hardship, isolation, or hope. Gold Trees Bloom invites everyone to participate, bridging generational divides through shared vulnerability.
- **Sustainable, Growing Impact:** The annual “Bloom cycle,” evolving leaves, public participation and renewal makes this project a recurring community anchor — not a one-time art drop, but an ongoing cultural and social movement that can grow locally and expand globally.

In this way, Gold Trees Bloom shifts from “public art installation” to **a living, breathing movement for mental health, empathy, and collective healing.**

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# Why Carmel, Indiana Should Host:

## Cultural Alignment

Carmel is a national leader in public art, city design, and placemaking. Hosting Gold Trees Bloom aligns with its mission to integrate beauty, wellness, and civic innovation.

## Addressing Youth Well-Being Locally

While national mental-health statistics are sobering, Hamilton County youth are also affected. Hosting this exhibit provides a **non-clinical, inclusive wellness experience** right in public space—free and open to all.



## Community Engagement

The installation encourages emotional connection, storytelling, civic pride, and meaningful social media interaction. It builds community not just visually—but soulfully.

## Tourism & Economic Boost

As a seasonal centerpiece in downtown Carmel or the Arts & Design District, Gold Trees Bloom becomes a visual destination. Visitors are drawn in to participate, reflect, and share—benefiting local businesses and cultural programming.

## Educational Partnerships

Carmel Clay Schools and youth programs can use the installation for:

- Gratitude journaling
- STEAM/art curriculum connections
- Creative writing prompts
- Mental wellness activities
- Local field trips promoting Mental Health Awareness and Art

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## What Hosting Involves:

### City Provides:

- Public space placement approval (downtown plaza, library, monon trail, civic green, etc.)
- Utility access if nighttime lighting is desired
- Communications support: social media, event calendar, launch outreach to business and local residents/schools



### Artist Provides:

- Hand made gold leaf Metal Tree(s) - *up to 3 Trees*
- Full installation and weekly upkeep of the installation
- All Bloom Leaf printing, design, and seasonal replenishment
- Dynamic QR code integrations and online digital leaf archive
- Public interaction signage and leaf-box podium
- School/youth outreach programming collaboration with City of Carmel
- Photo and media archive for the city of Carmel
- Artist in person outreach - speaking, presenting, interaction with public/media
- Artist social media marketing for the installation

**CARMEL**  
x GoldTreesBloom



# 2026 Bloom Season Impact Goals for the City of Carmel

- **1,000+ community participants** adding personal leaves
- Hundreds of **school-aged contributors** and local educators involved
- **QR-scanned leaf archive** showcasing digital reflections online
- Carmel positioned in press as a **national leader in mental-health-driven placemaking**
- Return visitors and new tourism driven by **annual themed Bloom Seasons**

## Key Benefits for Carmel

### 1. Civic & Cultural Enhancement

Hosting *Gold Trees Bloom* aligns with Carmel's well-known commitment to public art and cultural excellence. The exhibit tells a story of transformation and reimagined beauty—showcasing Carmel's leadership in promoting meaningful, inclusive, and accessible artistic experiences.

### 2. Community Engagement

This installation thrives on direct public participation. Residents contribute by writing personal reflections on Bloom Leaves, attaching them to the tree, and sharing digitally. The result is deepened civic pride, emotional connection, and a living piece of collective storytelling.

### 3. Economic & Tourism Value

As an interactive and visually compelling public artwork, *Gold Trees Bloom* draws visitors, social media attention, and increased foot traffic to surrounding businesses—especially in Carmel's vibrant downtown or arts districts.

### 4. Educational & Youth Programming

Carmel's schools and nonprofits can collaborate on workshops, field trips, and creative projects tied to the exhibit. The QR-coded, interactive leaves can support STEAM curricula and storytelling exercises, connecting youth with public art in hands-on ways.

### 5. Seasonal and Civic Continuity

Each year, *Gold Trees Bloom* adopts a new theme and design palette. This allows the city to renew the installation seasonally—building tradition and anticipation over time, while keeping the artwork dynamic and engaging.



# Let's Plant the Seed of Something Bigger

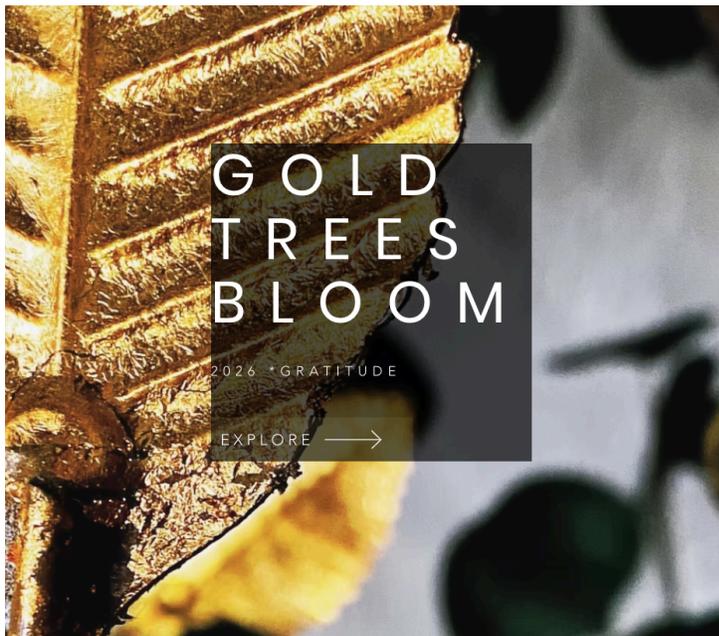
The mental-health challenges facing our youth today are not just statistics — they are real emotional burdens carried silently by thousands. With Gold Trees Bloom - Art has the power to connect, to heal, and to make us feel less alone.

By hosting Gold Trees Bloom in 2026 under the theme of **Gratitude**, Carmel can lead a movement of empathy, creativity, and public wellness.

**Our goal is to create a city-wide act of love, connection, and expression.**

Let's plant seeds of hope together, and create a space where every person — every young heart — can add their voice, hang their leaf, and know: they are not alone.

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