LAND TENURE ⟷ SUSTAIN INTEREST ⟷ COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Table 1.

Once the idea for a community garden has been initiated, organizers can use this information diagram to guide their decision making process. The major headings are those concepts identified through research as being critical for establishing a long term successful community garden. The smaller headings are critical aspects of the concepts that should be taken into consideration. Under the smaller headings are the key elements to consider when creating a community garden. They might not all apply to a particular garden, but the purpose of this chart is to identify them so that an informed decision can be made at the start of a garden project.

Lease

Long Term
- *Arrange through any willing organization such as a church, city department, private landowner, hospital, housing development*
- *Minimum of 5 years, 10 years is ideal*
- *Work with an organization with long term stability*

Short Term
- *Least secure option*
- *Arrange through any willing organization such as a church, city department, private landowner, hospital, housing development*
- *City government has proven unreliable partner in the past unless the government is dedicated to having community gardens*
- *Good option for gardens starting in a city or community with no prior history of community gardens*

Land Trust

- *Requires the availability of a land trust with like minded interests or that is dedicated to protecting community gardens*
- *Most secure option as the land will be protected as permanent open space*
- *Requires good relationships with the city or town and other local community organizations*
- *Community garden group must be committed since it can be a timely process to get a garden into a land trust and, once in, the garden is arranged as either a permanent or long term land use*

Government Partners

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Other Partners

- *Churches, schools, healthcare facilities, nonprofits and housing developments are all potential partners*
- *Common for the partner to be involved in the organization of the garden*
- *Can be selevtive in membership depending on the type of organizaion*
- *Future of the garden may depend on the long term stability of the partner rather than on the land*

Policy and Planning Tools

- *Can be utilized to establish community gardens as a permanent land use*
- *Can incorporate community garden goals into the comprehensive plan*
- *Can include provisions for community gardens in zoning ordinances*

Location

- *Garden site should be no more than a short bike, walk or drive from intended gardeners*
- *Target demographics where a community garden can fulfill a need such as: elderly, low-income, renters, immigrants*
- *If it is a transient community make sure to include a diversity of demographics*

Outreach

- *Involve the entire neighborhood in the planning process*
- *If there is not a solid group of interested individuals then move on to a different location*
- *Host all parties and events for gardeners and nongardening community members*
- *Offer interactive learning opportunities such as gardening technique classes and cooking classes*
- *Provide an outlet for gardeners to communicate through such as a newsletter*
- *Organize an advisory board or council that includes a diverse group of community members*

Leadership

- *Initial motivation and passion for the project should come from a commited leader in the community*
- *Establish a method of distributing and sharing leadership roles*
- *Establish an invlusive decision-making process*
- *Arrange for mentoring and leadership training*

Funding

- *Be aware of a basic budget for starting a garden (between $1,000 and $5,000, but can be as high as $60,000)*
- *Host fundraising events such as bake sales, car washes and potluck dinners*
- *Seek donated material from local businesses*
- *Apply for grant money through federal, state, city or nonprofit organizations*
- *Seek out a 501(c)3 nonprofit partner that can help acquire grant money*
- *Charge membership fees to cover basic operating expenses (fees can range from $10.00/year to $50.00/year or more depending on what the fee covers and how large the plot is)*

Relationships

- *Create opportunities or gardener and nongardener interactions through activites and social events*
- *Sample events include: cooking classes, gardening classes, crafts, and mentoring programs*
- *Build coalitions among gardeners and nongardening community members*
- *Create a network for community gardeners to share ideas and information. This can be done through email bulletins, newsletters and conferences*

Organization

- *Organize around community driven ideas and goals*
- *Utilize the assistance of outside agencies once a clear purpose and vision for the garden is established with input from the whole community not just gardeners*
- *Define an inclusive internal organizational structure*
- *Establish rules, regulations, membership guidelines and a decision making process that will help determine, for example, how to al locate funds and plan events*

Design

- *Enable a collaborative design process*
- *Start small, but have a vision that can guide future additions*

Site Features
- *6-8 hours of sunlight*
- *8-9 inches of topsoil*
- *Access to water with at least 1 hose bib for every 4 plots*
- *Compact site (avoid long linear sites)*
- *High visibility both from the street and within the site*
- *Enough garden plots to accomodate demand*
- *Minimum 3 foot wide paths*

Accessibility
- *ADA accessible spaces for the elderly and disabled*
- *Encourage diversity by incorporating the needs of different cultural traditions*
- *Located in close vicinity to gardeners*
- *Provide curb cuts and gates where necessary to accomodate vehicular access*

Gathering Spaces
- *Provide spaces for small groups of gardeners to socialize and rest in the sun and the shade*
- *Provide larger indoor and outdoor spaces for events and classes*

Site Features
- *Tool shed*
- *Sign*
- *Bulletin board*
- *Picnic and barbeque space*
- *Space to display artwork*
- *Composting area*
- *Demonstration garden*
- *Attractive landscaping*
- *Fence*
- *Motion lights*