

CAC's New Garden Guide: Starting and Growing a Community Garden

Revised 2013



COMMUNITY ACTION COALITION
FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN, INC.



Handbook for Starting a Community Garden
Madison, Wisconsin 2013

Thanks for your interest in launching a community garden!

This handbook was prepared at Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc (CAC) by the Community Gardens Division. Please contact the CAC Gardens Program at 246-4730 with questions, corrections or suggestions for future versions of the handbook.

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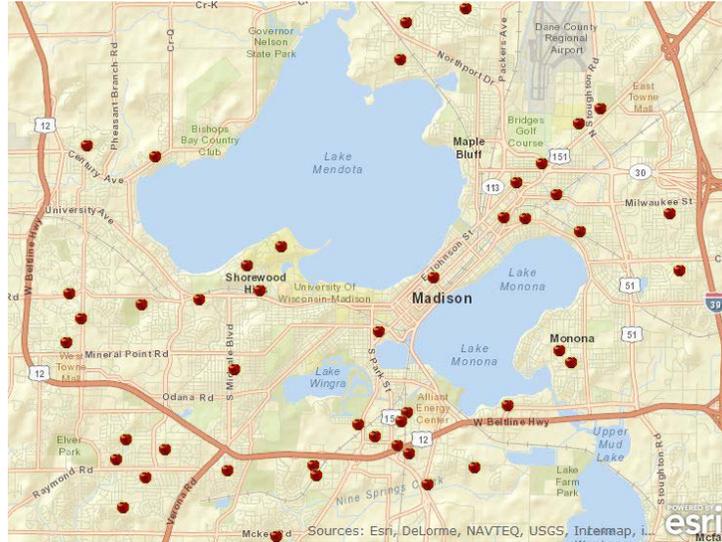
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Community Gardening in Madison and Beyond

As of 2013, there are now more than 50 community gardens in the Madison area, twice the number of community gardens that existed 10 years ago. Madison residents now grow food on 30 acres of garden plots, up from about 17 acres in 2002. More gardens mean more fresh produce for so many people: more than 3000 households now have plots in the community gardens, an increase of 87% over the past 8 years.



1. Community gardens in and around Madison as of 2012

Why Community Gardens?

Community gardens, on the most basic level, give people the opportunity to grow their own fresh vegetables, herbs, flowers, and fruits. Further exploration into community gardening reveals a multiplicity of benefits hidden to the eye of your quiet passers-by. Community gardens are often a place of expression for the people given the least voice in our society, giving people the opportunity to practice what they most enjoy. Diverse people come together to raise food and they find that natural outgrowths of the gardens are personal relationships, cross-cultural exchange, community development, beautification, environmental justice, crime prevention, leadership, and self-reliance for their neighborhood as a whole.

Madison community gardeners also collectively represent over 50 languages and cultures. This presents an opening for gardeners to connect not only with their (agri)cultural heritage, but with those of their neighbors. When did you last see such a range of cultural diversity connecting through a common interest?

Gardens are a great economic investment as well. In 2007, one family was able to grow over 150 pounds of produce equivalent to \$389 in savings on one 400 square foot garden plot. In addition to these savings, gardeners become more self-sufficient and empowered by growing their own food.

For a detailed list of benefits from cited sources, visit Gardening Matters' "Multiple Benefits of Community Gardening" documents on their website at http://www.gardeningmatters.org/sites/default/files/Multiple%20Benefits_2012.pdf. Use these facts to help people understand what impact community gardens can have on your neighborhood.

Step One: Get Your Neighbors Involved

Are you interested in starting a community garden in your neighborhood? A community garden is a wonderful resource, but it requires quite a bit of work to start and maintain. The first step is to **get your neighbors involved**, find a few other people who are interested in the garden project. A strong core group will help when decisions need to be made and the real work of garden installation begins. CAC recommends that garden planning begins with a group of no less than four people and a list of at least ten interested gardeners/ households.

First, create a mission/vision statement to guide you through this process. Use the “Developing a Vision for Your Garden” worksheet found on page 18-19 of the appendix to help you discover the mission of your garden.

Here are few ways to reach out to potential volunteers and gardeners:

- **Word of mouth** among those initially involved in finding prospective land. Call people on waiting lists for existing gardens. CAC can help make those names and phone numbers available.
- **Meet with groups** already functioning in the neighborhood (community councils, neighborhood clubs & associations, church groups, etc)
- **Survey door to door** in the neighborhood you intend to start the garden in. This will help you gauge interest and response to the garden early on. Knowing the level of interest can help you in the planning of size and location significantly. (see page 20 of the appendix for the survey)
- **Contact your alder and other community leaders.** The alder is there to represent your neighborhood to the city and help with community decision making processes such as establishing a garden in your neighborhood. Neighborhood associations, school principals, faith leaders and other community organizers are all great resources for your initiative.
- **Advertise in the neighborhood** newspapers, community council newsletters, bulletin boards, mailings, put a sign on the lot telling people about the future garden (once it's established), and flyer the neighborhood.

Although the planning process doesn't directly produce any food, the fruits of your labor will surely pay off with a better outcome. CAC recommends that your group begins planning the garden project one year in advance. The more time and thought your group puts into the process, the more successful and bountiful your community garden will be.

Step Two: Search for a Garden Site

Seek land that is vacant, or with run-down buildings or under-used parking lots. Sometimes institutions, such as churches or hospitals have vacant property. Also, consider workplaces or local businesses with land. We recommend that your team uses the worksheet (pages 22-25 of the appendix) when you analyze potential garden sites.

- **Size** – A space large enough to accommodate a minimum of 20 gardeners is recommended to truly build the community in your garden. The standard plot size for community gardens in Madison is 20' by 20', but there are gardens with larger and smaller allotments.
- **Terrain** – The lot should be reasonably flat. If it slopes, the grade should be gentle enough that level beds could be created by terracing. There should also be access for a large truck to deliver materials such as mulch and compost (10ft driveway at minimum).
- **Sun** – The site should get sun most of the day, and therefore should not have buildings or trees on the south, east or west. Adjacent property should not be zoned for high rise buildings. Contact CAC Gardens Staff to see if you are eligible for a solar pathfinder analysis which gives you a detailed analysis of the solar availability of a site. Also consider including shade somewhere for a gathering space for gardeners.
- **Water Access** – Is there a building nearby with a water hook up? If so, can you use it for the garden and is it a safe distance to run a hose from? If not, is there a fire hydrant nearby or a water line that can be tapped into (page 28 for details)? Water systems can quickly become costly, so using established systems is great for the budget.
- **Location** – The site should be on a relatively quiet street to guard against interference from traffic, crowds, or noise. If located near a busy street, there should be ways of shielding or screening the garden site. It's important to consider the garden's proximity to housing and its accessibility to youth, as well as to elderly and disabled gardeners.
- **Soil Quality** – More and more, gardens are popping up in urban areas where pollution and contamination are concerns. Get your soil tested as soon as you are seriously considering a location to see if it is safe by sending a sample into the UW Madison Soil Testing Laboratory. The soil should be tested for heavy metals at the minimum. Make sure to dig down 18 inches to ensure the soil depth is appropriate. If not, don't fret, depending on the conditions and levels of contamination, raised beds and vertical gardening may be options.
- **Neighbors** – Ideally, the site should be observable by nearby residents. The watchful eyes of neighbors add to security. Invite the neighbors to get involved from the start so they feel invested in the garden. **All adjacent property dwellers/owners and those who live in view of the potential garden site must be surveyed using the attached survey form on page 20 of the appendix.**
- **Longevity** – In identifying a potential garden site, you should consider the long term security of your access to that property. Open lots are often considered for other uses or planned for future development and your ideal garden site may compete with building projects or non-garden recreational space. Will the proposed space be a permanent home for your garden project? Is permanence critical to your garden project or is a short term lease an option?

CAC Community Gardens staff may be able to help you evaluate and secure access to your proposed site. If the land is publicly owned, you will need to work with the relevant government agency as well. It's best to negotiate a lease of at least 5 years, so keep that in mind while meeting with the land owner.

If you are interested in starting a garden in a City of Madison park, contact CAC gardens staff to learn more about the process. A timeline for establishing community gardens in City of Madison Parks can be found on page 26 of the appendix.

Step Three: Gather Resources & Grow Your Group

Form a Garden Leadership Group (Garden Committee)

A garden group is a way of formally organizing your new group. It helps you make decisions and divide up the work effectively. It also ensures that everyone has a vested interest in the garden and can contribute to its design, development, and maintenance. It can be formed at any time during the process of starting a community garden; however, it's wise to do so early on. Shared leadership is a key part of community gardening, so we recommend having a minimum of three people working on the planning of a garden. The more people involved, the lighter the work and the “brighter” or “broader” the ideas are.

Use the first meeting to identify people's interest in the garden and the goals they would like to achieve through the garden. The worksheet, **Developing a Vision for Your Garden (pages 18-19)**, can guide the discussion, record the outcomes of the meeting, and provide background for people who join the garden project later. Please consider the following suggestions to create comfortable leadership and good garden governance in your group.

- Go around the group and ask for people's thoughts and input to ensure that everyone feels like they were heard during this process. Write everything down on a large pad of paper for everyone to see.
- Many problems and headaches can be avoided in the future by developing a vision of the garden at the very start and can be reviewed when decisions are being made.
- Identify tasks which people can assume for the next meeting such as identifying possible locations, partnerships, and other interested gardeners.
- Collect and share a list of phone numbers and emails keep encourage communication between meetings.
- Everyone has some leadership qualities in them, so find ways that they can be expressed. Share leadership via roles, responsibilities, committees, etc. Support each other in filling the roles. A common mistake is that one person assumes the planning, the group lets them, and some form of dictatorship occurs, or a good-hearted person burns out from taking on too much.
- Inventory the group's skills and resources, person by person. Match a person's skills to the roles and how that fits into the mission. This keeps people personally invested in the project.

Including questions about people's skill sets on garden registration forms is a great way to gather information on this as your garden grows.

- Ask CAC to come talk to your group about Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) and see what treasures you have hiding in your very own neighborhood!

Garden Leadership Roles

Once the garden is a go, there are a few necessary roles in your new garden. Some roles may require more than one person to do that job or more than one person may wish to share a role (see page 32 of the appendix for other volunteer roles in a community garden:

- **Coordinator:** The coordinator gathers the gardeners together for events, workdays, and meetings, encouraging all to share in the work and decision-making of the garden.
- **Registrar:** The registrar holds the waiting list for people who want plots, runs Spring Registration, and assigns plots.
- **Treasurer:** The treasurer collects garden fees and deposits them in garden bank account, pays bills, authorizes spending in consultation with other gardeners, and sometimes manages grants that the garden receives. For ease of payments and accountability, it's ideal to have two treasurers.

Once a garden location is established, the garden leadership group will:

- Revisit the garden's vision and mission statement, and revise it if necessary to properly reflect the needs and desires of the group
- Apply to grants and create a garden budget (see page 30 of the appendix for the budget worksheet)
- Establish garden guidelines (visit http://www.cacscw.org/garden_handbook.php for examples)
- Manage garden budget & bank account (see page 29 to learn about opening an account)
- Collect garden dues, pay for tilling, compost, water and other bills
- Resolve conflicts
- Organize registration, workdays and social events for the garden

Step Four: Build your garden!

Most sites require improvements to clear debris, improve the soil, install water lines and build fences, compost bins and tool sheds. Once the site has been secured, your group can apply to the New Garden Fund, the Department of Planning and Development and other grant opportunities listed in this handbook's funding sources. If your garden is income eligible, the staff of the CAC can give advice, technical assistance and provide examples of successful applications from other gardens. The standard size plot in Madison is 20x20 ft. In addition to plot the garden space should

also include a gathering area, tool storage shed, and a centralized area for compost and mulch storage.

Hold a series of meetings to create a design plan for your garden space. Include phases for expansion, and be realistic for what your group can handle in the first year, the second, the third, etc. Also use this time to plan the ground breaking and installation days as well as work days throughout the season, and brainstorm ways to keep your community involved in the process.

If your site receives support from CAC or is on city land, each gardener will pay an annual income-based fee on a sliding scale (\$10- \$65 per year) for plot rentals. This money goes into a bank account managed by your garden and may be used to pay for water bills, supplies, communal tools, etc. Garden sites are managed and maintained by the gardeners. Assistance to build site leadership and coordination is available to eligible groups from CAC.

Now, give yourself a big pat on the back for helping to create a place where people can plant, grow, and harvest with family and new friends. Organize social events and invite everyone in the neighborhood. Celebrations are just as important as workdays for building a strong garden community. Have fun out there!

Step Five: Sustainability

Community Gardens require a lot of work to start up, but there is also plenty to do throughout the entire year to keep you garden a thriving community place to gather. Review these tips adapted from Philadelphia Green and keep your group growing together in community and gardening.

Garden Guidelines

It's important that a garden develops an agreed upon code of conduct for gardeners. Visit http://www.cacscw.org/garden_handbook.php or review CAC's Garden Leader's Handbook for guideline examples.

- Identify the garden's needs and name the responsibilities people will have to take on to meet the needs and support the mission. Refer to the garden's vision worksheet during this process! Know the group's abilities and limitations before setting goals.
- Guidelines Inspire - Rules versus Guidelines: Guidelines are goals with behaviors associated to them. They are more than a list of "Do's and Don'ts." "No leaving tools out;" vs. "We value our resources. Be sure to put all tools away."
- Start with a few guidelines that will help the group get going. Write them out and provide each person a copy. Plan to review the guidelines each year as a group, growing them along with the group.
- Set a few small goals for the garden per 3-month phases and the year. Review them, adjust them, set a few new ones.

- Access resources in your neighborhood. Build partnerships with local groups and organizations to access the skills and capital necessary to build and sustain your garden (see page 19 to learn more about asset-based community development).

Garden Maintenance

- Work with CAC to coordinate tilling, compost and woodchip deliveries in springtime.
- Develop plans for maintaining pathways and common areas, as well as fencing and irrigation systems. Local service groups may be able to help if you find your garden needs extra hands.
- Plan for cover crops, winterizing, and other seasonal tasks.

Communication

- The most important skill is listening, hearing another person from their perspective. “Seek first to understand, then to be understood.” Win – win vs. lose – lose. Give everyone a chance to voice their opinion, and be sure everyone feels heard.
- Expect differences. From the beginning, set up how the group will resolve differences and conflicts.
- Conflict is an opportunity to create strength in the group by embracing it and navigating to resolution. Never give up, even in times when the group is struggling.
- Celebrate! Host frequent small celebrations; occasional big ones to share the joy of successes along the way. Show pride, joy, appreciation of each other and your community through juice and cookies, pot lucks, BBQ, musicians, plays, and poetry readings, in the garden.

Reaching Out: Grow Together

- Always reach out to people to expand participation. A group that doesn’t seek new participants will gradually shrink and cease to exist. Ask in an inviting way, honor a “no,” and keep trying. Some people need to be asked a few times. Stop when it’s clear they won’t participate.
- Invite everyone: the neighborhood, store owners, local organizations, local officials to meetings, garden work days, celebrations, etc. Invite neighbors into the garden just to see it from the inside. Just being in it without feeling pressure to participate can inspire people to join.
- Youth are the future in the present. Reach out to youth again and again. Be patient and encouraging with them as they learn. Allow mistakes. Let their interest grow gradually.
- They Just Want to Belong - Youth who vandalize gardens and are then invited in to learn rather than to be punished often become eager participants and protectors of the gardens. Get past anger and feeling victimized; don’t grow animosity; GROW GARDENERS! Youthful insolence is an opportunity to learn and teach.



Community Gardening in Madison with CAC

Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc – Community Gardens Division provides ongoing management and administrative support for. We also work in collaboration with the City of Madison to assist any group establishing a garden on city land through the organizational process and into its first year. Here are some of the services we provide:

- Free seeds and some plants in the spring and early summer (as donations arrive)
- Assistance with tools for workdays and some ongoing maintenance
- Translation between Hmong, Spanish, and English-speakers
- Organizing and publicizing springtime registration meeting & workdays through the season
- Liaison to city departments who provide mulch, compost & water
- Insurance coverage to CAC supported gardens
- Facilitate outreach & refer gardeners citywide
- Help with special projects – fences, water systems, raised beds
- Conflict resolution
- Leadership development for volunteers who coordinate their gardens
- Coordinate and publicize a city-wide harvest celebration in gardens, CAC Garden Days
- Fall gardeners potluck and skill sharing workshops
- Annual Grow Together Conference for community gardeners

For more information on the CAC Gardens Program, visit our website at <http://www.cacscw.org/gardens.php> or call 246-4730 to speak with a gardens specialist.



Gardening Resources in Madison

Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc is a non-profit based in Madison that works with Madison's community gardens and has helped to develop many new community gardens over the years. CAC's mission is to develop economic and social capacities of individuals, families and communities to reduce poverty in Dane, Jefferson and Waukesha counties. For more information and resources, visit <http://www.cacscw.org/gardens.php> or call 246-4730.

Eagle Heights Garden on the UW campus is probably the largest community garden in the country, with well over 400 families! Their website has lots of great information for Madison community gardeners: <http://www.eagleheightsgardens.org/>

Community GroundWorks has regular workshops at their spectacular garden on topics of particular interest for community gardeners. Visit www.troygardens.org or call 608-239-6205 for more information.

Olbrich Gardens, our city's botanical garden, has a gardening reference center located in Olbrich Botanical Gardens' Visitor Center adjacent to the Bolz Conservatory. The library is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. The library is staffed by a Horticulture Librarian and nearly 40 volunteers, many of whom have taken Master Gardener training. Visit www.olbrich.org or call 246-4550 for more information. The public libraries have a very good range of books on gardening.

Master Gardener Training is put on by the Dane County Cooperative Extension. This course is a good introduction to gardening. In Dane County, two class sections are offered from February to August. The entire course consists of 15 sessions. Each class is three hours, offered either from 6-9 pm or 9 am-noon, depending on the section you are in. Classes are held every other week, with a few exceptions for holidays, etc. Visit <http://dane.uwex.edu/horticulture/master-gardener/training/> or call 224-3715 for more information.

Cooperative Extension's Home Horticulture Help Line is the place to call with plant questions. Volunteers provide Answers to Gardening Questions for Dane County Residents Via the Horticulture Hotline 608-224-3721, Email horticulture@countyofdane.com or Walk-in Assistance. There is also a wide variety of publications available through extension online at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu>.

Your Neighborhood Association President

<http://www.cityofmadison.com/neighborhoods/profile/sectors.html>

Your Alder <http://www.cityofmadison.com/Council/councilMembers/alders.cfm>. The office number for all Madison alders is (608) 266-4071. You can also contact your alder at the home number, usually listed in the phone book.

Other City Contacts

Mayor's Office: Room 403, City-County Building 266-4611

www.cityofmadison.com

City Streets & Recycling Department (Trash, Brush Pickup) East 246-4532; West 266-4681

www.cityofmadison.com/streets/

City of Madison Parks Department 266-4711

www.cityofmadison.com/parks

Diggers Hotline 1-800-242-8511

www.diggershotline.com

Online Community Gardening Resources

CAC Community Gardens -Madison, WI www.cacsew.org/gardens

Madison Area Community Gardeners Google Group- a great place to keep in touch with local gardeners

<https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/madison-area-community-gardeners>

American Community Gardening Association www.communitygarden.org

Community GroundWorks Troy Community Gardens -Madison, WI

<http://www.communitygroundworks.org/who-we-are/brief-history>

Denver Urban Gardens

<http://www.dug.org/>

Gardening Matters- Twin Cities, MN

<http://www.gardeningmatters.org/>

Growing Power, Inc. in Milwaukee www.growingpower.org

Minnesota Community Gardening Listserv- very active with lots of information

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/embeddedform?formkey=dGtRcjZlTTZ4ZHBiUkJoQ0RCV0NaTVE6MQ>

Philadelphia Green

<http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/phlgreen/>

Seattle P-Patch

<http://www.cityofseattle.net/neighborhoods/ppatch/>

San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners

<http://www.slug-sf.org/>

Boston Natural Areas Network

<http://www.bostonnatural.org/index.htm>

Friends of Burlington Gardens & the Vermont Community Garden Network

<http://www.burlingtongardens.org/welcome.htm>

Funding Sources for Madison Area Community Gardens

CAC New Garden Fund

This grant began in 2005 and has supported 13 new or expanding gardens in Madison. New Garden Fund grants are available only to gardens within the City of Madison. Garden groups must have secured a site (preference of a 5 year lease), a minimum of 10 households interested in a plot, neighborhood support, open participation for the entire community, and show that there is a scarcity of garden plots in the neighborhood. Preference is given to project that include gardeners that are ethnically, economically, and socially diverse, and have differing abilities, gardens in low-income neighborhoods, a plan to include children's programs, a plan for accessible raised bed gardening, a neighborhood beautification/ aesthetic component. Funding up to \$2,000 may be requested, but the New Garden Fund is rarely able to fully fund projects. Grants are Due mid January, and are awarded by March. Visit http://www.cacscw.org/garden_grants.php for an application and more information.

Madison Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development's Neighborhood Grants Program, *especially the Community Enhancement Program*

This program funded five major improvement projects at community gardens between 2004 and 2007: a living fence at Quann Garden, a water system and murals at Atwood Garden, an orchard and prairie council ring at Quann, a Hmong thatch pavilion at Quann, and community-building sessions with a built project to-be-determined by the gardeners at Marlborough. The amounts were between \$3,000 - \$10,000. They require that you have matching money, and a New Garden Fund grant would qualify. Or you can match their grant with volunteer hours dedicated to the project.

For more information: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/neighborhoods/grantprogram.htm> or

Linda Horvath: Planning Division, 267-1131, lhovath@cityofmadison.com

Rebecca Cnare: Planning Division, 266-4957, rcnare@cityofmadison.com

People for Parks Matching Fund

This program provides matching funds for benches, trees, and picnic tables that will be put in our city parks. Six community gardens are currently in city parks: Quann, Reindahl, and Marlborough. In 2003, this grant program contributed half of the cost of a picnic table for the Quann Community Garden; the Quann gardeners paid for the other half from their plot fees. For more information call Laura Prindle, the Parks Community Relations Coordinator, at 266-5949 or lprindle@cityofmadison.com.

Madison Area Master Gardeners Association (MAMGA)

This program gives out grants for community gardening projects that meet many of the following criteria:

- Community: Increases beauty and sense of property ownership in the community
- Educational: Increases community knowledge base/innovative gardening methods
- Stewardship: Environmentally/Ecologically responsible
- Teamwork: Involves community members through volunteering, esp. youth
- Effectiveness: Begins exchange of garden related ideas and information

They consider individual and organization sponsored community gardening projects located within Dane County. Grants up to \$1,000 have been awarded. The grant proposals are due mid-November and awards are announced in early February. Visit <http://www.mamgawi.org/grants.htm> for updated information on the application process.

Dane County Environmental Council Grant

The Council awards grants every year to a broad and diverse field of Dane County nonprofit community organizations, school districts, and municipalities for environmental initiatives. Grants ranging from \$250 to \$5,000 are available for conservation projects that enhance Dane County's natural resources and benefit Dane County residents. Past projects that have been funded include a solar oven for sustainable energy education and fruit trees and shrubs for sustainable landscaping of a community garden. Contact person is Mindy Habecker at habecker@co.dane.wi.us or 224-3718. www.countyofdane.com/commissions/environmentalcouncil/grants.aspx

Willy Street Coop Reinvestment Fund

For this grant, priority is given to developmental projects, educational projects, and events that are consistent with WSGC's goals. This includes, but is not limited to, a focus on food, nutrition, health/well-being, *Sustainable Agriculture*, cooperative education and social change. This makes it a great opportunity for groups looking for start ups funds for community gardens. Priority is also given to organizations working on projects benefiting the Madison Metropolitan area. Women, people of color, and members of other protected groups are strongly encouraged to apply. Visit http://www.willystreet.coop/community_reinvestment_fund for more information. The applications for their 2013 round of funding are due in February of 2013.

Madison South Rotary

This organization give back over \$50,000 a year to south Madison. Projects that involve disadvantaged youth, youth, elderly, food & shelter, family support, and have an element of cultural/arts receive priority of funding. Innovative projects, start up projects, and equipment are favored to receive funding. Operational expenses are generally not favored; projects should benefit South Madison area, and requests benefiting groups are preferred over requests benefiting individuals. Grants usually range between \$ 500 and \$ 2,500. Visit <http://www.madisonsouthrotary.org/Portals/0/Rotary%20Foundation%20Application-2012.pdf> for an example application. Applications are made available in January, and are usually due mid march. Check <http://www.madisonsouthrotary.org/> for more information.

National Opportunities

GRO1000 Grassroots Grant

ScottsMiracle-Gro provides GRO1000 Grassroots Grants to help foster community spirit and public service. Grassroots Grants of up to \$1,500 are awarded to local communities to help bring edible gardens, flower gardens and public green spaces to neighborhoods across the United States. The 2013 GRO1000 Grassroots Grant application window is open mid January and closes mid February. ScottsMiracle-Gro will accept applications until 11:59 p.m. EST, February 18 in 2013. If you are interested in applying for a Grassroots Grant, please fill out the application online. Visit <http://www.grogood.com/GiveBackToGro/Gro1000/Grassroots> to see our [frequently asked questions](#) and for more information.

Developing a Vision for Your Garden

Defining why you want to develop a community garden will help you create a vision for your garden project. Similarly, it will help you (your garden group) identify what you want to accomplish and how you will prioritize your garden's goals. This will help to recruit new garden members and gain community support.

Developing a Vision for Your Garden - A Community garden doesn't just happen, it takes hard work and commitment. List three reasons why you (your group) want(s) to develop a garden.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Define what you want to accomplish and prioritize your goals - List three goals your garden group wants to accomplish and then prioritize. *Example: Our primary goal is to produce fresh nutritious food for our families and our neighbors.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Identify how your garden project will benefit your neighborhood and community.

Think of examples:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Use your garden goals to create a brief mission statement

Example: "Our mission is to strengthen our neighborhood by maintaining a community garden that provides a common ground for neighborhood members to garden together and to get to know each other." *Create a mission statement that unites the group and the garden to a larger purpose.*

ASSET MAPPING EXERCISE

Approach the garden development as an opportunity to develop greater community partnership, leadership development and enhance the garden's physical presence. Start with what you have and where you are.

Community Partnership

A. What assets/groups/resources are in the surrounding neighborhood? List them below

-
-
-
-
-
-

B. Discuss list with person sitting next to you and why you circled the ones you did.

1. Do you see any mutual benefit for community partners to participate in the garden?
2. What could be accomplished with community partners visiting the garden or perhaps even participating?

Leadership Development

A. What are the 'people assets' already in the garden group? List below some of the talents, hobbies, and skills of fellow community gardeners.

-
-
-
-
-
-

B. Discuss list with a different person why you chose the examples you did.

1. How you might "tap" them or find out how they would like to help with the garden?
2. Where do you see possible opportunities for developing greater leadership/involvement in the garden in the future?

COMMUNITY GARDENING PROJECT SURVEY

We, _____, are planning to start a community garden at _____ with help from the Community Action Coalition. As a neighbor we would like you to know about this project and we welcome your feedback and/or participation. It is also a part of the city process to demonstrate that we have spoken with our neighbors. The following questions are to help you and us think about adding this to our neighborhood.

- 1) Please give us your name and address. (These will not be shared outside of this application process.)

- 2) Would you be interested in having a garden plot? Please circle: Yes No
If yes, please give us your phone or email address where you can be reached.

- 3) Would you have any concerns or suggestions regarding a community garden at this site?

If you have any questions please contact _____ at _____.
_____. We would appreciate getting this form back from you by _____.
_____. Thank you for taking the time to communicate with us about this project and we look forward to a productive and successful community garden.

Sincerely,
The Garden Committee

SITE ANALYSIS FOR GARDEN PLANNING

WHAT IS THE EXACT ADDRESS OF THE GARDEN?

List ALL addresses, even those that face other streets (new gardens must be within the City of Madison)

1. _____
Street Address #1
2. _____
Street Address #2
3. _____
Street Address #3
4. _____
Street Address #4

WHAT ARE THE DIMENSIONS OF THE LOT?

- _____ Length _____ Width _____ Area (length x width) _____ Irregular shape
- _____ Estimate the maximum number of garden plots (20' x 20') this lot can accommodate
- _____ Is there room for future expansion of garden space?

IS THE GARDEN SITE SUNNY OR SHADY? IN MORNING OR AFTERNOON?

- _____ Full sun--at least 8 hours of direct sun each day
- _____ Partial sun--at least 4 hours of direct sun each day
- _____ Shady--not much sun at all
- _____ Mixed--different parts get different amounts of sun

WHAT'S THE SOIL LIKE? Dig down 18" to make sure there is a healthy layer to work with.

- _____ Will use soil already in the garden (weeds are HEALTHY!)
- _____ Will need to bring in compost
- _____ Soil is hard and compacted, and no weeds are growing
- _____ Water puddles on soil surface
- _____ Other

WHERE WILL WE GET WATER FOR THE GARDEN?

- _____ From a house or other building --Address
- _____ From Public Housing – Address
- _____ From a fire hydrant. The closest working hydrant is
- _____ Will you store water in containers in garden?
- _____ Will you need water barrels?

_____ Other sources of water

WHAT IS THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE GARDEN LOT?

_____ Surface is flat

_____ Surface is sloped

_____ Rainwater runs off from the site

_____ There are paved surfaces on the site

_____ We'd like to add different levels to the garden

DIG UP THE "DIRT" ON YOUR SITE---WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

Talk to some of the older residents of the block:

How long has this site been vacant? _____

What used to be on the site? _____

Was it ever a factory or a gas station? _____

Are the adjacent houses occupied? _____

Is the garden near a busy street or a factory? _____

Which side of the garden faces the most neighbors? _____

Is the garden visible to passerby (for safety and publicity)?

_____ not at all _____ somewhat _____ very

What is the level of crime in the area (drugs/vandalism/theft/violent crime)?

_____ none _____ low _____ some _____ high

IS THERE ANYTHING ON THE LOT THAT NEEDS TO BE MOVED?

_____ trash _____ weeds _____ trees _____ cement

_____ cars _____ rocks & rubble _____ other

_____ Are there animals that you will need to control for (deer/raccoons/dogs/woodchucks)?

WHAT ARE THE EXISITNG SITE AMENITIES?

_____ Is there space for a shed and tool box?

_____ Is there space for compost?

_____ Are restrooms nearby?

_____ Is there vehicle access to the garden (for material deliveries, etc)?

_____ Is there parking available?

_____ Is there a shelter the garden can use?

_____ Other: _____

DRAW A PICTURE OF THE SITE

Start by drawing the shape of the site

- measure length of each side of the site in feet
- note these measurements on the drawing

Make sure to include the following in the drawing:

- all surrounding streets and the exact addresses
- water source
- existing fencing, walls, alleys, paths
- problem areas (for example, blacktop, muddy spots, tree stumps, etc.)
- existing trees & shrubs; are they alive or dead?
- put an E for east, where the sun rises
- best location for a 10-foot delivery gate

DRAW PICTURE HERE

SITE ANALYSIS FOR GARDEN PLANNING

This document is borrowed, with permission, from Philadelphia Green of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO USE THE GARDEN SITE?

The more you want to do with the lot, the more work and people will be needed to take care of it. If you want to do more than one activity, how will you divide up the space to match the uses? Answering the following questions will help you to decide where to put what on your garden plan.

What uses do you have in mind? Does everybody agree? How will decisions be made?

Work out these things before the garden gets off the planning map and out onto the ground.

How much space is really available?

That is, how much area can actually be used as garden space, not simply how much empty ground is available.

A sitting area?

Do you want the sitting area to be in sun or shade?

What kind of plants do you want? Perennials? Annuals? Trees? Shrubs?

Play area for the children?

Will a children's play area be too close to where people will be planting?

Meeting place or barbecue?

A storage area for compost, tools or woodchips?

How much room do you need to leave for full-grown shrubs and trees?

How will you build social relationships and community in your garden?

Will you have workdays? Opening and closing day festivities? Potlucks? Neighborhood social events?

Be sure to address other concerns:

How will the garden affect neighborhood politics?

Do you need to think about arranging the front of the garden to satisfy the neighbors who look at it every day?

Timeline for Establishing Community Gardens in City of Madison Parks

June (or earlier)- August	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Neighborhood Group forms to organize a garden <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. three or more people gather to organize a community garden b. CAC is contacted c. City Community Gardens Committee is notified of interest 2) Potential sites are evaluated by neighborhood group & CAC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. multiple sites in a neighborhood go through preliminary evaluation b. if an ideal site is within a city park, this process continues c. New Garden Application form released August 1st on CAC and City Community Gardens Committee websites.
September-October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) CAC staff contacts Madison Parks Dept with information regarding potential sites <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. location in park b. size c. approximate layout 4) Parks staff/Superintendent and other city staff as needed review site for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. deed restrictions b. master plan/capital improvement plan conflicts c. utility conflicts d. potential access to water/availability of parking e. other locations available in the park (as necessary) 5) If preliminary review is favorable*, continue with New Garden Application process: CAC to work with Alder and neighborhood to gain support for site
November-December	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6) Group completes New Garden Application (due to CAC by Nov. 15) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Applications reviewed by CAC, completed applications forwarded to Madison Parks by December 1st. b. Parks staff and Superintendent review applications (Dec), if no conflicts identified*, proposal proceeds to the Park Commission.
January	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7) Park Commission reviews garden proposal <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If approved, proposal details are forwarded to Real Estate office for potential drafting of lease.
Jan-Feb	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8) New Garden Fund Committee reviews proposals seeking funding 9) Leases with CAC for new gardens (whether funded or not) are drafted by Real Estate staff
March-April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10) Lease approval process begins <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. resolution is introduced to Common Council (March) b. resolution is referred to Park Commission and Plan Commission c. Common Council action (April)
May	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11) Begin garden installation

*Any requests that are denied by Parks staff/Parks Superintendent may be appealed to the Park Commission.

February 27, 2013

Using City of Madison Hydrants for Community Gardens

From Sharon Bogert, McCormick Community Garden coordinator

Madison Water Utility will provide access to fire hydrants for use by a community garden, but there is a fee each year to pay for the labor for installation of the back flow valve, water meter, and padlock. They also charge for the water used from the hydrant. The installation/set up fee was \$113.50 in spring 2010. The water rate was \$1.93 per 100 cubic feet (748 gallons) of water in spring 2010. The set up fee and the cost of the water are combined in one bill that is sent to the community garden at the end of the season.

You will need to contact the Operations Clerk Amy Jones at least two working days before hydrant set up:

Amy Jones
Operations Clerk
Madison Water Utility
119 E Olin Ave
Madison WI 53713
608-266-4647
ajones@madisonwater.org

You will need to give her the following information:

- Location or address of a building close to the fire hydrant you plan to use, or the names of intersecting streets close to the hydrant.
- Name of your garden
- Name and mailing address of the garden officer responsible for paying the water bill for your garden. (This is often the garden's treasurer).
- Phone number and or email address of a contact person to notify when the hydrant inspector arrives to install the valve and meter, also in case there are problems or delays in installation.
- Indicate how you want to receive the key for the padlock. You can pick up the key at the Madison Water Utility office, 119 E Olin Ave, or your contact person can meet the hydrant inspector at the fire hydrant and receive the key during the installation.
- Desired date for the installation.
- Size of the valve to install. You get the choice of a fire-hose size fitting or garden-hose size fitting.

When you are ready to shut down your garden in the fall, follow this process:

- Contact the Operations Clerk at Madison Water Utility. Give them at least two working days before the date you want them to remove the back flow valve, water meter, and padlock.
- The padlock key can either be returned to the hydrant inspector at the time he/she removes the valve, or the key can also be returned to Madison Water Utility office, 119 E Olin Ave, depending on what is more convenient for you.
- When the hydrant worker removes the equipment, the water meter is read. Soon after, the water utility uses the reading to calculate the cost of your garden's water and sends your garden a bill to the address given to the Water Utility Operations Clerk in the springtime.

Information on Community Garden Bank Accounts

This info is from First Federal Bank's business and non-profit accounts office. Their number is 1-800-657-4636. Other banking institutions may have different policies, so check with whatever bank you would prefer to use. You do not need any official non-profit status to open a checking account. You want a non-interest bearing checking account, so that you will not need to pay taxes on the interest.

- There is no charge on the account; they provide them as a free service for community groups.
- There is no minimum balance.
- You do need to give them someone's social security number when you open the account, so that any interest earnings can be reported to the IRS. This is just a technicality, because there won't be any interest earned, so nothing will be reported to the IRS. (The money that you deposit will NOT be considered your personal income by the IRS.)
- The account can have up to 150 items (transactions) each month for free. After that, each item will cost 25 cents.
- You can have any number of authorized signers for the checks, and each of them needs to fill out a signature card at the bank.
- If you want to use another financial institution, it helps to already have an account in good standing there.

If you decide to use a group number instead (known as an EIN or Employer Identification Number), you have two options:

- 1) Use someone else's EIN (sorry, not CAC since our very strict federal auditing process requires direct fiscal control and is not an option) but possibly your neighborhood association, an affiliated church or other local non-profit would do this (several groups do this at present).
- 2) Get your own EIN. If no group is in your area, you could do this for your group. This requires that you fill out an online form with the IRS and someone from your group has to step forward as the "responsible person" with their Social Security Number. Remember this does not make you into a non-profit (for donation and tax purposes), It is just another way to open a bank account for the group. Going forward, be sure to change the "responsible person" with the IRS when that time comes.

Please take steps to ensure that your garden treasury will be secure:

- Decide as a garden how to structure the volunteer job of treasurer, and how to make that position accountable to other garden leaders.
- Require that your treasurer regularly informs other garden leaders and gardeners about activities in the bank account, perhaps through a treasurer's report at regular garden meetings.
- We recommend that there are two or more people who have access to monthly bank statements or to the online account to check bank statements.
- You can ask your financial institution for restrictions on the account, such as two people being required to sign for withdrawals above a certain amount of funds or above a certain number of withdrawals each month.
- Please contact your financial institution for other ideas on how to ensure that your garden treasury will be secure.

Sample Budget Worksheet

Create a budget for up to three years to help you budget funding, and save for projects in the garden. Contact CAC for estimates on water bills, tilling charges, and other garden necessities.

Line Items	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
Revenue/Income			
Plot Fees (\$35x 25 plots)	875	875	875
New Garden Fund Grant	350	0	0
Neighborhood Start Up Grant	500	0	0
Master Gardeners Grant	0	0	500
Balance from previous year		155	169
<i>Total Income:</i>	1725	1030	1544
Expenses/Costs			
<i>Necessities:</i>			
simple water system: hydrant hook up, hoses	300	116	116
Plowing/Tilling	175	0	0
water bill	195	195	250
Tool storage	200	0	0
Hand Tools	200	100	100
Lease fee	200	0	0
Woodchips (free to Madison CG's)	0	0	0
Compost (unscreened free; screened \$100- \$125/load)	100	100	100
plants & seeds (free from CAC)	0	0	0
garden sign	0	100	0
<i>Wish List</i>			
Fence		250	
Benches	200		
Pergola			
Mural Project			200
Fruit trees			100
<i>Total Expenses</i>	1570	861	866
<i>NET-Income (income-expenses)</i>	155	169	678

Volunteer Opportunities in Community Gardens

Gardens run smoothly because of the work of many people, coordinated by several key volunteers who each have small but important roles to organize the efforts. Many gardens have multiple people in each role – co-coordinators strengthen leadership, and lighten the load. The responsibilities and volunteer opportunities grow with the garden. Below are the descriptions of some volunteer positions:

***Coordinator**

The coordinator gathers the gardeners together for events, workdays, and meetings, encouraging all to share in the work and decision-making of the garden.

***Registrar**

The registrar holds the waiting list for people who want plots, runs Spring Registration, and assigns plots.

***Treasurer**

The treasurer collects garden fees and deposits them in garden bank account, pays bills, authorizes spending in consultation with other gardeners, and sometimes manages grants that the garden receives. For ease of payments and accountability, it's ideal to have two treasurers.

Plot Monitor

The monitor, a.k.a. “weed police”, has the task of making sure that all garden plots are being used and maintained.

Communications & Outreach Leader/Secretary

The communications person makes sure gardeners are in touch through meetings, phone calls, mail and email, and arranging the services of interpreters when needed. This person also makes sure that people in the neighborhood know about the garden and feel welcome to participate.

Grounds Maintenance Leader

The grounds committee leader organizes workdays to make sure that paths, common areas, hoses, fences, compost, etc are in order.

Social / Education Leader

The social committee leader organizes and publicizes potlucks and other parties at the garden. They can also set up educational workshops (CAC can help) and connect new and experienced gardeners with a buddy/mentor program.

Translation

Bilingual gardeners are important as interpreters during events, liaisons through the season, and with translating signs, mailings, etc.

Security

The security leader works on strategies to minimize theft and vandalism.

*These are the three essential roles to start a community garden and keep things running smoothly.

For a more in-depth description of volunteer roles, please visit our resource list online at http://www.cacscw.org/garden_handbook.php.