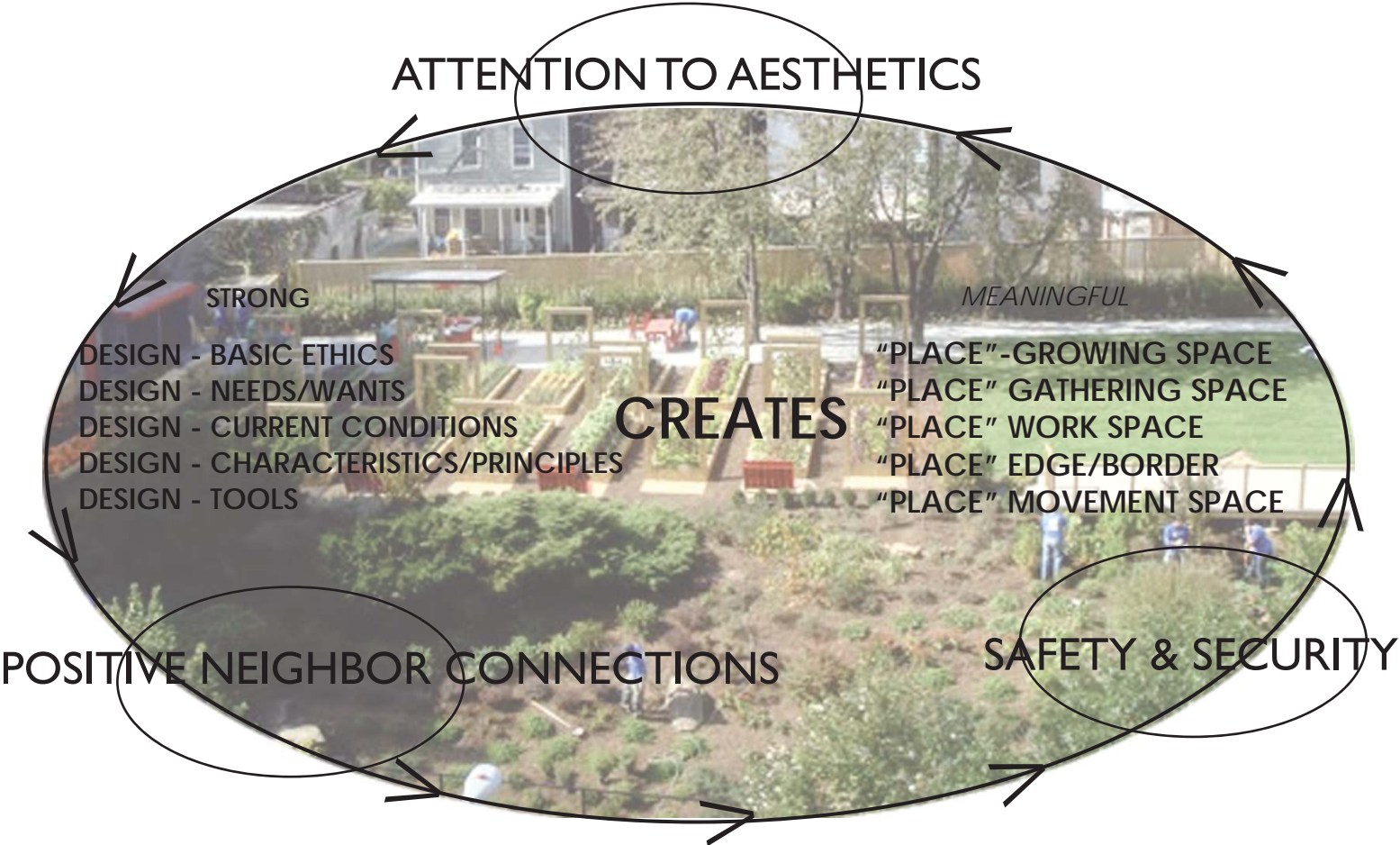


DESIGNING FOR COMMUNITY: A participatory design process



Placemaking: Giving value to the content that is already there!

# #1 Community Garden Design: BASIC ETHICS

Designing with these basic environmental factors will assist in creating beautiful spaces for positive neighborly connections while contributing to the safety, security, and sustainability of your community garden .

**DESIGN FOR LOW WASTE** - maximize on-site management of organic matter of garden, surrounding businesses, or community members.

**DESIGN FOR INTEGRATED SOIL MANAGEMENT** - grow biomass for mulch through on-site composting. Think about crop rotation and crops that fix nitrogen in the off season.

**DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY** - Use recycled materials or local materials. Avoid importing soils and materials.

**DESIGN FOR WATER MANAGEMENT** - Maximize opportunities for water harvesting and passive irrigation while reducing run-off. If site is sloped, use swales, terraces, and beds that run along the contour of the slope to catch water.

**DESIGN FOR SOLAR ACCESS** -When placing buildings and trees on site, make sure that you will not be blocking sun access.

**DESIGN FOR LOCAL CONDITIONS** - Planting native trees, shrubs or perennials (or those adapted to dry conditions) especially on the perimeter will help reduce evaporation of valuable soil moisture.

**DESIGN FOR BIODIVERSITY** - Community gardens can be a part of a city-wise network of native animal habitat. Plant species and design infrastructure to encourage this.

# #2 Community Garden Design: NEEDS & WANTS

It is an essential starting point for gardeners to clarify their aims and objectives before commencing a more detailed planning and design process.

## Getting Started In Community Gardening

A guide to planning, design and implementation of community garden projects



### Checklist for new community garden projects

This checklist is adapted from the Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network. It is a useful starting point for gardeners seeking to clarify their aims and objectives before commencing a more detailed planning process.

- 1. What type of community garden?**

A shared garden where participants share the gardening and the harvest.

An allotment garden where participants garden their own plots and share the experience of growing crops.

A garden with both allotments and shared gardening space.

How long has the garden been established and what has been the success?

What else do you not have the plan for?
- 2. What will be the purpose of the community garden?**

Reasons for garden being:

A place for people to grow food and get to know each other.

A place where people can bring their children.

A place for social and cultural events.

Reasons for garden being:

Access to fresh, nutritious food.

Reducing family expenditure on food.

Supporting the local food supply.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Education:

Will the garden be open to use and/or available to other people (children, seniors, etc.)?  Yes  No

Will gardeners who qualify contribute to a common fund, gardening club?  Yes  No
- 3. How will we garden?**

Do you need the garden to be the garden suitable for what to provide additional services?  Yes  No

Other additional services: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. How will we garden?**

Organic gardening?  Yes  No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

It is to be for an organic garden, will this be supported by the gardeners when they start the garden, what methods or is working?  Yes  No

Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. What types of plants will we grow?**

Remember that fruit and veg have been used to the garden when it is started - sometimes more than 10 years. There is enough space to accommodate the fruit you want to grow?

Vegetables  Herbs  Fruit and veg  Flowers

Many fruit orchards  More crops

Herbaceous plants  Fruit trees

Annual flowers  More or integrated plants

Other plants are those requiring to be planted in individual plots (eg. in the soil)  Yes  No
- 5. What animals will we keep?**

No animals  Chickens  Other poultry  Bees

Other animals: \_\_\_\_\_

### COMMUNITY GARDEN PLANNING WORKSHEET

Discuss these questions and work together to generate ideas and policies for your community garden. Add more questions as necessary and delete when appropriate.

Garden name: \_\_\_\_\_

Garden Opening Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Closing Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**People & Plots**

How many plots? \_\_\_\_\_ How many people? \_\_\_\_\_

Will the be plot fees? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how much? \_\_\_\_\_

What do plot fees include? (water, tilling, look, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

What is the process for plot selection? \_\_\_\_\_

What about for last year's gardeners? \_\_\_\_\_

What are specific plot care requirements (weed control, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

What if the plot is not planted or maintained? \_\_\_\_\_

Will a warning be given? \_\_\_\_\_ By whom? \_\_\_\_\_ After how long? \_\_\_\_\_

What should gardeners have accomplished by the closing date? \_\_\_\_\_

Will a portion of the fee be refunded if gardener leaves plot in good condition? \_\_\_\_\_

**Policies**

What are the rules on pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers? (Gardening Matters strongly recommends only organic pest controls and fertilizers, and no herbicide use).

If a garden OK's chemical use, what are application rules? (for example on windy days?) \_\_\_\_\_

What are the garden's policies on:

Compost Bin and its maintenance: \_\_\_\_\_

Water: \_\_\_\_\_

Tools: \_\_\_\_\_

Overripe/finished vegetables: \_\_\_\_\_

Structures/support: \_\_\_\_\_

City of Sydney: Getting Started in Community Gardening pages 7-9  
<http://communitygarden.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/cityofsydney-cg.pdf>

Gardening Matters: Twin Cities Community Garden Start-up Guide pages 16-17  
<http://www.gardeningmatters.org/resources/startupguide.pdf>

# #3 Community Gardening Design: CURRENT CONDITIONS

To get a better understanding of what's going on at and around the site, follow these steps of thoughtful observation to understand the physical conditions -the cultural and natural structure of your garden site and community:

## 1. Obtain a base map of the site. Make a few copies and write on the maps.

Google Maps

Hennepin County Property Tax Website <http://www16.co.hennepin.mn.us/pins/addrsrch.jsp>

## 2. Measure your site and make a to-scale site map. A 100' tape measure is helpful in this endeavor!

Park Design Website: How to measure your site

<http://picasaweb.google.com/OpenRoadPark/ParkDesignHowToMeasureYourSite#5298265030655587362>

## 3. Conduct a Site Analysis - design for the specifics of sites, clients, and cultures.

**Natural and physical site conditions are ranked in order of most difficult to change or control (climate) to easiest (soil).**

1. How many hours of sun does the site get each day? Note buildings and trees nearby.
2. Note wind direction? Will this effect plant growth?
3. Are their major roads nearby? If so, are there barriers that exist? Is it safe for small children?
4. What is the slope of the land? Note during and after a rain where the water is draining.
5. How quickly does water move through the site after it rains? Flooding? Standing water?
6. Note the existing services to the site and their location. Electricity, water, stormwater drains, places to lock bikes, parking, or bus stops.
7. Note existing structures, sidewalks, fences, seating, walls, or existing gardens on the site?
8. Note existing vegetation on the site? Note trees, shrubs, ground cover, invasive, weeds. Note their quality, height, spread, and notes about their aesthetic and wild life quality.
9. Note the square footage (Length in Feet x Width in Feet) of the site? How much is suitable for growing space?
8. Note the soil type on site? History of site? Have you conducted a soil test? Is there contamination?

**Immediate cultural conditions exist in and near your garden space. It is important to remember these as well.**

1. Who currently owns the land?
2. What is the land currently used as? If it is vacant, do people walk through the site, dump things there, kids hang out, dogs playing? Will the garden conflict with these uses?
3. Who lives immediately near the garden site? Ages? Employment levels? Rentals? Homeowners? Cultural backgrounds? Linguistic backgrounds?
4. What are the existing land uses around the site? Roads? Residential? Industrial?
5. Can the site be seen from walkers, businesses, roads?
6. Is graffiti and vandalism a problem in the immediate area? Is there lighting nearby? What is the current crime situation?
7. What community groups and businesses nearby might support this project?



## #4 Community Gardening Design: CHARACTERISTICS/PRINCIPLES

### DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

First it is important to consider the characteristics of the spatial functions/elements you will be using in your garden, including any growing spaces, path, or structures. These include, but are not limited to:

**FORM** is the shape of any element that you are putting in your garden.

**COLOR** is found throughout all seasons, in all planting materials, and in all man-made building materials.

**SCALE** is the relative size difference when deciding where to place elements in your garden.

**TEXTURE** is an experience through sight or touch that can add mood or emotion to a garden.

**SCENT** can be experienced through flowers, fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Place along garden edges or along walkways.

### DESIGN PRINCIPLES

You can use these characteristics as tools to impact the overall look and feel of your garden by applying a few basic design principles. These include:

**LINE** works to help guide someone's eye through a garden. A horizontal line, like a row of low plants, will draw someone's eye across a garden, while a vertical line, like a tree or arbor, will draw their eyes up. Line shape can also make a difference - gentle, curving lines can have a calming effect, while sharp, jagged lines can add excitement and energy.

**REPETITION** is the duplication of characteristic in your garden, like color, texture, form, or line. Repetition can emphasize a certain element of the garden, but its overuse can lead to monotony or a sense of disorder.

**VARIETY** is the opposite of repetition. Variety refers to the mixing of different colors, forms, and textures in a garden to add visual excitement. Think seasonality! Variety can also be overdone.

**FOCAL POINTS** is the most dominant element of the garden. Focal points give the viewer a place to rest the eye - a tree, an orchard, gathering area, or a water feature. In a larger garden, you can use several focal points to guide a visitor through the space.

**UNITY** is a gradual change, from one element to another. An example of this would be a line or group of plants that move gradually from very low plants to progressively higher ones.

Unity gives a garden continuity, and ties all of its distinct parts together into a greater whole.

Reduced from RebelTomato

<http://www.communitygarden.org/rebeltomato/shoots/basic-garden-design.php>

## #5 Community Garden Design: TOOLS

Choose the systems that support your community's goals and reflect the needs and resources available.



Visioning/Goals



Create a timeline



Engage Diversity



Build local alliances

Random Assembly Method

Sector diagrams/plans

Map Overlay

Modeling

Community Feedback Sessions/Revision

Implementation

# THE FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNITY SPACE

## “PLACE” GROWING SPACE

- Plots/Allotment
- Shared garden space
- Orchards
- Groves
- Rain garden
- Raised garden beds - types
- Handicap accessible beds
- Greenroof
- Espalliar systems
- Vertical structures - trellises

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## “PLACE” GATHERING SPACE

- Seating - benches/chairs - moveable or permanent
- Eating area - table
- Cooking space
- Shelter- pergola or covered area
- Community Bulletin boards
- On-site signage - interpretive/garden name/ purpose
- Child play area
- Public art
- Event space/ Classroom
- Fire pit
- Electricity

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## “PLACE” WORK SPACE

- Water harvesting - rain barrels (what is the structure and where is it coming from)
- Storage/Shed
- Compost bins
- Vermiculture
- Mulch pile/soil pile
- Garbage
- Recycling
- Chicken Coop
- Swales
- Bee Hives

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## “PLACE” EDGE/BORDER

- Importance of entrance/Gate
- Appropriate Fencing/Chain link fence removal
- Hedgerows/ Tree/shrub border
- Windbreaks
- Boulevard planting
- Edging: Defining path/growing space:

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## “PLACE” MOVEMENT SPACE

- Walkways/pathway (give std size)
- Adjacent roads
- Traffic safety /calming applications
- Bike racks
- Parking
- Designing for accessibility - do you plan to accommodate those with limited mobility?

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## SITE PLAN

