

From: Community and School Gardens Working Group  
To: Beth Ross, Redwood City Climate Action Plan  
Community Planning Workshop  
Fall Quarter 2009

In this packet you will find paper copies of many of the documents we have created. These documents are all intended to be companions to the online resource we have created. All of the information contained in these documents, plus more, can be found on the Redwood City Community Gardens website. This packet has five major sections:

The first is a hard copy of the toolkit portion of the website. This document can be printed and kept on site at any community or school gardens. It contains information regarding planning, creating, and maintaining community gardens. If you have any questions about this toolkit, please contact Eno Inyang at [inyange@stanford.edu](mailto:inyange@stanford.edu).

The second is the Taft Case Study, produced by Brittany Rymer. If you have any follow-up questions regarding this case study, please contact Brittany at [brymer@stanford.edu](mailto:brymer@stanford.edu). This document can also be accessed on the website under the "Helpful Resources" tab.

The third section is a document compiling eleven case studies we conducted of innovative school and community gardens in California and around the country. An abbreviated discussion of the lessons learned from these case studies is summarized at the beginning of the document. If you have any questions about these case studies, please contact Nicole Wires ([nwires@gmail.com](mailto:nwires@gmail.com)) or Sarah Blahnik ([sblahnik@stanford.edu](mailto:sblahnik@stanford.edu)). These case studies can be accessed on the website in the "What are some of the best practices?" section and "What are some potential challenges?" section.

The fourth section is a short list of potential tasks an intern with Beth Ross and Redwood City could work on that might help to push forward the movement of creating community gardens in Redwood City. These tasks are meant solely as suggestion, but we hope these tasks will be helpful in continuing the efforts we have started.

The final section contains a few sample legal documents, user rules, and use agreements we have collected from other community gardens. These documents are meant simply to be instructive and give Redwood City officials a better understanding of how other gardens navigate legal and liability issues related to community gardens.

We hope you find this information helpful. Do not hesitate to contact any of us if you have any follow-up thoughts or questions.

The purpose of the **Community Garden Toolkit** is to make community engagement in urban agriculture as effortless as possible.

To optimize user-friendliness, it is designed as a flowchart - delineating 6 steps towards starting and maintaining a successful community garden.

All the included resources can also be found at the Redwood City Community Gardens Website.

This hard copy version can be placed and used on the garden site, and was created to ensure universal accessibility.

# REDWOOD CITY COMMUNITY GARDENS

## TOOLKIT

# STARTING A COMMUNITY GARDEN

**STEP 1**  
**...Get Connected...**

Connect with a team of Redwoods to get the garden going!

To really hit the ground running, you will need to involve a mix of people to create balance.

Interested Neighbors  
Local Business/Nonprofits  
City Contacts

See the database of interests, here ->  
And add yourself to the list!

**STEP 2**  
**Infrastructure**

You're going to need it!

Build a Fence  
Get back your building team

Fence: For materials and a teaming site, visit us: [www.redwoodscity.org](http://www.redwoodscity.org)

Soil: The City offers soil with a good nutrient mix. [www.redwoodscity.org](http://www.redwoodscity.org)

Tools: The City has a lot of gardening tools for loan (for a fee!) visit & rent at: [www.redwoodscity.org](http://www.redwoodscity.org)

See [www.redwoodscity.org](http://www.redwoodscity.org) to get on the water!

**STEP 3**  
**Funding**

Although minimal, your garden is likely to require certain costs...

Redwood City's Community Improvement Grant Program (CIGP) offers up to \$10K for a neighborhood improvement project (such as community gardening)

Apply for one here... [www.cityofrc.org](http://www.cityofrc.org)

For some more funding ideas, take a look at this: [www.cityofrc.org](http://www.cityofrc.org)

**STEP 4**  
**Where's the Water?!**

Lots of water is available in our area.

The City has offered a solution to this issue...

Contact Melissa on [melissa@redwoodscity.org](mailto:melissa@redwoodscity.org) and [www.redwoodscity.org](http://www.redwoodscity.org) to get your pit dug up with a total cost of water.

See [www.redwoodscity.org](http://www.redwoodscity.org) for more information.

**STEP 6**  
**Get on the Map!**

Once you're getting everyone up to speed with your new project!

Where are you?  
Get your address listed on the map. If it's a map, it will show other...  
...in your area. It will also show you...  
...of your address in the map. It will also show you...  
...of your address in the map. It will also show you...

What's the news?  
Keep a "journal" of the progress of your garden. Share your status and activities with other interested gardeners. Post photos, newsletters, news, etc. and...  
...and please share it on our website! Get listed...  
...and please share it on our website! Get listed...

**STEP 5**  
**Development and Maintenance**

After the initial set up, you're going to need to develop and maintain the garden. Here's a general and concrete guide on how to get this done...

For the info on what and when to plant (and schedule) take a look at this: [www.cityofrc.org](http://www.cityofrc.org)

See our other plan for info on how to develop and maintain your garden. [www.cityofrc.org](http://www.cityofrc.org)

# STEP 1

## ...Get Connected...

**Connect with a team of like minds to get the garden going!**

To really hit the ground running, you will need to involve 3 sets of people (as shown below)...



See the database of contacts, here - <http://tinyurl.com/com-contacts>

**And add yourself to the list!**

[From <http://tinyurl.com/com-contacts>]...

## **Useful Contacts**

### **Interested Neighbors:**

Visit <http://tinyurl.com/com-contacts> for directions on how to get access to this contact list, and for a sample 'Garden Contract'

### **City Contacts:**

s/n	NAME	POSITION	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
1	Malcolm Smith	Public Communications Manager	malcolm.smith@redwoodcity.org	650.780.7305
2	Erica Spacher	Neighborhood Liaison Coordinator	espacher@redwoodcity.org	650.780.5905
3	Beth Ross	Environmental Initiatives Manager	bross@redwoodcity.org	650.780.5917

### **Local Groups / Non-Profits:**

s/n	NON-PROFIT	RESOURCE PROVIDED	CONTACT			TELEPHONE
			NAME	POSITION	EMAIL	
1	Composting, Unincorporated SMCo	Source of compost	Jacqueline Rosine	RecycleWorks Program Coordinator	jrosine@co.sanmateo.ca.us	650.599.1498
2	Sustainable Community Gardens	potential resource/umbrella non-profit/adviser	Rebecca Jepson	Executive Director	rebecca@scgardens.org	
3	Hidden Villa	Model, adviser	Jessica Zuckerman		jzuckerman@hiddenvilla.org	
4	Redwood City Scouts (boys)					
5	Redwood City Scouts (girls)					

# STEP 2

## Infrastructure

You're going to need to:

*Build a Fence*

*Test the Soil*

*Get basic gardening tools*

### Fence:

For materials and a how-to guide, check out...

<http://tinyurl.com/gardenfence>

### Soil:

The City offers free soil testing, email Malcolm at...

[malcolm.smith@redwoodcity.org](mailto:malcolm.smith@redwoodcity.org)

to make it happen.

### Tools:

The City has a box of gardening tools for loan (for free!!)

email Erica at...

[espacher@redwoodcity.org](mailto:espacher@redwoodcity.org)

to get in on the action!

See

<http://tinyurl.com/cg-infrastructure>

for more in-depth infrastructure info

[From <http://tinyurl.com/cg-infrastructure>]...

## **Basic Garden Infrastructure**

### **Fence:**

Below are a list of materials you will need to build your fence...

- 4" or 5" - PVC Pipe 4 to 6 pieces @ about 3 to 4 foot long
- 4 to 6 - 4" by 8' treated posts/timbers
- Chicken Wire 6'
- Post Hole Digger
- Wire Snips/Cutter
- Staple Gun / Tacker

If you choose to build it yourself (with your team), you can find a how-to-guide here:

<http://tinyurl.com/gardenfence>

### **Soil:**

The City offers free soil testing.

Contact Malcolm on

[malcolm.smith@redwoodcity.org](mailto:malcolm.smith@redwoodcity.org)

when you are ready to test the soil.

### **Tools:**

The City offers a toolbox that can be checked out on loan (for free!!).

Contact Erica on

[espacher@redwoodcity.org](mailto:espacher@redwoodcity.org)

to check for availability.

If you decide to garner these tools yourself, the 10 essential tools that you will need to get started are:

1. Trowel
2. Hand fork or Claw or Cultivator
3. Hoe
4. Secateurs (aka Hand pruners)
5. Watering can
6. Fork
7. Shovels & Spades
8. Wheelbarrow
9. Gloves
10. Hose

[taken from American Community Garden Association's 'Ten Top Tools for Community Gardens']

[From <http://tinyurl.com/gardenfence>]...

## **How to Build A Cheap Fence Around Your Garden**

By [agoodman](#)  
*User-Submitted Article*

If you are tired of losing your vegetables in your garden to wildlife, you may have to build a border line or install a removable fence; especially if deer are lurking around the area.

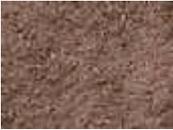
Over many years and many gardens, I have developed a quick and somewhat easy and inexpensive way to build a fence around my gardens. With many trials and errors, this design has worked the best for me.

### **STEP 1:**



First thing you need to do is to prepare the soil. Usually, depending on where you live, I turn the soil with my garden tiller at least twice: first to loosen the soil and then later to add garden mulch and to make my rows. I always design my garden to face east to west in order to get as much sun as possible. Typically I like median size gardens around 30 feet by 30 feet square, but depending on space, I have had smaller and much larger gardens.

### **STEP 2:**



Second thing I do is to work in some garden mulch into the soil during my second tilling. I have a mulch pile on my property to pull from. The pile is made up of yard waste such as leaves, grass, and a bag or two of lime which I through in there during the season. I turn the mulch pile over with a pitch fork often to give it air and to speed up the decomposition (breakdown or decay of organic materials). The better the mulch the better the garden.

### **STEP 3:**



Third step is to plan the layout of the garden. Depending on what your growing, this step is important because some vegetable grow better next to certain vegetables and some grow taller than others, etc.

Typically, I set my fence up around the corners of the garden. For instance, I will make 4 corners and a gate (some times depending on the distance between the corners, I will make more holes) In the corners I dig holes using a post hole digger to a depth of 2 feet and the same for the gate. So, depending on the size of the garden, usually this requires a min of 6 treated 4 inch by 8 foot treated wood posts.

### **STEP 4:**



Now the secret to making this a fence that you can take down at the end of the season, is to submerge PVC pipe into the holes.

Forth step is to buy 2 - 6 foot long PVC pipes that are 4"+ in diameter and cut them into 2 foot long sections (this might take a special blade or you can ask the hardware store if they would cut for you). These sections I submerge into the 4 holes I have made on the corners and the 2 holes for the gate. Since I have a large tiller, I make my gate at least 5 feet wide.

#### STEP 5:



Fifth thing I do is to sink the 4 inch by 8 foot treated wood beams into the PVC tubes that are in the holes I have made (depending on the height you require you may want to shorten or lengthen these). I do not add dirt or concrete because I want to be able to remove at the end of the season and the poles are sturdy enough without adding dirt or concrete.

#### STEP 6:



Sixth thing I do is to stretch out the chicken wire around the borders up onto the gate posts and use a staple gun to secure the wire directly to the wood posts. I usually use 7 to 8 foot high chicken wire (remember 2 feet of the wood post in is the PVC tube in the ground. I trim up the chicken wire with wire cutters as needed. I usually like the chicken wire to be in one, not more than two pieces depending on the weight once wound up and of course, the size of the garden. Depending on what creatures are lurking around, I usually bury a foot or so of the chicken wire under the ground. Some of the little critter like to bore under the fence and this will keep them honest.

#### STEP 7:



Next step is to construct the gate and you can get very carried away with this step, but I have found all you really need is some way to get in with your equipment and keep the critters out. Unfortunately, you can't bury the chicken wire under the gate or you won't be able to open it.

Interestingly, this is the place where the animals will try to make their entry into the garden. Like I said in a previous article, **THEY DON'T PLAY FAIR**. Moreover, they will try to come in by climbing up the wood posts. That is why I plant, special plants that they hate around the garden and next to these posts. In worse case situations, I have even had to put barb wire on the posts and weave the wire along the tops of the wire around the border of the garden, although this is a drastic, last ditch effort to keep the illegals out of my garden, I really don't want to hurt the wild animals. To this date, I have never found a hurt or dead animal on the outside of my fence or inside my garden when I used barb wire. However, this is up to you.

#### STEP 8:



Finally, depending on the size of the garden, you may need more wood posts and PVC pipe to shore up the distance between all the posts. What you don't want is the chicken wire to fold over from lack of support. The bottom line is as the old saying goes, "you can't keep all the critters out all the time, but you can keep most of them out some of the time." Some will find a way to get in.

At the end of the season, you can dismantle the fence and store it for next year and you can leave the PVC pipes in the ground.

I still will have dreams and can still see their little mouths crunching on my vegetables as I sleep at night. Help me!

Again, you can make this as elaborate as you want.

# STEP 3 Funding

Although minimal, **your garden is likely to**  
accrue certain costs  
...

Redwood City's Community Improvement Grant Program (CIGP)  
offers up to \$300 for a neighborhood improvement project  
(such as community gardens)!

Apply for one here...

<http://tinyurl.com/CIGPapp>

For some more funding ideas, take a look at this:

<http://tinyurl.com/gardenfunding>

[From <http://tinyurl.com/gardenfunding>]...

## **Funding Possibilities**

A variety of grant possibilities exist for both community groups and schools who wish to start gardens. Redwood City even has its own local grant program that can provide funding. Below is a list of possible funding sources. The list begins with small local grants, and is concluded with a national, large-scale grant program. While this list does include many potential sources of funding, it is by no means comprehensive. Other potential sources can be found by researching online or asking other community gardeners how they are funded.

### **Redwood City's Community Improvement Grant Program (CIGP):**

[<http://www.ci.redwood-city.ca.us/manager/initiatives/cigpf.html>]

CIGP provides small grants for your community engagement project, beautification program, neighborhood participation activity, or other project that brings people together and builds community. The grants come in two amounts, \$100 and \$300.

### **San Diego Master Gardeners-School Garden Grants:**

[<http://www.mastergardenerssandiego.org/schools/grants.php>]

This is a calendar of grants available for starting school gardens. The grants are organized based on due dates. The amounts of these grants vary.

### **KidsGardening!**

[<http://www.kidsgardening.com/grants.asp>]

KidsGardening lists many grants that are funded by the NGA and other large foundations. Many of these grants, but not all, are related to childhood gardening education. The grants listed vary in size.

### **National Gardening Association (NGA):**

[<http://assoc.garden.org/grants/>]

NGA awards Youth Garden Grants to schools and community organizations with child-centered garden programs. NGA gardens must have a strong focus on education. Annually, NGA gives out 100 grants. Of those grants, 5 are for \$1,000 and 95 are for \$500.

### **W.K. Kellogg Foundation:**

[<http://www.wkkf.org>]

The Kellogg Foundation provides very large sized grants to promote the "health, happiness, and well-being of children". Last year that grants awarded ranged from \$15,000 to over \$16 million. This year some of the Kellogg Foundations initiatives that pertain to community gardening include Food and Community, Food and Society, and Food and Fitness.

# STEP 4 Where's the Water?!

Lack of water is one of the **major roadblocks** to getting stuff growing!

The City has offered a solution to this issue...

Once you have  
**a plot**  
**a team**  
and  
**basic infrastructure** underway  
...

Contact Malcolm on [malcolm.smith@redwoodcity.org](mailto:malcolm.smith@redwoodcity.org)  
and he will hook your plot up with a source of water.

Other watering ideas include

- Rainwater collection (from rooftop)
- Donations from kind neighbor in adjacent plot
- Addition of garden-specific water line

[see best practices page for more info]

<http://tinyurl.com/garden-b-practice>

# STEP 5

## Development and Maintenance

After initial set-up, you're going to need to develop and maintain the garden.

Here's a generic and concise guide on how to get this done...

<http://tinyurl.com/dev-maint>

For info on 'what and when to plant' (crop schedules) take a look at this...

<http://tinyurl.com/c-schedule>

Here are some other good guides with info on development and maintenance:

Expanded 10-step guide:

- [http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/articles/startup\\_guide.html](http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/articles/startup_guide.html)
- <http://www.communitygarden.org/learn/starting-a-community-garden.php>

Other Full Handbooks:

- <http://communitygarden.org/rebeltomato/roots/program-team.php>
- <http://www.burlingtongardens.org/gardenorganizer.html>

[From [tinyurl.com/dev-maint](http://tinyurl.com/dev-maint)]...

## **Development & Maintenance**

*\*The following steps are adapted from the American Community Garden Association's guidelines for launching a successful community garden in your neighborhood*

### **- PREPARE AND DEVELOP THE SITE**

In most cases, the land will need considerable preparation for planting. Organize volunteer work crews to clean it, gather materials and decide on the design and plot arrangement.

### **- ORGANIZE THE GARDEN**

Members must decide how many plots are available and how they will be assigned. Allow space for storing tools, making compost and don't forget the pathways between plots! Plant flowers or shrubs around the garden's edges to promote good will with non-gardening neighbors, passersby and municipal authorities.

### **- PLAN FOR CHILDREN**

Consider creating a special garden just for kids--including them is essential. Children are not as interested in the size of the harvest but rather in the process of gardening. A separate area set aside for them allows them to explore the garden at their own speed.

### **- DETERMINE RULES AND PUT THEM IN WRITING**

The gardeners themselves devise the best ground rules. We are more willing to comply with rules that we have had a hand in creating. Ground rules help gardeners to know what is expected of them. Think of it as a code of behavior. Some examples of issues that are best dealt with by agreed upon rules are: dues, how will the money be used? How are plots assigned? Will gardeners share tools, meet regularly, handle basic maintenance?

### **- HELP MEMBERS KEEP IN TOUCH WITH EACH OTHER**

Good communication ensures a strong community garden with active participation by all. Some ways to do this are: form a telephone tree, create an email list; install a rainproof bulletin board in the garden; have regular celebrations. Community gardens are all about creating and strengthening communities.

\* the most common advice sought from ACGA, also visit <http://www.communitygarden.org/starting.php>

**Other Online Guidelines:**

Expanded 10-step guide:

[http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/articles/startup\\_guide.html](http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/articles/startup_guide.html)

<http://www.communitygarden.org/learn/starting-a-community-garden.php>

Other Full Handbooks:

<http://communitygarden.org/rebeltomato/>

<http://www.burlingtongardens.org/gardenorganizer.html>

[From <http://tinyurl.com/c-schedule>]...

## **What to Plant and When?**

Getting your plants in the ground at the right time is critical for the best harvest. There are a vast number of different vegetables to grow, so that's why it's important to check the planting dates, beginning with these, for the most common vegetables in gardens... [[gardenguides.com](http://gardenguides.com)]

### **Common Vegetables:**

- **Onions** can be planted 2 to 4 weeks before the last spring frost. They can grow in 40 degrees F weather temperature. Plant these 4 to 6 inches apart and at a depth of 1/4 inch.
- **Potatoes** can be planted 2 weeks before the last spring frost. They are able to grow in temperatures around 40 to 50 degrees F. Plant them 12 to 15 inches apart and at a depth of 4 to 6 inches.
- **Corn** can be planted at the last spring frost. They can grow in temperatures above 60 degrees F. Plant them 12 to 30 inches apart and at a depth of 1 to 1 1/2 inches.
- **Winter squash** should be planted when there is no chill to the air and temperatures are always above 55 degrees F. Typically this is around 2 weeks or more after the last spring frost.
- **Tomatoes** - When the weather gets above 55 degrees F and stays without chill to it, plant tomatoes. It is generally 2 weeks or more past the date of the last spring frost before the ground is ready. Plant 24 inches apart and on a trellis.
- **Cucumbers** - Plant the cucumbers at near the last spring frost date. Temperatures over 60 degrees F are optimal. Plant these 24 to 36 inches apart and at a depth of 1 inch.
- **Carrots** - Plant the carrots around 2 weeks before the final spring frost. They can take temperatures 40 to 50 degrees F. Plant 2 to 3 inches apart and at a depth of 1/4 inch.

### **All Vegetables:**

Visit the following site for a crop schedule/calendar specific to Northern California - [http://www.sacramentogardening.com/edible\\_gardening.html](http://www.sacramentogardening.com/edible_gardening.html)

# STEP 6

## Get on the Map!

Once you've got going, keep everyone up-to-speed with your new project!

### Where are you?

Get your chosen plot updated on the map! As if by magic, it will change either...  
from vacant to active (turn from yellow to red),  
or from unknown to known (a red marker will appear on the map).

Email Eno Inyang on [inyange@stanford.edu](mailto:inyange@stanford.edu)  
and he will make this happen on the 'Where to Grow?' map.

### What's the news??

Keep a 'journal-of-sorts' on the progress of your garden. Share your trials and tribulations with  
other like-minded souls (team, best practices, roadblocks, events, etc, etc)  
and perhaps inspire a new community gardener!

Email Eno Inyang on [inyange@stanford.edu](mailto:inyange@stanford.edu)  
and he will give you access to the community's garden blog/forum

 <http://rwcgardens.wordpress.com>

# Taft Elementary School's Garden Program

## A Case Study

Brittany Rymer  
December 7, 2009



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## Overview

School gardens have been initiated in many Redwood City schools as a means of enhancing science education. One school in Redwood City, Taft Elementary School, has started a truly exemplary school garden. To start its school garden program, Taft partnered with Hidden Villa, a non-profit outdoor education organization. Hidden Villa placed a science teacher at Taft who now runs Taft's garden program. The garden has expanded over the years to include two planting sites, a rainwater catchment, composting facilities, and a greenhouse. The program has made Taft students excited about learning, and student standardized test scores have risen as a result. The example and success of Taft shows that other Redwood City schools can duplicate the model of outdoor, tactile learning that Taft has initiated.

# The Story of Taft

## Founding

Five years ago, Taft Elementary School was in need of a stronger science program, and Hidden Villa wanted to form stronger connections with Redwood City schools. This joint need fostered a partnership between Hidden Villa and Taft Elementary School that produced Taft's school garden program. Prior to the establishment of the garden and partnership with Hidden Villa, Taft's science curriculum was nearly non-existent. Taft therefore initially hoped to use the partnership to deeply integrate science into its daily curriculum and after-school activities. Hidden Villa hoped to experiment with off-site, long-term education. To reach the goals of both parties, a Hidden Villa employee was placed at Taft. Jenny Zeabst is the Hidden Villa employee who now fills this position by working as both Taft's fifth grade science teacher and garden manager.

Taft's garden land was made ready for planting during a SERVE in the Peninsula Beautification Day. On this day, Redwood City community members came together with a Redwood City church to construct Taft's initial garden. This construction included preparing soil, constructing planting boxes, and planting initial seedlings. After the Beautification Day, Taft and Hidden Villa became responsible for the maintenance of Taft's garden. These two parties have maintained and greatly expanded Taft's garden over the past five years.

## Financial Information

Taft's garden program was initially funded by a grant from the Hancock Family Foundation and the S.H. Cowell Foundation. It is now supported by a major anonymous donor of Hidden Villa. Due to Taft's unique funding situation, Taft's financial model could not necessarily be duplicated at other Redwood City schools. However, the

implementation, maintenance, and programs of the garden can be used as a model for other school garden programs.

## Hidden Villa Partnership

### Hidden Villa's Mission

Hidden Villa is a nonprofit educational organization that uses its organic farm, wilderness, and community to provide opportunities for student education about the environment and social justice. Hidden Villa stretches over 1,600 acres of open space in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains about 40 miles south of San Francisco. According to Hidden Villa's webpage, Hidden Villa's mission is to inspire a just and sustainable future through on-site education.<sup>1</sup>

### Specific Elements of Partnership

□ **Jenny Zeabst's Role** – Jenny is the main coordinator of Taft's garden program. As a Hidden Villa employee placed at Taft, she is now a full-time Taft teacher and staff member. In addition to serving as a fifth grade science teacher, Jenny designs lesson plans for other classes that incorporate Taft's garden. With help from her students, Jenny physically maintains the garden.

Jenny's hard work and dedication is the primary reason that the Taft garden is so sustainable.

□ **Field Trips** – Taft students take frequent field trips to Hidden Villa. All students at Taft travel to Hidden Villa at least once a year, regardless of what grade they are in. As the students progress from kindergarten to 6th grade, the field trips become increasingly more scientific. The field trip activities correspond

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hiddenvilla.org/>

with the standardized test requirements of each given grade. For example, fifth grade students learning about nutrition participate in a Farm Feast where they pick tomatoes and make tomato soup while learning about the nutritional benefits of organic produce.

□ **Opportunities Outside of School** – Since Taft students are so frequently exposed to Hidden Villa, they are encouraged to interact with the organization outside of the classroom. This can include attending Hidden Villa’s summer programs as well as volunteering at the Hidden Villa site as an intern. Because of Taft student’s familiarity with Hidden Villa, they have the opportunity to take advantage of all Hidden Villa has to offer.

## Taft’s Garden Facilities

### Physical Garden Space

Taft’s garden is divided into two sections. One section is used for science education. Jenny Zaebst maintains this portion of the garden for classroom use. The other section of Taft’s garden is comprised of individual teacher planter-boxes, which teachers are able to use however they please. This section of the garden is a recent addition as Taft’s original garden space consisted of only the science garden. Taft’s teachers have been very eager to make use of the new planter-boxes, all of which are currently utilized.

### Special Garden Features

□ **Greenhouse** – Taft’s garden has a small greenhouse to enable plant growth during the winter, which greatly increases the diversity of Taft’s plant growth. Through the greenhouse, students can learn about seasonal plant growth.

□ **Composting System** – Starting around Thanksgiving, Taft’s fourth and fifth graders will compost the leftovers from their school lunches once a week. This compost will then be used as fertilizer for the Taft gardens. Through composting, students can learn about nutrient recycling.

□ **Rainwater Catchment** – Taft has a rainwater catchment system that provides the garden’s water, one of the most important necessities of any garden. This water is used for both sections of the garden. Through rainwater catchment, students can learn about conservation.

**Compost Box**



**Greenhouse**



**Rainwater Catchment**



## Taft’s Garden Programs

### Science-Based Garden Programs

□ **Grade Specific Garden Lessons** – Jenny designs garden-based science lessons for Taft’s non-fifth grade teachers. This way even students that Jenny does not have in class can fully

engage in the garden. The garden lessons that Jenny designs for other Taft teachers correlate with the standardized test requirements for each grade level. This grade-specific lesson design greatly increases the number of students who get to experience the garden. As of last year, all Taft students participated in a garden activity at least once during the school year.

☐ **Curiosity Club** – Once a week, the Curiosity Club is offered to the fifth grade students. The Curiosity Club is for students who wish to explore science more in-depth. The students are introduced to the basic science information that they will be taught the following week in class. The outcomes of the Curiosity Club have been increased interest in science, increased scientific knowledge, and increased participation in science labs.

☐ **Garden Club** – The Garden Club is offered once a week as an elective to students in the Parks and Recreation after-school program and the Boys and Girls Club after-school program. Students garden, harvest, and cook produce from the school garden. The students are taught about nutrition, environmentalism, stewardship, care for plants, and gardening skills.

## **Other Garden Activities**

☐ **Incorporation into non-science disciplines** – Since Taft teachers are able to design their own individual garden-boxes and request customized lesson plans, they are free to incorporate non-science disciplines into the garden. History, for example, can be taught by growing different types of corn that have been grown at different time-periods.

☐ **Garden Reading Time** – Through an online scheduling program, teachers can individually reserve garden space for

reading time. Their students can then spend time outside, reading in the garden.

## Challenges Taft Has Faced

### **Financial Issues**

Since Taft's garden program was initiated with funding from an anonymous donor, Taft does not offer a financial model that can be duplicated in many other situations. Additionally, since Taft's garden program does require substantial funding and does not produce any revenue, it is uncertain if Taft's program could have gotten started without such generous donations.

### **Teacher Trust**

Jenny has worked through a variety of means to gain the trust and respect of Taft's teachers. For example, she allows them to decide how often they will take their class into the garden. The respect that Jenny shows Taft teachers encourages them to trust her. Increased science test scores have also pushed teachers to respect Jenny and the garden program.

## Progress Made

### **Overview**

Taft's garden program has produced many benefits for both Taft's students and teachers. The main forms of progress that the garden program has fostered are outlined below.

**Test Scores** – Science test scores have significantly increased since Taft established its garden system. The drastic increase in science

test scores has helped Jenny gain credibility with Taft teachers. The increased scores have also made teachers more eager to take their students into the garden.

**Student View of Science** – By spending time in the garden, students learn that science exists outside of textbooks, making them more excited to learn. By fostering students' excitement to learn, Taft's gardens are immeasurably valuable.

**Student Environmental Consciousness** – When students tangibly interact with the earth, they can more clearly understand that their daily actions have environmental impacts. By illuminating this truth, Taft's gardens encourage students to be more environmentally conscious. This pushes students to lower their personal environmental impact.

**Impact Outside of the Classroom** – Many parents of Taft students cite noticeable changes in the way their children engage with science and nature at home. Some Taft students have even started their own home gardens. Other students now compost their home's daily leftovers. One Taft mother even discussed being patronized by her daughter if she ever fails to recycle. Many Taft parents have heard their children speak excitedly about spending time in Taft's garden.

## Methods Used to Conduct Research

### Interviews

Interviews were one of the three main methods used to collect information for this case study. I interviewed several different Taft garden stakeholders to gather a wide range of information. An outline of the interviews I conducted is displayed below.

## **Taft Interviews**

- **Fifth Grade Taft Science Teacher, Jenny Zaebst** – I interviewed Jenny twice formally and contacted her several additional times for follow up questions and clarifications. These additional contacts were conducted via email.
- **Boys and Girls Club Students** – I interviewed Boys and Girls Club students during an after-school garden club.
- **Taft Parents** – I interviewed several Taft parents both in-person and via email. While I have not talked to the parents of all Jenny’s students, I attempted to speak with a full gambit of parents who ranged from lightly to heavily involved in Taft’s garden program.
- **Beth Ross** – I interviewed Beth Ross, a Redwood City Counsel member who was greatly involved with the formation of Redwood City and Hidden Villa’s partnership. This interview was conducted first in-person and later continued via email.

## **Hidden Villa Interviews**

- **Jessica Zucherman** – Jessive Zucherman is a Hidden Villa employee who works to produce environmental educational materials. I interviewed her both in person and via email.
- **Hidden Villa Interns** – Several interns lead the students who visit Hidden Villa on tours. I interviewed four of these interns when I accompanied Taft’s Boys and Girls Club fifth graders on their Hidden Villa field trip.

## Observations

I also used observations to collect data for this case study. I gathered observation-based information during three main outings. These outings are described below.

### Observation-based Outings

□ **Taft Garden Tour** – I toured Taft’s school gardens with Jenny Zaebst. During this tour, Jenny described the functions of each garden feature and described how the school interacts with these features. She also explained how the garden has changed and evolved over time.

□ **Field Trip to Hidden Villa** – Taft’s fifth grade Boys and Girls Club went to Hidden Villa for a field trip in early November. I attended this outing and observed what and how the students were learning. The students picked vegetables, picked tea leaves, made butter, made all-natural tomato soup, composted their leftovers, and visited some of the farm animals on sight. While participating in these activities, the students were told about the physical and environmental benefits of organic farming and healthily eating.

□ **After School Garden Club** – I observed and spoke with students who were fertilizing beds during Taft’s after-school garden club. The students were very eager to tell me about their gardening experiences.

## Relevance to Redwood City

**Additional School Garden Sites** – Many Redwood City schools have no garden program whatsoever. Other Redwood City

schools have gardens that are under-utilized. Taft's garden program illuminates the massive potential that lies within Redwood City schools to create or expand their own garden programs. There is no reason why this potential should not be fully tapped.

**Expansion into the Community** – Taft's garden program has potential to be further integrated into the Redwood City community. Such an integration would allow more people to experience the garden, and provide volunteers to maintain the garden over the summer. Other Redwood City schools also have the potential to integrate their school gardens into the Redwood City community. Additional integration could range from leasing out planter-boxes to recruiting community volunteers for after-school garden maintenance.

**Climate Action Plan** – Redwood City's Climate Action Plan aims to reduce Redwood City's greenhouse gas emission levels. Expanding and increasing the number of school gardens in Redwood City is one way that this goal can be achieved. By using school gardens to teach Redwood City's youngest generation how to be environmentally conscious, Redwood City can ensure a brighter and greener future.

## School and Community Garden Case Studies

### Lessons Learned:

In this document you will find eleven, in-depth case studies of innovative school and community gardens all over the nation. The case studies are alphabetized for convenience. Although many of the case studies are exemplary of multiple “lessons learned”, below you will find a synthesized list of some of the most valuable takeaways from each individual case study. If you have any questions about any of these cases, feel free to email [sblahnik@stanford.edu](mailto:sblahnik@stanford.edu) or [nwires@gmail.com](mailto:nwires@gmail.com).

- See **Champlain Garden** (p.1) in Burlington, Vermont for an example of how a community overcame limited public land in a densely populated area and created a community garden on an elementary school garden.
- See **Friends of Burlington Gardens** (p.3) in Burlington, Vermont for an example of how networks can be a powerful aid to facilitate collaboration, resource sharing, and movement building among community and school gardeners.
- See **Full Circle Farm** (p.6) in Sunnyvale, California for an example of how a school garden can reach out to an entire school district by providing educational spaces, workshops, activities, work-days, and field trips.
- See **Green Mountain Farm to School** (p.9) in Newport, Vermont to learn how a coordinating non-profit can make school gardens available to schools without putting unmanageable burdens or expectations on individual teachers within schools.
- See **Green Street School** (p.11) in Brattleboro, Vermont to learn how part-time support staff can expand the potential of a garden within a school; and to learn how a school garden can have impacts on the wider community.
- See the **Healthy City Youth Farm** (p. 13) in Burlington, Vermont to learn how at-risk youth can be engaged in and benefit from community and school gardens.
- See the **Palo Alto Community Gardens** (p.14) in Palo Alto, California to learn about the importance of rules and procedures for dispute negotiations.
- See **Rosa Parks Elementary School** (p.16) in San Diego, California to learn how school gardens can start farmers markets and parent clubs to increase their exposure to and support from the local community.
- See the **Salisbury Community School** (p.18) in Salisbury, Vermont to learn how innovative partnerships with local farmers can improve the effectiveness and quality of school gardens.
- See the **Sunnyvale Community Gardens** (p.20) in Sunnyvale, California to learn about a potential partner for your own garden in Redwood City and to understand how waiver forms can minimize liability issues in community gardens.
- See the **Wheeler School Community Garden** (p.22) in Seekonk, Massachusetts to learn how delegating responsibilities to a team of workers can help a garden run more efficiently and productively.

## Champlain Garden: Burlington, VT

### **Background**

Champlain Garden is one of 11 garden sites in the Burlington Area Community Gardens (BACG) network. Between these 11 sites there are nearly 400 allotment style garden plots. The garden, which is nearly 15 years old, is located on the south side of Burlington, on the Champlain Elementary School campus. In this part of Burlington there is very little public land available for community gardening, so a coalition of gardeners submitted a proposal for a joint-use agreement to have the garden exist and operate on the school campus.

While there is no formal legal agreement between the city of Burlington Parks and Recreation, which manages the BACG, and Champlain Elementary School, there is an implicit agreement which includes only one stipulation: contractor work (repairing a water line, mowing, tilling, etc.) cannot happen during school hours. Otherwise, the garden is allowed to operate how it sees fit. Despite a formal legal agreement, the garden has not encountered a single incident or issue between parents, students, and gardeners.

### **Garden Specifics**

Champlain Garden is about 700 square feet and has 16 plots. The soil at the garden is very heavy and compacted. The garden also encounters problems with ground water because of management practices outside of the garden—school management and watering of the grass and lawn directly impacts the garden. The school has poor mowing practices and does not aerate, which compacts the already hard soil outside the garden even more, leading to substantial groundwater runoff. The 16 plots can be rented as full plots, half plots, or quarter plots. Half the garden plots are designated as no-till plots, whereas the other half are tilled by a contractor. This division reflects a transition to more sustainable, no-till practices.

### **Community Involvement**

Despite the fact that the garden is the least ideal in terms of soil and groundwater problems of all of BACG's gardens, it is still the most highly demanded garden because it is in a prime location in south Burlington where there are no other available gardens.

The governing parent organization, BACG, has evolved from various organizations and initiatives in Vermont reaching back as far as the early 1970s. In 1987, when BACG faced financial bankruptcy due to loss of corporate funding and poor fundraising, the board requested that the City of Burlington take over the management of the community gardens. This responsibility that fell under the auspices of the Parks and Recreation Department. The gardens expanded, and in

2002 the Burlington City Council passed a unanimous resolution to support the long-term maintenance of the BACG programs. Through advocacy by BACG and Friends of Burlington Gardens, a city-funded permanent full-time position was created within Parks and Rec to coordinate BACG's community gardens and serve as a land steward for the City of Burlington.

In addition to Champlain Garden, BACG has other innovative ways to address land shortages and ensure community gardens are available to the community. BACG has an agreement with the University of Vermont (UVM) which consists of a yearly lease that is re-negotiated every year to allow a community garden on the university's property. They also lease land from two religious associations: the Episcopal Diocese and the Catholic Diocese. Finally, they have put a conservation easement on a plot of land that was purchased by another non-profit, the Intervale Center. The conservation easement will require whoever owns the land to always keep it as a community garden.

### **School Involvement**

There is no direct integration of the community garden into school curriculum, however the school has a direct impact on the community garden, as described above in the Garden Specifics section. School grounds management practices influence the quality of soil and water available to the garden.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Creating joint land-use agreements, whether legal or not, can help overcome constraints of limited public land in urban areas and create spaces for community gardens.
- Community members have substantial power to lobby their municipal government to create a position within the government (here the Parks and Rec department) to manage and oversee community gardens and ensure their sustainability.
- Management practices of entities surrounding the garden can have a large impact on the quality of environmental parameters in the garden.
- Innovative land use agreements, such as partnerships with religious associations or conservation easements, can also help to create community gardens.

## Friends of Burlington Gardens: Burlington, VT

### **Background**

Vermont has an extensive, statewide network of community and school gardens. The network is supported in large part by a state resolution passed in 2004, Vermont Legislature Joint Resolution 47, supporting the establishment and expansion of community, neighborhood, and youth gardens. This, in addition to a successful non-profit based in Burlington, Friends of Burlington Gardens, has led to the development of well-integrated and innovative school and community gardens in many parts of the state.

Friends of Burlington Gardens (FBG), a 501c3 non-profit, was originally founded in 2001. For five years it operated out of the house of the executive director, Jim Flint, until in 2006 when it established sufficient secure funding and a large enough volume of projects to move into an office space. The organization has one full-time employee in addition to Jim Flint, a recent addition hired to manage a new program. This new program is the Healthy City Youth Initiative, targeting at-risk youth at one of the largest community gardens in Burlington. In 2010 the Healthy City Youth Initiative will create a permanent, sustainable farm at Hunt Middle School in Burlington where community volunteers and students will work together to grow fresh, organic produce for summer lunch programs and fall salad bars (see Healthy City Youth Farm for more information).

In 2010, the annual operating budget for FBG will increase from approximately \$90,000 in 2009 to approximately \$155,000 for 2010. Each year the budget is based on expected projects, as funding is raised each year that is necessary to cover programs, staffing, and over-head. FBG funds about 2/3 of its entire operating budget with grants, while the remaining 1/3 is raised from donations, contributions from sponsors, program fees, the sale of a few products, and special events. FBG's primary programs include the Community Teaching Garden, the Vermont Community Gardener's Network (VCGN) mini-grant program, the Burlington Community Wildlife Habitat Initiative, and providing support to the extensive network of allotment style community gardens and education based school gardens in more than 40 Vermont towns.

### **Garden Specifics**

While FBG does not maintain any of its own gardens, it provides small start-up grants to many community and school gardens across the state of Vermont through the Vermont Community Gardens Network (VCGN) mini-grant program. The grants are coupled with technical assistance, to aid new gardeners in planning, planting, and cultivating their new community and school gardens. Technical assistance takes many forms, ranging from advice on site selection to provision of and training regarding garden tools. If community members interested in a particular site have questions about its viability and Jim Flint is unable to visit the

site himself, he has recently utilized GoogleEarth to view the site remotely and determine, in a general sense, its probably viability. FBG also manages a tool coop, where community gardens can pool resources to reduce tool costs by sharing a common set of garden and farm tools.

The funding for the mini-grant programs is provided exclusively to cover infrastructural costs (raised beds, fences, signs, water systems), and does not cover labor costs. Up to \$250 can be awarded to interested schools, and up to \$500 to interested community gardens (that must include at least 10 households and be at least 2500 square feet). While these grants seem rather meager, with frugality and the support of volunteers, grant recipients have been able to create very successful school and community gardens in their communities. The grant program has a 90% success rate because the grant is only rewarded as a cash reimbursement once the garden has been created (as opposed to in advance), and recipients must complete an evaluation and reflection of their program in order to receive the reimbursement. In 2008, 56 mini-grants were awarded to garden projects statewide. [Click here to learn more about the grant program.](#)

### **Community Involvement**

In addition to the VCGN mini-grant program, FBG runs many additional programs that solicit wide community support. The Community Teaching Garden is a hands-on gardening program that teaches adults ages 18 and over how to plant, cultivate, harvest and preserve fresh organic vegetables. More than 100 participants have completed the 22-week course since the program began in 2003. [Click here to learn more about the teaching program.](#)

The Burlington Community Wildlife Habitat Initiative is a multi-year project involving community members in wildlife habitat restoration. The end goal of the program is to certify Burlington as a National Wildlife Federation Community Wildlife Habitat, a distinction only fourteen other cities in the country have achieved. FBG trains individuals how to convert their backyards into native plant ecosystems that provide ample habitat for wildlife. [Click here to learn more about the wildlife habitat program.](#)

### **School Involvement**

Since 2007 FBG has also overseen the Burlington School Garden Council for all the schools in the district (nine schools - six elementary, two middle, one high). The council holds regular meetings to allow school garden managers to share best practices and brainstorm how to coordinate group ordering for seeds, tools, etc.; additionally, they discuss group requests for funding, how to use school grounds and community gardens more, and how to better incorporate the garden clubs into classrooms.

## **Lessons Learned**

- Networks can be a valuable tool to build connections, maintain support, and share resources among similar community and school garden efforts across a state or larger region.
- Through networks, some expensive resources such as tools, can be shared communally, as with a “tool co-op”.
- Some new technologies may play a valuable role in developing community gardens, such as the use of GoogleEarth to “visit” a potential site and learn more about its characteristics.
- State-wide conferences can be an important way to build relationships and networks and maintain motivation for community and school gardens.

## Full Circle Farm: Sunnyvale, CA

### **Background**

Full Circle Farm is built on the property of Peterson Middle School in Sunnyvale, CA. The school is part of the Santa Clara Unified School District. The school itself is built on property that, in the 1950s, used to be a plum orchard. However, the orchard was bulldozed to build a high school, and in the 1980s after a series of demographic changes in the community, the community was redistricted, and the school was downgraded from a high school to a middle school.

According to zoning laws, high schools are required to have much more substantial space than middle schools, so when Peterson Middle School was downgraded from a high school, it had 11 acres of available, unused land on its property. For nearly twenty years those 11 acres sat fallow in the neighborhood and were used as a multi-purpose space; at various times it was intermittently a dog park, cricket fields, and a common use outdoor space.

In the early 2000's the district, facing increasing pressure from developers, decided to sell the valuable land. The outraged community rallied against the school district and overturned their decision. The district then put out a Request For Proposals, and in 2006 unanimously voted to approve a proposal designed in part by then district board president Teresa O'Niel to build an organic urban farm and educational space. According to the proposal, a parent non-profit organization, Sustainable Community Gardens (SCG), was to partner with Peterson Middle School to create, manage, and operate the educational farm. Full Circle Farm Sunnyvale became SCG's second and biggest project, with their first being the coordination of a successful community garden in downtown Sunnyvale known as the Charles St. Gardens.

Full Circle Farm currently finances its \$250,000-\$300,000 operating budget with about 60-70% grant funding, 20% major donations, and 10% farm sales and for-fee services. This budget covers the salaries of four full-time staff (Farm Manager, Assistant Farm Manager, Educational Programs Manager, Executive Director) and all of the farm's operating costs. While they recognize this finance structure is unsustainable for any non-profit, it is typical of a start-up non-profit. They are hoping to transition to more individual and corporate donorship, slightly higher farm sales, and less and less grant funding.

### **Garden Specifics**

Full Circle Farm is 11 acres in total, broken down into 6.5 acres of row crops, 3.5 acres of mixed orchard, and a half-acre educational garden that is being expanded to a full acre. There are only four full-time staff members, including a Farm Manager and Assistant Farm Manager, an Educational Programs Manager, and an Executive Director. The remaining staff and support is all volunteer-based.

Currently, the only permanent structures on the property include an industrial sized greenhouse and a few sheds. The remaining structures are all temporary structures, which have a different permitting process that requires renewal once a year. The land is owned by the school district and leased to Full Circle Farm. Full Circle Farm had to apply to the city to receive water permits, and then had to finance the construction of pipes to bring that municipal water to the farm. The farm is charged an agricultural rate (which is slightly lower than an industrial rate) for this water.

### **Community Involvement**

Because the farm depends heavily on volunteers, there is very substantial community involvement. The farm receives about 30-40 regular monthly volunteers, but in any given month up to 150 individual volunteers may pass through the farm. The farm also hosts many volunteer groups, including a high school club from KIPP and Hands on Bay Area working groups from various institutions, including Cisco, Google, and Enterprise. They have additional education and teaching interns from San Jose State and Santa Clara Universities. The Farm Stand is run almost entirely by volunteers. The influence of all of these community volunteers is to build a strong sense of ownership and commitment among the community to the farm space.

### **School Involvement**

The farm is also used as an active classroom for the middle-school students at Peterson Middle School. The farm is integrated into nutrition, environment, and vocational programs at the school. Utilizing the farm kitchen, students learn first-hand about healthy eating, and how it can further contribute to healthy lifestyles. The farm is an integral component of science education, providing a context for grade-appropriate curriculum about life, earth, and physical sciences, as well as ecology and the interactions between complex systems. In May 2005, the Board of the Santa Clara Unified School District adopted new curriculum standards that included a requirement for career technical training for students in grades seven through twelve. At Peterson Middle School, seventh and eighth grade students fulfill this vocational training through the farm, learning such skills as crop planning, farm financial management, estimating the labor needed to manage and harvest crops, developing the farm budget, projecting revenue, interacting with buyers, bee-keeping, rotational grazing, composting, preparing fresh produce, and packaging farm goods for sale.

Middle and high school students from across the district are encouraged to be involved in all parts of the farm operation. Students are encouraged to train and lead volunteers, run the farm stand, create planting and harvesting schedules, create healthy food marketing campaigns, plan events and festivals, and work with the local food pantry, Sunnyvale Cares, to distribute excess produce to the community's home-bound seniors and families in need. Through these experiences, students gain leadership as well as technical skills.

Additionally, Full Circle Farm offers free field trips to any other school in the district, and fee-based field trips for any other educational institution, from private kindergartens to Stanford University. The field trips are catered to the level of sophistication required by the visiting institution, and whenever possible are designed to fit into current curriculum of the visiting students.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Having access to ample land owned by the school district can ease the challenges of finding affordable land for urban community and school garden space.
- Some of the biggest challenges to new gardens are funding and staffing. Additionally, it is currently very challenging to be a grant-based non-profit in this economic climate. It is important to think about a sustainable financial structure for any garden or garden-based organization.
- Depending on volume of water usage, there is a potential to buy water directly from the city and pay an agricultural (reduced) rate.

## Green Mountain Farm to School: Newport, VT

### **Background**

An organization in Newport, Vermont - Green Mountain Farm to School (GMFTS) - has developed a highly effective and successful model of creating sustainable school gardens in local elementary and middle schools. GMFTS is an incorporated 501c3 non-profit that is contracted by schools in the school district to establish and maintain school gardens on school properties. GMFTS also runs a 30-week after-school educational program for students, teaching kids about healthy, environmentally sustainable food production and consumption.

GMFTS began as a pilot project intended to be adopted as a model for the school district, but even after a successful pilot year the district was unprepared to finance the expansion of the project to the entire district. As a result, GMFTS incorporated as a non-profit. The non-profit works with 15 schools (soon to be 20) in northeastern Vermont. When contracted by a school, GMFTS does three things: creates a garden, directs an extracurricular garden program, and maintains the garden over the summer.

### **Garden Specifics**

To create a garden, which is on average a 30 ft x 40 ft non-raised bed, GMFTS brings a tractor and rototiller to the school to level and till the land. The extracurricular program then begins in the fall, when students harvest the beds, give all the food to the school cafeteria, and learn how to save seeds. In the winter months they shift indoors and focus more on cooking and making healthy eating choices. In the spring, students create a gardening plan, plant seedlings, and then plant the beds in the end of May. GMFTS then provides an in-kind service to maintain the gardens over the summer, coming every other week regardless of whether outside volunteers are coming.

In 2009 the operating budget of GMFTS was around \$100,000; but as the organization expands this budget is expected to increase up to \$160,000 in 2010 and beyond in later years. This budget is funded by about 1/3 from grants, 1/3 from individual donations, and 1/3 from program fees. GMFTS charges each school \$50 for the after school programming, which coincides with the amount of federal funding schools receive to provide after school programs.

### **School Involvement**

With GMFTS providing all of the maintenance work on the garden, the gardens become outdoor classrooms that teachers have the opportunity to participate in without the obligation to maintain. In the fall, GMFTS works with teachers to develop and design activities that can be done on the farm that are relevant to the given grade level and curriculum.

GMFTS has found that this program approach (as opposed to training individual people at individual schools to operate this type of program) has been highly efficient. Each educator is in charge of five schools, teaching one day a week at each school. All the educators are year-round Americorps positions.

### **Lessons Learned**

- The model of a coordinating non-profit with the resources to organize for multiple schools solves the problem of having a garden rely on only one person in the school or community; a problem that leads to a severe lack of sustainability and continuity for the garden.
- Because the growing season is not well synced with the school calendar, creative lesson planning will help overcome challenges and ensure students learn about the planning, planting, growing, harvesting, and preparing of sustainable foods (if not necessary in that order).

## Green Street Elementary School Garden: Brattleboro, VT

### **Background**

The Green Street Elementary School in Brattleboro, Vermont has a small school garden, that is used as an outdoor educational space. It was built with a \$3,000 start-up grant secured by one of the 4th grade teachers, Laura White, with the approval of the school principal. While it is not built under ideal circumstances – it was built on an eastern facing hillside that only get sun until noon – it has still been a very successful addition to the school community.

### **Garden Specifics**

The garden is approximately 65 ft x 25 ft. Laura quickly realized that it was impossible to be both a farmer and a teacher at the same time – the demands of coordinating and maintaining a school garden were too great in addition to the demands of being a full-time teacher. To remedy this problem, Laura arranged for the creation of a part-time Garden Coordinator position. The Garden Coordinator is responsible for planning and planting in the garden, preparing for lesson plans and buying the materials in advance of the lesson, and providing support to any other teachers interested in conducting a lesson in the garden. The Coordinator also writes additional grants when necessary and arranges for families of garden students to adopt the garden for individual weeks over the summer to ensure its successful maintenance. The Coordinator is paid \$13 an hour, and the funding comes from a school fundraiser coordinated by the school board and parents.

### **Community Involvement**

The Green Street Elementary School Garden has been a very positive contribution to the community. The garden is in a very visible space, and many community members have walked by and told Laura White that they have been inspired to plant or expand their own personal home gardens. In addition, Laura says the anecdotal evidence abounds about the value of the garden program to the students in the school. The students have been more eager to eat new and different foods, eat more locally, and encourage their parents to eat more healthfully and grow their own gardens.

### **School Involvement**

The garden is incorporated into the fourth grade curriculum, with science, math, and nutrition-based curriculum taught in weekly garden classes. Every Thursday, all the fourth grade students get 40-50 minutes of gardening time in small groups. Teachers of other grades have developed their own curricula independent of the garden, and therefore rarely develop lessons that bring students out into the garden. This has had the effect of making the garden program very special to the fourth grade, and something for younger classes to look forward to.

## **Lessons Learned**

- Hiring a part-time garden aid can be a great way to minimize the burden of school gardens on an individual teacher and ensure that school gardens are possible.
- Placing a garden in a visible space can expand the positive impact of the school garden beyond just the school to the entire community.

## Healthy City Youth Farm: Burlington, VT

### **Background**

The Healthy City Youth Farm is a unique program in Burlington operated under the auspices of Friends of Burlington Gardens. The farm is on the campus of one of the two middle schools in the district. In 2010, the Healthy City Youth Farm will be fully operational--currently it is still in the building stages.

### **Garden Specifics**

The middle school has an existing school garden of five to six raised beds on the school campus, but the Healthy City Youth farm is larger and more production-oriented. The school will build a fence around the farm, mostly just to create a physical boundary. The fence will not be locked after hours.

### **Community and School Involvement**

FBG will run a summer program where they hire 12 students for 8 weeks over the summer, for 20-25 hours per week. The program will be an intensive experience for at-risk youth in the community to learn about agriculture and food systems while doing paid work. During the fall and spring, the farm offers field trips to local schools in the area.

The farm is in the process of arranging a lease and legal agreement with the school, and they have not encountered any liability issues with adult volunteers working on the school campus. This may be because FBG has such strong rapport and respect in the community.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Building strong relationships within the community can help overcome potential legal barriers to innovative farm and garden proposals
- Involving at-risk youth in food systems can be a great way to provide active occupation of such youth's time. The potential for paid work can also be a way for youth to support themselves, building their sense of autonomy and self-respect.

## Palo Alto Community Gardens: Palo Alto, CA

### **Background**

There are a few Palo Alto Community Gardens, and the original Main Garden site began in 1970 as a model to demonstrate organic gardening. Over the years, there has been an increased demand for more sites, and additional garden locations have been created. The garden program currently resides with the Community Services Departments and is the responsibility of the Open Space and Parks Division. The majority of funding for the garden comes specifically from the city's budget.

#### Garden Specifics

All of Palo Alto's community gardens are all located on sites where they can tap into a city meter and create their own water source, since the city has the freedom to tap into its own irrigation system. Maintaining pathways can be a problem with the gardens, as part of the plot owners' responsibilities is to maintain a specific width around walkways. Some plot owners don't maintain their gardens very well and excessive growth of Bermuda grass can be a huge issue. At the Main Garden site, people are not allowed to have a drip system or timer set for sprinklers because everyone shares the same spigots.

The Main Garden site specifically takes up 60,000 square feet of land bordered by fruit trees and flowerbeds. Most individual plots are 20 ft by 20 ft and some can go up to 600 square feet. It currently costs members 35 cents per square foot to maintain a plot.

### **Community Involvement**

Administrative responsibilities for the gardens include working with the community volunteers, handling the waiting list, billing, dealing with any types of disputes among gardeners, and enforcing all garden rules. There is also a designated Garden Liaison for each specific garden who contacts people on the waiting list for availability of that specific site. The Liaison also evaluates if someone is gardening the proper way, and deals more directly with their specific garden than the administrative worker.

Part of each garden member's responsibility is to work at least two (of the four) annual work days which last about three hours each. If they are unable to attend the required work days they have to donate approximately \$20 to the garden which typically goes towards fencing, wheelbarrows, or other necessary equipment.

Theft can be an issue at the garden because some people don't understand that members of the garden sites are paying to garden there. Therefore fencing and other precautions are very important.

## **Lessons Learned**

- Dividing up tasks between administrative, maintenance, and volunteer work can help ensure a balanced and successful garden.
- Disputes are inevitable, whether related to theft or arguments about gardening techniques, and it is important to have set user rules and regulations that are enforced and anticipate any potential disputes.

## Rosa Parks Elementary School Garden: San Diego, CA

### **Background**

Rosa Parks Elementary School Garden is located in the low-income, diverse neighborhood of City Heights in San Diego. Eleven years ago the principal and teachers of the school envisioned turning a parking lot adjacent to the school into a garden to bring students and community members together to nurture community spirit and environmental stewardship and to create a more sustainable community. They applied for and were rewarded a \$30,000 grant from the San Diego Women's Foundation to create the garden. The grant covered the costs of tearing up the parking lot, building a chain-link fence and gates to secure the 92 ft x 22 ft plot, purchasing an aluminum cargo container (40 ft x 8.5 ft x 8 ft) to store supplies and materials, constructing twelve planting beds and creating an irrigation system, and purchasing planting soil, amendments and supplies for the garden. The garden is located adjacent to a park owned by the park system, and the water for the irrigation comes, with permission, from that park.

The garden currently operates on a fluctuating budget, funded by varying grants and donations. The budget has ranged from between \$800 and \$2000 a year.

### **School Involvement**

After the garden was created, it sat nearly unused for five years due to a loss of momentum post-construction on the part of the school administrators and teachers. Finally, about six years ago, Candice Goss got involved with the garden, creating a student garden club and a parents garden club.

The student garden club meets once a week in the garden. It is responsible for all of the planning, planting and harvesting that occurs at the site. Until recently, the students in the garden club have been allowed to take their harvested produce home. However, the school was recently invited to sell its produce at the City Heights farmers' market. Fearing a lack of consistent, quality harvest, the school decided not to participate in the municipal farmers' market, but will be opening its own school farmers' market in the summer of 2010. The School Farmers' Market will be a way for Rosa Parks to generate income while providing fresh, healthy and local produce directly for community members. The market will be at the school, and will occur once a month.

### **Community Involvement**

Another mission of the Rosa Parks School and Community Garden was to involve parents in the gardening and education about healthy and sustainable foods. Many parents of students at Rosa Parks Elementary School are on federally subsidized food stamps, and much of the food they eat is canned and processed. In order to combat unhealthy eating in the community, the school has developed a

parents garden club. The Parents Garden Club will also plant and harvest produce for the School Farmers' Market.

The parents club was initially a challenge to create, as many parents have been passive, and even apprehensive, of getting involved in the garden. Candice Goss attributes this lack of involvement to a failure to bridge the gap between faculty and staff at the school with the parents. This year, with the help of one parent heavily involved with community, Candice was able to mobilize a core of six parents to inaugurate the Parents Garden Club. The majority of the parents are Hispanic and come from agricultural backgrounds, and thus far they have had a lot to contribute to the garden. In order to harness this expertise, build pride in the community, and encourage more parents to get involved, the school is planning on creating a community cookbook with great ideas and recipes from the Parents Garden Club.

Rosa Parks Elementary School has also partnered with the San Diego Nutrition Network and Scripps Mercy Hospital to teach lessons and workshops about nutrition in the garden.

### **Lessons Learned**

- It is possible for a new garden to lose momentum; planning for this and ensuring continued support throughout the lifespan of the garden will be critical for its success.
- A school farmers' market is a great way to market produce, provide high-quality organic food to the community, raise funds, and build community support for the school garden.
- Starting a parent gardening club can be a way to engage parents in the school garden and build extra support for the students and the garden.
- A community recipe cookbook is a unique, innovative way to harness the knowledge of the community and garner excitement for the school or community garden.

## Salisbury Community School Garden: Salisbury, VT

### **Background**

The idea for the Salisbury Community School Garden was created around 5 years ago, when the state of Vermont offered a wellness grant for schools interested in assessing what ways their schools could make improvements to the health of their students. The school also applied for and received a grant from the state Department of Agriculture to improve the relationship between schools and local farmers, and to get fresher local foods into their schools. This grant was almost \$6000, which funded field trips to local farms, farmer guests speakers, and innovative relationships between local farms and the school. One example of a unique partnership with a local farmer was when the school partnered with a local farm to allow students to plant their own pumpkins in the spring and then return in the fall to harvest their pumpkins. These relationships built excitement in the school for gardening and understanding food production. As awareness of sustainable food grew at the school, Diane Benware, a teacher at the school, applied for a mini-grant from Friends of Burlington Gardens to construct the school garden.

### **Garden Specifics**

The Salisbury Community School sits on 34 acres, about 2/3 of which is a woodland with a natural lake. The school has a school garden composed of four raised beds, 4 ft x 20 ft each, and a blueberry patch. The garden runs on an operating budget of less than \$300 a year. The costs usually fund basic garden necessities—tools, compost, and plant starts (which are provided by a local farm). As community knowledge of the school garden builds, community members have volunteered to provide topsoil, build beds, and do other helpful tasks around the garden, thereby lowering costs. One of the volunteers is a Master Gardener, providing technical expertise and guidance.

### **Community Involvement**

The Salisbury Community School has considered adding extra beds to the garden for community members as a way to expand the garden to a more integrated community-school garden. The momentum for this is currently inadequate, in part because in their small community people either already have their own gardens or they are uninterested in creating a garden, so the target audience for an integrated community-school garden is quite small.

### **School Involvement**

On Friday afternoons, students have “Friday Explorations”, or opportunities to engage in hands-on multi-age alternative learning. Garden class is one of the offered Friday Explorations, with usually 15-20 students. The food harvested from

the garden is provided to the school Nutrition Coordinator, who integrates it into school meals.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Partnerships with local farmers can build support and excitement for local, sustainable food and school and community gardens.
- Building awareness for your garden locally can lead to donations, volunteers, and extra support from community members.

## Sunnyvale Community Garden: Sunnyvale, CA

### **Background**

The Sunnyvale Community Garden, known as Charles Street Gardens, was started by an initial ~\$20,000 grant from Satterberg Foundation, a family foundation with a family member who is an avid gardener and resident of Sunnyvale. The initial grant covered contracted work such as removing trees and tilling land with a tractor; most of garden infrastructure was built by volunteers. The garden operates on city-owned property. The managing non-profit, Sustainable Community Gardens (SCG), negotiates a five year lease agreement with the option for either party to terminate early with 180 days notice in order to keep the gardens on the city property. This lease is negotiated between managing SCG and the Director of Parks and Recreation; it is then sent to City Council for approval.

SCG has insurance, but all members, volunteers, and visitors are required to sign a release of liability waiver to work, or even volunteer for one day, at the gardens.

### **Garden Specifics**

The Charles Street Gardens host 92 garden beds on one acre of land near City Hall and Public Library. The garden is in very high demand, and they operate a waiting list by seniority. Any gardener must take a short “Organic Gardening 101” course in order to have a plot in the garden.

While water already existed on the 1 acre plot, some work was required to connect to the main line and test the quality of the water. This work was donated by the city. The gardeners pay for the water bill and any infrastructure and maintenance costs through their membership fees, which are \$50 per year, and gardeners must pay for annual water backflow tests or for any repairs to the water system if those are required to water system. Monetarily the garden is pretty self-sustaining now, through the collection of membership fees and the minimal costs of the garden.

### **Community Involvement**

Although garden is managed by non-profit, it is entirely volunteer run. Garden Manager (in charge of on the ground management and upkeep) and Membership Manager (the general contact point person who manages the waiting list, and handles paperwork and administrative things) are the two main volunteers. The garden has little regular contact with the City officials because gardeners manage the day-to-day operations themselves. This has been a challenging model for the garden because a lot is required of the volunteers. The managing volunteers are all voluntarily unemployed (due to individual wealth or other reasons), and

would probably not be able to do their jobs as adequately if they were in fact employed full time.

The parent non-profit organization, SCG, could provide potential leadership for group of community members interested in starting a garden in Redwood City. They have expertise in lease negotiation and technical needs of garden. There are also potential opportunities for joint applications for larger grants, with the opportunity to use SCG as possible umbrella non-profit.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Waiver forms can help to minimize liability issues at the garden.
- SCG can be a potential partner for budding gardeners in Redwood City. Get in touch!

## Wheeler School Community Garden: Seekonk, MA

### **Background**

The Wheeler School is an independent day school located in Providence, Rhode Island. Its current school community garden began about a year ago when Wheeler modern languages teacher Kelly Foss proposed an innovative idea for her upcoming sabbatical. During her year off, she wanted to devote her time to starting a school garden that could be implemented into other aspects of school life and maintained even after she returned to teaching.

While Kelly had some previous personal gardening experience, she had never been involved in any kind of communal or group garden program. In figuring out how to get her project started, she did Internet research of other community and school gardens around the country, and also discovered school gardens close by. Kelly visited a few of these locations and met with the people who had started their own projects.

In order to receive funding that the school could not provide, Kelly applied for and received one of the available grants from Project Orange Thumb. It was difficult for Kelly to apply for the grant because she had no experience with starting or contributing to any kind of communal garden, and the grant required specific details of a garden plan that was presumably already in place. The grant was extremely key in the process of starting the garden because of her discouragement with the lack of school funds, and the way the grant provided the necessary resources for the garden's beginnings.

After the first stages of starting the garden were complete, Kelly applied for more funding, through the Gardenburger Community Garden Grants. This application was much less difficult for Kelly because she already had a well-laid out plan for what the garden was so far and what it could become. For the application, Kelly had specific ideas in mind for what she wanted the funding for, including fencing, lumber for raised bed, and grow lights.

### **Garden Specifics**

The Wheeler School's main campus is in Rhode Island situated on a one-block urban campus. However, the school's athletic facilities, and now the garden, can be found on the Wheeler's second campus nicknamed "the farm." The farm is in Seekonk, Massachusetts on the other side of the Providence Harbor, and proved to be the best location for the new garden.

A difficulty Kelly has found in implementing the garden has been dealing with the maintenance staff. Because they are not on the school's actual campus, they felt that all of the initial work of the garden would fall and then stay on them. Kelly

was able to eventually gain their trust and respect but had to face an unforeseen difficulty of actually taking care of the garden property itself.

### **School Involvement**

While there continues to be more and more student, parent, faculty, and administration involvement, Kelly still holds the primary responsibilities for the garden. Her goal is to have a team of approximately three other staff members who all equally oversee the garden and its operations.

The garden serves three purposes, all for the benefit of the school and its own small community. These purposes include outdoor classroom space for hands-on learning, service learning for their “Seed to Plate” project, and community garden space for faculty, staff members, and their families. The hands-on learning aspect is primarily for second graders, when they plant crops in the spring, which the next year’s second graders harvest, and then plant additional crops the following spring, and so on. Teachers also use specific groups of plants, such as the Three Sisters Native American crops (corns, beans, and squash) that they can tie into different classroom lessons.

The Wheeler Seed to Plate program serves the purpose of growing vegetables for distribution to those in need through the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Wheeler has a service-learning requirement in its curriculum that all upperclassmen have to complete. Because of the collaboration with the food bank, Kelly was able to convince the service-learning administrator that students should receive credit for working with her in the garden.

While the garden is not a community garden within the Seekonk or Providence areas, it is a community garden in the sense that it serves the entire community of Wheeler school. Families of any faculty members, school staff, or students are able to have their own area of the garden for cultivation. Last spring, five families signed up and each was allotted a four by twelve foot plot of land where they could plan whatever they wanted. Kelly wants to improve this aspect of the garden program to include some sort of contract for whoever requests a garden plot, requiring tenants to be individually responsible for the garden for approximately one week in the summer in order to distribute work more evenly.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Commitment from all those involved with the garden will be necessary for future success.
- Delegating responsibilities to a more formal team of people who can equally oversee all aspects of the garden can ensure that the garden is managed and maintained properly.

- Building trust and respect with maintenance staff is important in the initial stages of planning in order to have a mutual understanding and agreement of what work will be involved.

From: Community and School Gardens Working Group  
To: Beth Ross, Redwood City Climate Action Plan  
Community Planning Workshop  
Fall Quarter 2009

## **INTERN TASKS**

### Community Garden Network (coordination & health):

- Manage 'Where to Grow?' page: Update map as interest is expressed i.e. put community members 'on the map' [see flowchart 'Step 6']
  - Vacant plots to active plots (yellow to red marker)
  - Unknown to known plot (placement of red marker)
- Manage community garden blog/forum [see flowchart 'Step 6']
  - Grant access to interested community gardeners
  - Organize pages, templates, etc.
- Manage contacts databases:
  - When they email in, grant access to prospective community gardeners (to 'Interested Neighbors' contact list) .
  - Update 'City Contacts' and 'Local Groups / Non-profits' as new contacts appear.
- Identify community member(s) to manage blog/forum, 'Where to Grow?' page, and contacts databases - 'passing on the torch'.
- Develop "tiered approach" for engagement in school and community gardens
  - Assess size of plots + indicate in pop-up boxes ('Where to Grow?' page)

### Local Partnerships:

- Identify (and engage) local garden supply stores - kindle partnership
  - Secure lower/bulk prices for community gardens (for things like soil, fencing, etc)
  - Place a marker on 'Where to grow?' map for these partner stores
- Engage local boy-scout + girl-scout groups
  - Partner with + help local community gardens (build fences\*, prepare soil, etc)
  - Update information in contacts database (point people, etc)
- Identify (and engage) other local community groups / non-profits
  - Update information in contacts database (point people, resource/service provided, etc)

### Other:

- Redistribute hard copy of toolkit as updates are made
- Help potential garden planners
- Add logo to documentation from all groups (including ours) and format and put it all together nicely
- Create one-page brief about community gardens in RWC (summarizing Community Garden group's literature).



# Palo Alto Community Garden Operations Manual

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## **I Introduction**

The city of Palo Alto provides space for Palo Alto residents to enjoy organic gardening. The goal of this manual is to provide the framework and operating procedures for this system.

The Community Garden Program is a City led program, but the success of the program depends on the energy, enthusiasm and competence of the garden volunteers. Please note that one person may fulfill more than one of the roles outlined below.

## **II City's Role**

One person on City Staff will be designated as the Community Garden Coordinator and will be the City contact for the Community Garden Program. A Community Garden Volunteer Liaison is available for each community garden.

The City will provide the following services:

1. Maintenance and repair of the underground water system. This will be provided by the Parks and Golf Division.
2. Billing information will be gathered by the Community Garden Coordinator and submitted to the Finance Department for processing and mailing.
3. The City is responsible for the purchase of supplies for maintenance of the above referenced water system.
4. Point of access for Palo Alto residents to be added to the waiting list.
5. The Community Garden Volunteer Liaison will be the Community Garden Coordinator's point of contact for other City services such as: wood chips and garbage services.

## **III City Services Not Provided**

1. The removal of garbage and debris at any of the garden areas. Gardeners are responsible for keeping the gardens and surrounding areas clean. A dumpster is provided at the main garden and is emptied on Monday and Friday.
2. Building and maintenance of kiosks and other structures.

## **IV Community Gardener Coordinator Role**

1. The Community Garden Coordinator will monitor the Community Garden waiting list, assign garden plots, keep track of plot occupation in each of the garden areas, and act as mediator in Community Garden disputes that cannot be resolved by the Community Garden Volunteer Liaison.

2. The Community Garden Coordinator will track the waiting list and garden plot assignments on both a computerized system and on maps.
3. The Community Garden Coordinator will assign a Community Garden Volunteer Liaison to each of the Community Gardens (Main, Eleanor, Johnson and Palo Alto). For information on selection of the Community Garden Volunteer Liaison, see Selection of Community Garden Volunteer Liaison below.

## **V Community Garden Volunteer Liaison Role**

1. Work with the Community Garden Coordinator to keep the garden plot list current and notify the Community Garden Coordinator of any changes within the garden.
2. Contact Community Garden Coordinator regarding garden plots as soon as they become available. Plots will only be filled from the waiting list. See Filling Available Garden Plots section for more details.
3. Be the source of contact between the gardeners and the Community Garden Coordinator.
4. Assist in resolving disputes between gardeners. Disputes that are not resolved in this manner may be referred to the Community Garden Coordinator for resolution.
5. Encourage gardeners to follow City rules regarding water use.
6. Maintain the above ground water system. Requests for parts will be submitted to the Community Garden Coordinator.
7. Make routine patrols of the Community Gardens to monitor gardeners' activities, watch for improper water use, and for security purposes.
8. Provide access to gardens on a reasonable basis and following City policy, for vehicles to be brought in (if applicable).
9. Coordinate workdays as part of the gardeners agreement. Garden Coordinator will provide plot lists, compost bin, and mulch.

## **VI Waiting List**

1. The waiting list will be the sole source of entry into the gardens. EVERYONE who is interested in getting a plot in the gardens must go through the waiting list and the garden plots will be allocated strictly on a first come, first served basis. There will be no allowances for political connections, special groups, or other factors.
2. Citizens wishing to be put on the waiting list will call the Community Garden Coordinator who will add the following information to the waiting list:
  - Full name of applicant.

- Resident address in Palo Alto.
  - Mailing address.
  - Day and evening phone number.
  - Date of acceptance onto the waiting list (date received).
  - The desired garden areas of interest.
3. The wait for a garden plot averages 2-5 years. For this reason, the waiting list will be closed when it reaches 25 names. As plots are assigned, the list will be “opened” for additions.

#### **A. Waiting List Procedure**

1. Potential gardeners call the published number and give their information to the Community Garden Coordinator or leave a message on voicemail. The Community Garden Coordinator will add the applicant to the waiting list.
2. The Community Garden Coordinator maintains the information on the computerized database.
3. When notified of a garden plot availability, the Community Garden Coordinator will contact someone who has requested a smaller or larger plot in that particular garden, or the next person on the waiting list. **Please note:** a person can refuse a plot and retain their place on the list, **one time only**. If a person refuses the offer of a plot a second time, they will be removed from the waiting list. The person can request to be added to the waiting list again, but will be added to the end of the list.
4. The Community Garden Coordinator arranges for the person to view the available plot through a joint meeting at the garden or through the Community Garden Volunteer Liaison. The person may accept or decline the plot. If the plot is accepted, the person must meet with the Community Garden Coordinator to sign the paperwork. After paperwork is complete, the Community Garden Coordinator assigns the person a plot.
5. The Community Garden Coordinator removes the name from the waiting list and notes the date, garden area and plot number assigned. If the plot is accepted as an “exchange” the correct paperwork is completed and the required information in the files.

#### **B. Dropping Applicants from the List**

1. A list of those who have been dropped from the waiting list will be kept. This will include the following information:
  - Full name of applicant.
  - Last known residence and mailing address.
  - Last known day and evening phone numbers.

- Date of original acceptance onto the waiting list.
  - Date of removal from the waiting list.
  - Reason for being dropped from the list.
  - Record of steps taken to contact applicant, including dates of contact.
2. Reasons why someone would be removed from the list include: the person is assigned a plot, we are unable to contact the person, the person moves out of Palo Alto, or the person has previously refused the offered locations.

### **C. Plot List Maintenance**

1. The Community Garden Coordinator will keep an up-to-date list of who occupies what plot in each of the garden areas. This information will be in a database format whenever possible, and should include the following information:
- a. Full name of gardener.
  - b. Plot number and square footage.
  - c. Residence address in Palo Alto.
  - d. Mailing address.
  - e. Day and evening phone numbers
  - f. Date of plot assignment

## **VII Selection of Community Garden Volunteer Liaison**

1. The success of the Community Garden Program rests on the energy, enthusiasm and competence of the volunteers who step forward to take a leadership role. In order to ensure the highest possible standards, the following selection procedures apply:
- A. Positions will be open to all current community gardeners.
  - B. Applicants must demonstrate the necessary skills and competence appropriate for the position (i.e., skills in maintenance, and dealing with people).
3. The Community Garden Coordinator will make the final choice, based on the above factors.
4. Note that one person may serve more than one role; even if there are other applicants for the position. The choice will be based on the City's perception of what is in the best interest of the garden program as a whole.

## **VIII Filling Available Garden Plots**

1. Available garden plots will be filled from the waiting list on a strictly first come, first served basis. As a plot becomes available, the Community Garden Coordinator will contact the person and arrange for a meeting with the Community Garden

Coordinator or the Community Garden Volunteer Liaison to meet the potential gardener at the plot. At the meeting, the following information will be explained:

- A. The garden rules.
  - B. The community led nature of the program (including any planned work days, etc.)
  - C. The billing arrangements.
  - D. The best method of contacting the Community Garden Coordinator and Community Garden Volunteer Liaison.
  - E. The need to conserve water.
2. With acceptance of the garden plot, the potential gardener will meet with the Community Garden Coordinator to complete the following forms:
- Garden License Agreement
  - Billing Form
  - Garden rules and Guidelines (no signature required).

**A. Determining the Amount of the Bill**

1. Billing is done on a calendar year basis. To determine the amount of the bill:
  - a. Determine which quarter you are in:  
  
1<sup>st</sup> quarter = January – March  
2<sup>nd</sup> quarter = April – June  
3<sup>rd</sup> quarter = July – September  
4<sup>th</sup> quarter = October - December
2. If the date of plot assignment is within the first 44 days of the quarter, then charge them for the current quarter, plus the remaining quarter(s). Following is a list of the 44<sup>th</sup> day of each quarter:  
  
1<sup>st</sup> quarter = February 13<sup>th</sup>  
2<sup>nd</sup> quarter = May 15<sup>th</sup>  
3<sup>rd</sup> quarter = August 14<sup>th</sup>  
4<sup>th</sup> quarter = November 14<sup>th</sup>
3. If the date of the plot assignment is past the 44<sup>th</sup> day of the current quarter, then only charge them for the remaining quarter(s).
4. Find the size of the plot from the plot list.
5. Calculate the cost of their plot using the following:

- A. \$.32 x square footage of the plot (length x width).
- B. Divide the total by four.
- C. Multiply this figure by the number of quarters to be charged.
- D. If the gardener is 62 years of age or older, multiply the total by .75 (to allow for the 25% discount).
- E. Fill in the information requested in the "Garden Coordinators Use Only" box on the Billing Agreement.
- F. Check that they have filled out the other parts of the Billing Agreement and signed the form.

**B. Distribution of Forms**

- 1. Copies of the Garden License Agreement are signed by the gardener and the Superintendent of Recreation or representative. The Garden Agreement is then distributed as follows:
  - White copy      File in Community Garden Coordinator's file
  - Yellow copy     Given to gardener
  - Pink copy        Revenue Collections

**IX Refunds**

- 1. Refunds will be given according to the terms stated on the billing statement.

**X Number of Plots per Gardener**

- 1. Because of the length of the waiting list, gardeners may only occupy one garden plot. An exception may be made in unusual circumstances (i.e, one plot is extremely small). This decision must be approved by the Community Garden Coordinator. Gardeners who are found to have "taken over" other plots will be asked to vacate that plot and may be removed from the system completely.
- 2. Gardeners may not be put on the waiting list for a second plot.

**XI Plot Changes**

- 1. No garden plot is to be traded, divided, shared, sub-leased, or otherwise changed from the original plot assigned and licensed to the signatory gardener. If a smaller or larger plot is desired, contact the Community Garden Coordinator.
- 2. Gardeners may request to exchange plots, either with another gardener or when a plot becomes available. Such exchanges will be made through the Community Garden Coordinator. A new garden agreement must be completed for the plot exchange. Each gardener will have to fill out a new agreement and the billing for the plot will be done with the next billing cycle. The gardeners obtaining a new plot must give up their old plot.

## **XII Removal of Gardeners**

1. The objective of the Community Garden Program is to give as many people as possible the opportunity to garden. Therefore, certain rules have been instituted and laid out in the Community Garden Agreement and appended Garden User Rules. This Agreement is signed by each gardener and the gardener's signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and rules of the Community Garden Program. The Community Garden Agreement is a **legally** binding contract and gardeners are bound by the terms of this Agreement and the appended Rules.
2. Gardeners who fail to pay the garden lease fees on a prompt basis will be removed from the program.
3. Gardeners who do not adequately use their plots will first be counseled by the Garden Liaison or a committee of concerned gardeners for the area. If the gardener continues not to adequately use their plot, the case will be reviewed by the Community Garden Coordinator and a warning letter will be issued. In the event that this pattern continues, no further warnings will be issued. The gardener's lease be revoked and the plot given to the next person on the waiting list.
4. Gardeners who repeatedly violate the Garden User Rules will be removed after verbal and a written warnings have been issued and documented. This action is subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Recreation.

## **XII Attachments**

- Palo Alto Community Garden License Agreement
- Palo Alto Community Garden Billing Agreement
- Palo Alto Community Garden User Rules & Fee Schedule



## Palo Alto Community Garden User Rules

1. The Palo Alto Community Garden Program constitutes a completely organic gardening project. Only organic materials are to be used for borders, planter boxes, weed or pest control, and fertilization of the garden plots. **No non-organic pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers, or chemically treated wood products are to be used in any garden site.** Violation of this rule will be cause for termination the Palo Alto Community Garden License Agreement and participation in the garden program.
2. The City of Palo Alto Parks and Golf Division is responsible for all irrigation systems, weed and/or pest control, and maintenance of the perimeter on all garden sites. **Gardeners are not allowed to contract for, or perform, any type of electrical or irrigation work without the written permission of the Garden Coordinator.**
3. The garden plot and its maintenance is the responsibility of the gardener. Plots and walkways shall be kept free of weeds, debris and trash year-round. Compost can be purchased and free compost is available at the recycling center during compost giveaway days. Any gardener composting is restricted to the confines of their assigned plot. The entire garden plot must be cultivated and contain an average planting density when it is not being mulched. A chair or small bench is acceptable for use as a resting place, but **no patio sets, furniture, tables, bar-b-ques, or other furnishings are allowed.**
4. Gardeners are to keep one-half of the width of all the walkways around their garden plot free of weeds and vegetation. Plants that overgrow and block the walkway are to be trimmed back. Wood chips are located at each garden site to help maintain the integrity of the walkways. **All plot walkways are to be mulched using wood chips, seed hulls, or dried leaves for garden resident safety and to help control vegetation growth.**
5. Each community garden site is maintained by the resident gardeners and all gardeners are expected to help on scheduled work days. The Community Garden Volunteer Liaison is responsible for scheduling garden work days. The number of work days per year will vary according to size of the garden and the amount of maintenance required to keep the garden site well groomed. Gardeners who consistently avoid doing their share of community garden work are subject to verbal or written warning, and possible loss of the garden plot.
6. Garden plots are confined to the assigned locations and a gardener may occupy only one garden plot. No person may use a vacant plot or other area in the gardens without the prior written approval from the Community Garden Coordinator. The Garden Coordinator may make exceptions in unusual circumstances (i.e., extremely small plot or sunlight has deteriorated due to shade trees). No garden plot shall be traded, divided, shared, sub-leased, or otherwise changed from the original plot assigned and licensed to the signatory gardener. If any change is desired, contact the Community Garden Coordinator. All requests will be reviewed and decided on an individual basis. An exchange of plots is an option, but must be approved by the Community Garden Coordinator before any exchange occurs.
7. Only vegetables, flowers, berries and herbs may be grown in the plots and no produce from the plot shall be used for commercial profit. Tall plants, such as corn, berries and tall vines should be located so that they do not produce shade on adjacent plots, and do not extend into pathways. Permanent plants (i.e., roses) are not to be over 5' in height. Fruit trees and bushes are not permitted because of their invasive root systems and shading potential. Berry bushes are to be maintained in 2' wide paths with 18" of cleared pathway between each 2' section of berries. Weeds and debris are to be cleared from the base of the berries. Berries are to be kept in the gardener's plot and not allowed to droop over into main pathways or other garden plots.
8. In the interest of **water conservation**, gardeners are **required** to remain in the vicinity of their plots while watering and are requested to turn off faucets at unattended plots.
9. Automatic watering systems prevent other gardeners from accessing the community water supply and contribute to low water pressure problems at some sites. Therefore, **automatic watering systems are not permitted** unless each plot in the garden has a designated water faucet. Automatic watering systems (drip systems preferred) will be allowed in some instances upon request and only by the permission of the Community Garden Coordinator. The approved systems must be checked on a weekly basis. Any system found leaking will be removed. Please contact the Garden Coordinator for approval before installing any type of watering system.
10. Plot holders are expected to conduct themselves in a safe, respectful and courteous manner toward other garden residents. Any gardener taking produce from a plot other than his/her own, will be terminated from the garden program and their license to garden revoked immediately. Garden conflicts should be taken to the Garden Liaison for resolution. In the event that the Garden Liaison cannot resolve the issue, the problem is to be taken to the City's Garden Coordinator for resolution. Non-compliance with this rule can subject the offending gardener to immediate dismissal from the garden program.
11. **Dogs are not allowed** inside any Community Garden site, either on or off a leash. Dispensation may be granted in special cases (i.e., handicapped, blind, etc.). Please contact the Community Garden Coordinator to request dispensation consideration.

12. A \$100.00 cleaning deposit fee is required at the time of the license agreement signing for the garden plot. Upon termination, if the Garden Coordinator determines that the garden plot is in acceptable condition for new tenent (refer to attached picture), this deposit will be returned 4-6 weeks after the termination of the license agreement. In the event the plot is abandoned, the deposit fee will be used to cover costs incurred for having the plot cleared and mulched for the next tenent.
13. The yearly garden fee is **35 cents per square foot**. Any gardener who is 62 years of age or older, is eligible to receive a 25% discount. The gardener is responsible for informing the Community Garden Coordinator that he or she is eligible to receive the discount and must provide proof of age. Low-income residents can apply for a fee reduction through the Fee Reduction Program. Applications are available at Lucie Stern Community Center or in the Enjoy! Catalog.
14. The amount of the fee associated with the right to cultivate any plot will be calculated by quarter on a calendar year basis. If a garden plot is assigned during the year, payment will be made for the remaining quarters and the remaining initial quarter, if the plot is assigned during the first 44 days of the quarter. If the plot is assigned after the first 44 days of the quarter, only the remaining quarters in the calendar year will be charged.
15. Invoices for the current year's fees will be mailed in January. Fees are due within 30 days of receiving the invoice. Bills will be considered past due 60 days after the invoice date and a late fee of \$10.00 (ten dollars) will be charged. Gardeners who fail to pay are subject to revocation of their license to garden.
16. In the event the License Agreement to cultivate a plot is terminated, the Community Garden Coordinator is to be contacted in writing by the gardener and a refund will be issued for the remaining quarter(s) of the calendar year. No refunds will be given for a part of a quarter (3 months) and no refunds of less than \$10.00 (ten dollars) will be issued. **In the event of termination of the license agreement (even if no refund is made) the garden plot will be available for reassignment to the next applicant on the waiting list.**
14. Fees may be paid in person at Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road Palo Alto. Fees can also be mailed to: City of Palo Alto Open Space and Parks Division, Community Garden Program, Palo Alto, CA 94303 Attention Catherine Bourquin.

**Violation of any Community Garden Rule will subject the gardener to a verbal or written warning and/or possible revocation of his/her license to use a garden plot.** If sufficient improvement is not demonstrated on an on-going basis, and the license to garden the plot will be revoked. The plot will be issued to the next person on the waiting list. Any items remaining in the plot will be given to the person taking the plot.

The good faith judgment of the Community Garden Coordinator will be sufficient cause for enforcement of the Community Garden Rules, including revocation of the license to garden.



# Palo Alto Community Garden Billing Agreement

Open Space and Parks Division  
Community Garden Program  
3201 East Bayshore Road  
Palo Alto, CA 94303  
650-496-5980

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Day: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Evening: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Proof of residency:  Yes  No  
Senior Discount:  Yes  No  
Proof of age received:  Yes  No  
  
Fee Reduction\*:  Yes  No

\*Contact Community Services Department – Administration  
for eligibility requirements at 1305 Middlefield Road  
(650)463-4952 or (650)463-4900

<u>Garden Coordinator's Use Only</u>	
Garden Location:	_____
Section:	_____ Plot No. _____
Size	_____ x _____ ft = _____ sq. ft.
Assigned by:	_____
	Coordinator/Garden Liaison
Date:	_____ Quarter: <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4
Customer Number:	_____
	(assigned by Class system)
Annual Cost:	\$ _____
Cost per Quarter(s)	\$ _____ x _____ sq. ft
Minus Discount if applicable:	\$ _____
\$100 Refundable Deposit Received:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If no, why:	_____
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:	\$ _____
	(Include deposit)

This bill is for the current calendar year \_\_\_\_\_. I understand the following billing system for the Community Gardens.

- The cost of the plot will be calculated on a yearly basis, divided into quarters (4 a year). After the first initial payment, I will be invoiced annually due by the end of January of that calendar year. If I obtain a plot during the year, I will pay for the remaining quarters and the remaining of the initial quarter, if it is assigned to me during the first 44 days of the quarter. If it is assigned in the later 44 days of the quarter, I will only pay for the remaining quarters left in the year.
- I will pay \_\_\_\_\_ cents per square foot for my garden plot and a \$100 refundable deposit\*. If I am 62 years of age or older (proof required), I will receive a 25% senior discount for my garden plot.  
\* To be refunded deposit, plot must be in the condition it was received, (no weeds or personal property)
- Should I wish to give up my plot, I will contact the Community Garden Coordinator in writing. A refund will be issued for the remaining quarters of the calendar year and any applicable deposit (see item 2). **No refunds** will be given for a partial quarter, or if the amount is less than \$10.00.
- After receipt of such notice in item 3, I understand the plot is available to be reassigned by the Community Garden Coordinator.
- The payment and agreement can be sent to: **City of Palo Alto, Open Space and Parks Division, Attention: Community Garden Coordinator, 3201 East Bayshore Road,, Palo Alto, CA 94303, or paid in person at Lucie**

***Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto.***

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# **Memorandum of Understanding**

## **Agreement for use of garden space at Hunt Middle School**

### **Burlington School District** **Friends of Burlington Gardens**

This agreement between the Burlington School District (BSD) and Friends of Burlington Gardens (FBG) details the arrangement for use of a 1/4 acre site behind Hunt Middle School, between the existing school gardens and the track. This agreement permits FBG to establish, cultivate, and maintain a production garden at the site known as the Healthy City Youth Farm. As a community partner, FBG will provide hands-on educational programming at the Youth Farm for the benefit of Burlington School District students.

**I. Term:** This agreement shall be for a trial period of April 1, 2009 to November 30, 2009, after which both parties agree to meet to evaluate this agreement and upon mutual consent renew this agreement for a two-year period.

**II. Responsibilities of Burlington School District:** BSD agrees as an in-kind contribution to:

- A. Authorize FBG to establish and maintain the 1/4 acre site;
- B. Allow FBG to use water from the spigot installed at the rear of the building;
- C. Allow FBG to use the Family and Consumer Science classroom for food preparation and group instruction during the Youth Farm summer program from June 15-August 20;
- D. Allow program participants and staff to use bathrooms at Hunt;
- E. Maintain open communication and provide feedback as needed to FBG staff; and,
- F. Provide FBG staff with school district policies applicable to the use of the site and interactions with district students and staff.

**III. Responsibilities of Friends of Burlington Gardens:** FBG agrees to:

- A. Establish and cultivate the 1/4 acre Healthy City Youth Farm;
- B. Raise funds necessary to provide educational programming at the site;
- C. Obtain approval from the Burlington School District and any applicable city permits prior to installing signage, fencing, tool storage, or related site infrastructure;
- D. Maintain the production garden as a safe, attractive, and conducive space for education by keeping it free of debris and hazards;
- E. Supervise activities within the production garden including field trips, community work days, and school and summer programming;
- F. Clean up the production garden after the growing season;
- G. Keep the Family and Consumer Science classroom clean and in working order;
- H. Follow applicable Burlington School District policies when interacting with students and staff; and,
- I. Maintain open communication with Hunt Principal Linda Carroll, Burlington Superintendent of Schools Jeanne Collins, and Director of the New North End Youth Center Kathy Olwell.

**IV. Additional Responsibilities and Terms of the Agreement**

- A. Upon the end of this agreement, Friends of Burlington Gardens will return the property to its original condition including removing of any raised beds, stones or other structural improvements unless otherwise agreed upon, and restoring the grass surface.
- B. Friends of Burlington Gardens shall indemnify and hold the Burlington School District, its Trustees and employees harmless from any claim by any person, for any loss, injury or damage, resulting from any activity set out in this agreement or any act or omission by FBG or any of its employees or agents.

C. Friends of Burlington Gardens shall carry liability insurance to cover its use and programming at the site.

**This agreement for the creation of a 1/4 acre Healthy City Youth Farm at Hunt Middle School is accepted, agreed, and approved.**

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Linda Carroll  
Principal

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Date

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Jeanne Collins  
Superintendent of Schools

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Date

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Jenn McGowan, Program Director  
Friends of Burlington Gardens

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Date

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Jim Flint, Executive Director  
Friends of Burlington Gardens

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Date

DRAFT