

Using Urban Agriculture to Promote Neighborhood Stabilization and Community Development

Sponsored by:
U.S. EPA Regions 5 & 7
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Great Lakes Environmental Planning

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Using Urban Agriculture to Promote Neighborhood Stabilization and Community Development

Agenda

Intro: Urban Agriculture & Community Gardens as Elements of Community Development (*Jim Van der Kloot, EPA & Eugene Goldfarb, Great Lakes Environmental Partners*)

Sustainable Urban Agriculture:
Best Growing Practices (*Patsy Benveniste & Angie Mason, Chicago Botanic Garden*)

Sustainable Urban Agriculture: Uplifting Communities, Creating Opportunities in the City of Lawrence, MA (*Art McCabe, City of Lawrence*)

Q&A with HUD (*Ted Massey & John Swanson*), USDA (*Alan Shannon*), EPA (*Jim Van der Kloot*)

Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

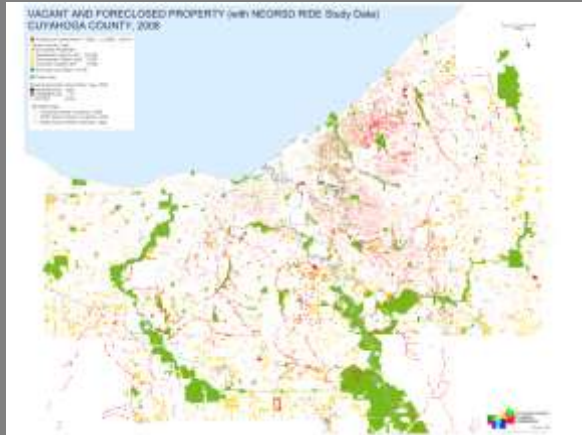


As elements of
Community Development



The Challenges:

- Widespread abandonment
- Economic Downturn
- Very poor market for Real Estate



Numbers of vacant properties

Pittsburgh - 15,000

Buffalo - 40,000

St Louis - 40,000+

Indianapolis - 22,000

Philadelphia -30,000+

Baltimore - 42,000

Detroit - 90,000

Cleveland - 20,000

Required to Think Differently!

Vacant lots aren't harmless...

They actively drag a neighborhood down:

- Illegal dumping
- Eyesores
- Crime
- Lowers surrounding area property values



Helping to Stabilize Neighborhoods

Community Greening can make neighborhoods more livable

- Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens
- Green Infrastructure (the subject of our next webinar)



This is an emerging issue

- Many communities are just getting started with Community Gardens
- Others have many years of experience
- Federal role is developing



Our goals in this webinar:

Introduce people and programs from two separate fields to each other

- Community Gardening
- Community Development

Kick off a dialog on Governmental roles

- Feds, State, Local Government



Sustainable Urban Agriculture: Best Growing Practices

Patsy Benveniste

Vice President of Community Education Programs

Angela Mason

Director of Community Gardening



Urban Agriculture: Common Themes Past and Present

- Local self sufficiency
- Reduced resource use
- Citizen health & welfare
- Improved morale

70 Years Ago

By USDA estimate, 20,000,000 Victory Gardens nationwide produced 40%+ of produce consumed nationally



- In multi-family city neighborhoods



- On the urban-suburban fringe

- In dense, inner city neighborhoods



Urban Agriculture in 2010: What it Means



- Economic Development
- Green jobs training
- Food security and health

- Carbon Sequestration
- Community Improvement



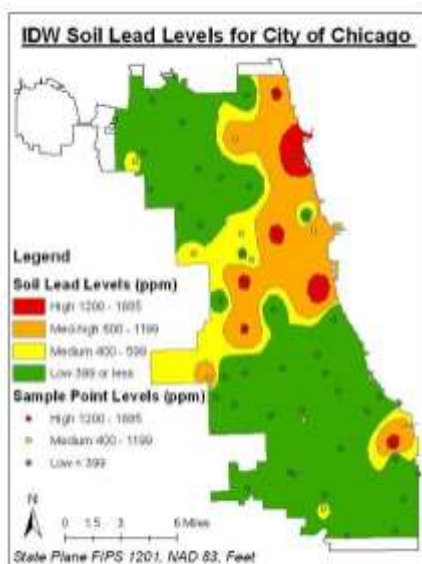
Urban Agriculture Players and Partners in 2010 and Beyond

- US Department of Agriculture
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Health and Human Services
- State agencies and county government
- Municipalities, e.g., city departments of planning, park districts
- For profit businesses and restaurants
- Non-profit environmental organizations, human service organizations, colleges and universities, faith based institutions

Sustainable Urban Agriculture in 2010

- Soil Contamination
- Safe Growing Methods
- Composting
- Propagation Methods
- Cover Cropping
- Season Extension
- Companion Planting
- Post-harvest Handling

Soil Contamination



Heavy metals and other contaminants are typical soil problems in densely populated urban areas.

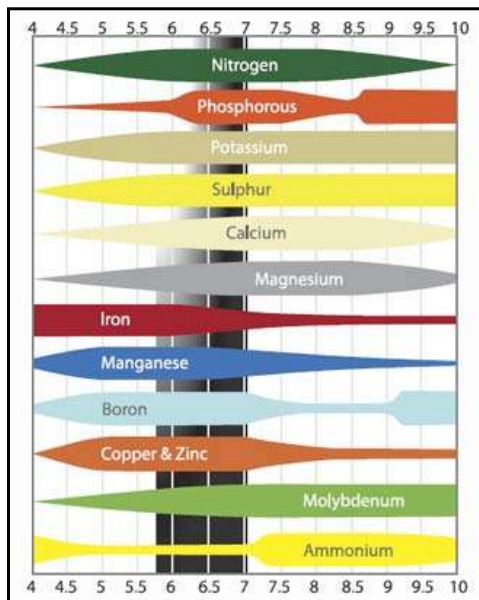
Urban growers should know their site's history and, if indicated, get a professional soil analysis

Map from www.urbanleadpoisoning.com

Soil Analysis



- Collect a soil sample and send for analysis
 - <http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/soil-lab.html>
 - Great resource for alternative soil analysis including compost analysis
 - <http://www.algreatlakes.com/>
 - http://www.algreatlakes.com/pdf/factsheets/ALGLFS02_Lead_in_Soil.pdf
 - County Extension Services will often have a place to send soil samples.



Nutrient Uptake

- Nutrient uptake varies depending on soil pH.
 - Soil pH determines what nutrients are available to the plant. Most plants like to grow in a soil at 6.5 pH.

Metal Uptake

Crop	Days	IW conc. (mg L ⁻¹)	Av crop Cd conc. (mg kg ⁻¹ dry wt.)	IW conc. (mg L ⁻¹)	Av crop Pb conc. (mg kg ⁻¹ dry wt.)
Cabbage	40	0.00	0.249 (0.125)*	0	0.601 (0.095)*
		0.05	0.542 (0.284)*	30	11.76 (3.98)*
		0.10	0.961 (0.215)*	50	15.22 (5.82)*
	70	0.00	0.093 (0.024)*	0	0.183 (0.015)*
		0.05	0.389 (0.067)*	30	0.367 (0.093)*
		0.10	0.592 (0.142)*	50	0.499 (0.082)*
	100	0.00	0.344 (0.185)*	0	0.216 (0.125)*
		0.05	0.85 (0.219)*	30	0.874 (0.185)*
		0.10	1.11 (0.328)*	50	0.945 (0.426)*
Carrots	40	0.00	0.062 (0.021)*	0	0.557 (0.298)*
		0.05	1.038 (0.334)*	30	3.22 (0.912)*
		0.10	0.732 (0.295)*	50	6.07 (1.09)*
	70	0.00	0.432 (0.041)*	0	0.73 (0.262)*
		0.05	0.701 (0.168)*	30	2.61 (0.656)*
		0.10	0.898 (0.688)*	50	4.32 (1.17)*
	100	0.00	0.181 (0.029)*	0	0.427 (0.18)*
		0.05	0.997 (0.208)*	30	4.54 (1.23)*
		0.10	0.799 (0.298)*	50	6.24 (2.64)*
Lettuce	20	0.00	0.263 (0.082)*	0	1.41 (0.563)*
		0.05	0.602 (0.238)*	30	21.80 (4.45)*
		0.10	0.549 (0.181)*	50	21.90 (3.62)*
	40	0.00	0.241 (0.092)*	0	1.62 (0.827)*
		0.05	1.00 (0.843)*	30	79.20 (24.9)*
		0.10	0.534 (0.101)*	50	82.40 (22.90)*
	55	0.00	0.121 (0.053)*	0	2.25 (0.812)*
		0.05	0.968 (0.392)*	30	133.60 (44.6)*
		0.10	1.022 (0.311)*	50	187.40 (39.9)*

Table 1: Relationship between cadmium (Cd) and lead (Pb) concentrations in cabbage, carrots and lettuce crops and (irrigation water IW) * table from <http://scialert.net/fulltext/?doi=ijar.2008.243.2518org=10>

Safe Growing

- Use a landscape fabric barrier
- Grow in containers or constructed timber, raised beds
- Use only untreated timbers, cedar is best, or composite recycled timbers. Do not re-use railroad ties since they have been treated with coal tar creosote.



Propagation Methods



- Soil blocks
 - eliminate the need for plastic pots, which cuts costs and saves on plastic going to the landfill
 - Produce a strong, healthy root system by naturally air pruning the roots
 - minimizes disturbance of the root systems

Cover Cropping

- Benefits
 - Provides organic matter and aids with soil structure
 - Nitrogen production
 - Soil microbial activity
 - Nutrient enhancement
 - Weed suppression
 - Soil and Water conservation



Cover Crops/Green Manure

Green Manure/Cover Crops				
Crop	Life Cycle	Sowing Time	Growth Period	Nitrogen Fixer
Alfalfa	Hardy annual	Late spring	1 year	Yes
Buckwheat	Annual	Late spring/late summer	3 months	No
Field Beans	Hardy annual	Late fall	Over winter	Yes
Crimson Clover	Hardy annual	Early spring/ late summer	3 months, overwinter	Yes
Red Clover	Perennial	Spring	18+ months	Yes
Winter Rye	Hardy annual	Late summer	Overwinter	No
Trefoil	Annual	Spring/late summer	3+ months	Yes
Vetch	Perennial	Spring/late summer	3 months/ will overwinter	Yes

Composting

- Check with city and state regulations
 - Some cities require in-vessel compost systems
 - Backyard composting in urban areas: use a compost bin with wire mesh to help deter rodents



Compost Bins



- Compost bins come in all shapes and sizes

Composting Guidelines

Compost Ingredients	
Greens = High Nitrogen Alfalfa Algae Clover Coffee grounds Garden waste Grass clippings Hay Spent brewery grains Manure	Browns = High Carbon Ashes (wood) Bark Shredded cardboard, newspaper, and paper Corn stalks Leaves Saw dust Straw Pine needles Animal bedding - straw/animal manure mix
A good compost pile will have a 25:1 C:N ratio	
*Do not compost meat and fish scraps, dog feces, cat litter, disposable diapers, coal ashes, synthetic fibers, weeds that have gone to seed, diseased plant material, bones, dairy, and colored paper	

Other Composting Practices

- Following these practices will reduce emissions and odor
 - Avoid layering brown and green material- be sure to mix the piles otherwise you will have pockets of anaerobic activity
 - Limit the height of the pile to 3'
 - Shred the materials before adding them to your pile. Materials will break down more evenly.
 - Have a course foundation for your pile, like course woodchips

February Production in Chicago

Spinach, chard, mesclun, carrots, beets, turnips, collard greens, radishes



Extended Season Production

- Hoop houses: big and small
 - Unheated hoop houses can be productive for a minimum of ten months
- Movable vs. stationary
- What will grow in February?



Mini hoophouses/coldframes



Mini hoops allow for 10 months of production



Movable Hoophouse Construction

- Movable hoophouses are versatile for season long growing in cold regions



Companion Planting and Intensive Cultivation



Companion planting increases production by grouping plants that have complementary nutrient needs and can help protect each other from pests.

Intensive Cultivation



Intensive planting in raised beds can double and triple harvest quantities with careful rotation and crop sequencing

Harvest Handling



1. Harvest during the coolest time of the day to maintain low product respiration.
2. Avoid wounding, bruising, crushing or damage. Handle as little as possible.
3. Shade harvest produce in the field, move to cool space quickly to reduce heat damage.
4. Do not mix damaged or decayed produce with high quality product.
5. Only used cleaned harvest and packing bins or coolers.

Harvest Practices



Sanitation

- Clean surface for prep
- Clean storage containers
- Clean harvest knives

Effects of Respiration

Respiration rates of commodities are directly related to product temperature; the higher the temperature, the higher the respiration rate. Rapid cooling to the commodity's lowest safe temperature is most critical for vegetables with higher respiration rates.



Tomatoes

- If warmer than 90F, harvest fruit earlier in day
- Pick when fruit is evenly red but still firm
- Do not squeeze
- Twist tomato in a downward motion to leave stem behind or toss after harvest. (Exception: some heirlooms)
- Pack on bread tray lined with newspaper
- Always pack stem side down in single layer, do not stack
- Rinse if necessary
- Never cool
- Store cherry tomatoes in pints to avoid cracking



Okra

- Harvest before okra are large and woody, best at about 3"
- Use scissors to harvest
- Do not wash
- Store dry in covered tote in walk-in cooler



Cutting Greens & Leaf Lettuce

- Harvest as early in a.m. as possible
- Use knife to give leaves a “haircut” to 2” long
- Cut section evenly
- Leave 3” for re-growth
- Flash shock in ice water in field for no more than 1 min
- Double wash if necessary
- Turn in salad spinner for 2 min
- Dry in crates
- Pack in 6 oz bags and store in cooler, in walk in cooler



Brussels Sprouts

- Harvest as early in a.m. as possible
- Remove entire plant from ground, cut roots and top off with angled knife
- Flip plant upside down and gently pull off leaves
- Rinse if necessary
- Pack in cooler and store in large cooler



The Future of Sustainable Urban Agriculture

- Growing in healthy and safe soil
- Proper harvest/ post-harvest handling of produce
- Good training & apprenticeship experience
- Effective marketing and community outreach



URBANO-BOWANE GARDEN
WINDY CITY HARVEST
Richard J. Daley College
A Growing Community Enterprise

WHAT IS WINDY CITY HARVEST?
Windy City Harvest is an organic vegetable and herb production enterprise that produces vegetables to supplement the food pantries and other agencies. It was developed and is followed by the Chicago Botanic Garden in partnership with the Richard J. Daley College, near the City College of Chicago.

Windy City Harvest grows safe, organic produce utilizing its training, production to produce high quality, organic produce, which is sold to food pantries and non-profit food agencies.

WINDY CITY HARVEST
Young adults take the reigns of Windy City Harvest.

WHAT ARE THE EDUCATIONAL GOALS?
Participants receive hands-on experience with sustainable vegetable production and learn essential business skills to help them grow their own sustainability.

Windy City Harvest provides a variety of hands-on instruction in production and marketing practices. Followed by critical research, paid marketing students are also able to offer valuable assistance to our seasonal growing customers at the markets and grower's.

After a complete completion of the curriculum and industry requirements, students receive certification in sustainable urban agriculture and urban agriculture. The certificate from the Richard J. Daley College makes participants eligible to participate in the "real" green jobs' after school.

WINDY CITY HARVEST IS YOUR PLACE TO GO!
Windy City Harvest participates at the Richard J. Daley College, Avera (Chicago Botanic Garden), near the Richard J. Daley College, and other sites. The business professionals of the organization fully support education and high-quality produce plant production services. Inquiries are invited and invited to Chicago Botanic Garden.

Opportunities for paid internships in a variety of growing settings

Classroom instruction and hands on experiences in partnership with educational institutions

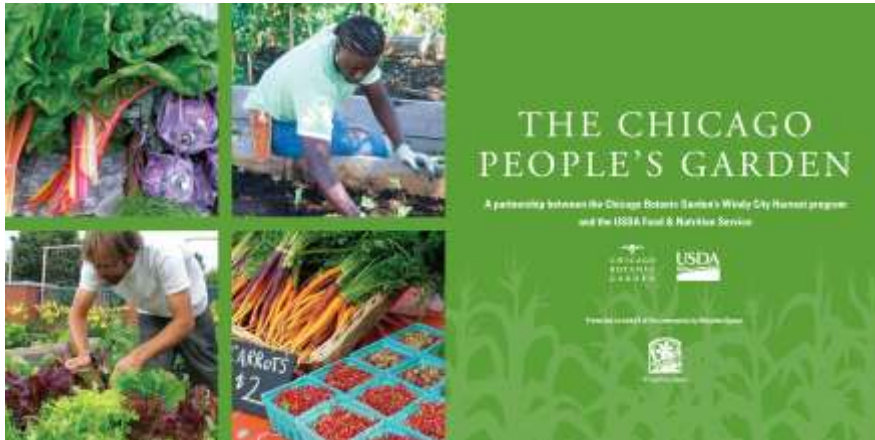
WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF WINDY CITY HARVEST?
The growing demand from educational institutions and businesses for locally grown, affordable produce led to the creation of Windy City Harvest and its partners.

WINDY CITY HARVEST SUPPORTS PRODUCE MARKETS
• The Chicago Botanic Garden
• The Chicago Botanic Garden
• The Chicago Botanic Garden
• The Chicago Botanic Garden

WHAT ARE THE GROWING PARTNERSHIPS IN YOUR CITY?
Support the Windy City Harvest by connecting with local educational institutions and other organizations throughout Chicago such as the University of Illinois at Chicago, Loyola University, and the University of Chicago. The University of Chicago, Loyola University, and the University of Illinois at Chicago are also great partners for Windy City Harvest. Other educational institutions that support Windy City Harvest include the University of Illinois at Chicago, Loyola University, and the University of Chicago.

WINDY CITY HARVEST IS YOUR PLACE TO GO!
Windy City Harvest is a growing community enterprise that produces vegetables to supplement the food pantries and other agencies. It was developed and is followed by the Chicago Botanic Garden in partnership with the Richard J. Daley College, near the City College of Chicago.

WINDY CITY HARVEST
1000 S. La Salle St. • Chicago, IL 60607
www.windycityharvest.org



Strong collaborations with local, county, state and federal agencies that support programs and share responsibility for expanding a safe and productive local food system

Resources

- Websites
 - www.chicagobotanic.org
 - www.rodaleinstitute.org
 - <http://attra.ncat.org>
 - www.composting101.com
 - www.organicgardening.com
 - <http://www.communitygarden.org/>
 - <http://www.foodsecurity.org/>
 - <http://casfs.ucsc.edu/index.html>
 - <http://www.schoolgardenwizard.org>
 - <http://www.familyfarmed.org>
 - http://www.greennetchicago.org/pdf/GreenNet_Jarrell_Feb_2005.pdf
 - <http://www.bridges4kids.org/lead/binnspaper2003.pdf>
- Books
 - The New Organic Grower by Eliot Coleman
 - Four Season Harvest by Eliot Coleman
 - Rodale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening by Pauline Pears
 - The Rodale Book of Composting by Grace Gershuny and Deborah Martin

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SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE

- uplifting communities
- creating opportunities

Lawrence Neighborhood Community Garden Initiative

William Lantigua, Mayor
City of Lawrence, Massachusetts

Art McCabe, Manager
Community Development
City of Lawrence, Massachusetts

Heather McMann, Director
Groundwork Lawrence



Gardening has been part of the fabric of our society since the beginning

Strategic Planning for Community Gardens

June 15, 2010

From Vision to Shovel



"We are stardust,
We are golden,
And we've got to get ourselves
back to the garden." Joni Mitchell, Woodstock 1969

Precedent Credits

Many cities and institutions are making important contributions to urban agriculture.

www.cityfarmer.info

www.urbanfarming.org

www.ecoschools.com

www.growingpower.org

www.communitygarden.org

Groundwork USA



www.groundworkusa.org

Groundwork USA



Lawrence, MA 2010

“Your most precious possession is not your financial assets. Your most precious possession is the people, and what they carry around in their heads, and their ability to work together”



Historic Significance

New York City



April 30-May 1, 1991



www.cliftongarden.wordpress.com

Historic Significance

WWII



1943



Historic Significance

Boston



Circa 1900

Historic Significance

Plymouth Plantation



Plymouth, MA Circa 1620

Historic Significance

Gardening Isn't Exactly A New Idea



“Hey Adam, want a bite of this apple?”
Eve, Day 1



Keys to Success



“Gardening is a universal
and timeless language.”



Keys to Success

- **KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY**
- **HAVE A VISION**
- **BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATE SHARED OWNERSHIP**
- **INVOLVE YOUTH**
- **ALWAYS: PATIENCE & PERSERVERANCE**

Keys to Success

- **KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY**
 - History of your Community
 - Know your Demographics
 - Immigrant connections / Personal journeys
 - Populations of Youth and Elderly
 - Cultural and Ethnic
 - Connections with Residents
 - Cultural and Social Parallels



Keys to Success

▪ **HAVE A VISION**

Set Long-term Goals and Break them into Manageable Parts

- Establish careful site selection criteria
- Identify resources | opportunities and challenges | impediments
- Analyze and differentiate between resources and obstacles
- Establish Open Space Plan, City-wide Master Plan, Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, State guidance documents, Regional Planning Organization technical assistance

Leverage Resources and Cluster Projects

- Match and leverage complimentary funding sources : local | state | federal | private
- Marshal resources and leverage assets by identifying complimentary and clustered projects
- Be conscious of the opportunity to use the garden as a vehicle for bringing the community together

Keys to Success

A Case Study

A neighbor of an abandoned city owned Brownfield parcel comes in without permission and singlehandedly turns the lot into a wonderful community garden.

Response #1

City officials come and kick the resident off the land, fence and lock the site to prevent further access. Existing garden withers with no **attention, site is now 'free' to be renovated into a formal community garden.**

Response #2

The City approaches the resident, explains the danger of gardening in urban fill and enrolls him as a partner in the redevelopment process. The site is remediated and His stewardship of the parcel continues as he manages new members of the formalized community garden effort.

Keys to Success

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATE SHARED OWNERSHIP

Identify stewards, stakeholders, and partners to create public | private partnerships and strategic alliances

- Neighborhood Associations
- Community Development Corporations
- Local Private Businesses
- Land Bakes

Potential Partners

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Department of Environmental Protection
- State Offices of Environmental Affairs
- Neighborhood Associations
- Groundwork USA
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of Public Works | Police Department | Inspectional Services Department | Health Department
- Faith-based Organizations

Keys to Success

INVOLVE YOUTH

Engage the community through schools, reach the parents and caregivers through the students

- YMCA and YWCA
- Boys & Girls Club
- Youth Build
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- www.schoolgardenwizard.org
- www.edibleschoolyard.org
- www.ecoschools.com

".....the presence of the youth of eternal summers
In the garden." Van Morrison, 1968



Student-based Design

Massasoit School, Braintree, MA

Integrated workshops into school's math / art / science curriculum and taught:

Mapping / Drawing to Scale

Site Inventory + Analysis

Basic Construction Techniques

Graphics / Rendering

Digital Modeling

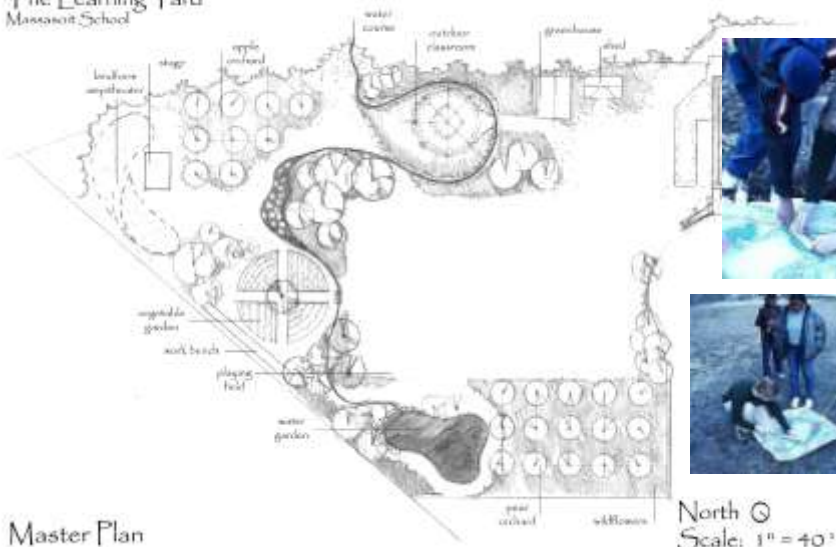
Public Presentation



Student-based Design

The collaboration between landscape architects and students was coalesced into a plan drawing that the students and their families helped construct.

The Learning Yard
Massasoit School



Keys to Success

ALWAYS: PATIENCE & PERSERVERANCE

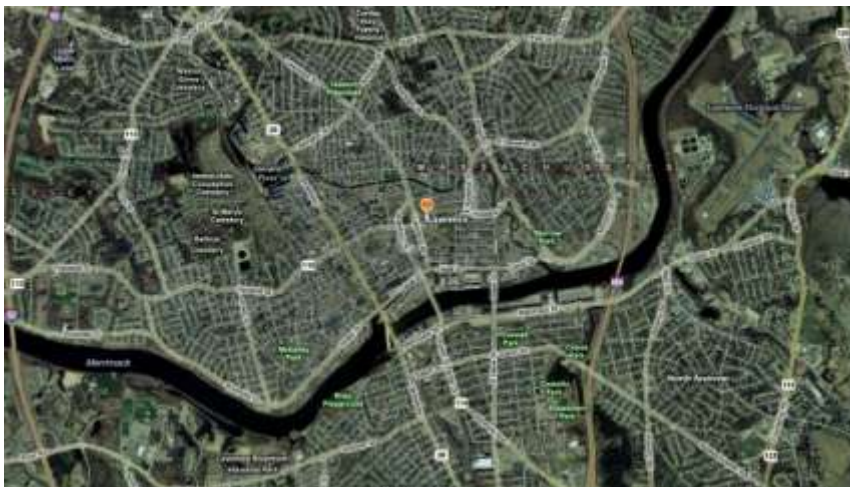
“Every journey of a thousand miles . . .
 . . . begins with a single step”



City of Lawrence
Community Profile



City of Lawrence



City of Lawrence



City of Lawrence

- One of the FIRST planned industrial cities (circa 1845) focused on living near the mills and efficient city planning
- 30 miles north of Boston
- One of the poorest cities in New England with over 25% of families below poverty line
- Population approximately 70,000
- Per capita income of just \$14,753
- Homeownership rates 35% citywide (*1/2 state average*)
- Unemployment rate 18% (*twice the state average*)
- 37% of residents hold HS degree
- Young population (~30% under age 24)
- Diet and lifestyle-related disease rates soaring
- Highest rates of foreclosure in MA
- 60% of population is hispanic or latino
- **State's FIRST Latino Mayor**

Conditions



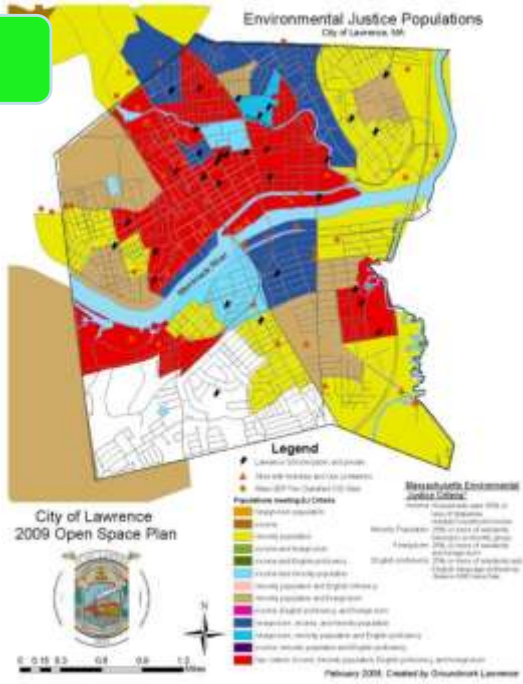
- 6.8 square miles of area
- Divided by a post-industrial river
- Highest number of environmental justice communities in the state
- High levels of residential density in close proximity to downtown
- Existing vacant lots with varying levels of contamination
- Remnant building materials from mill demolition
- Ideal for Smart Growth- Back to the Future- A planned city

Social Services Dilemma

or

Urban Planner's Dream?

City of Lawrence



City of Lawrence



Open Space Per Capita



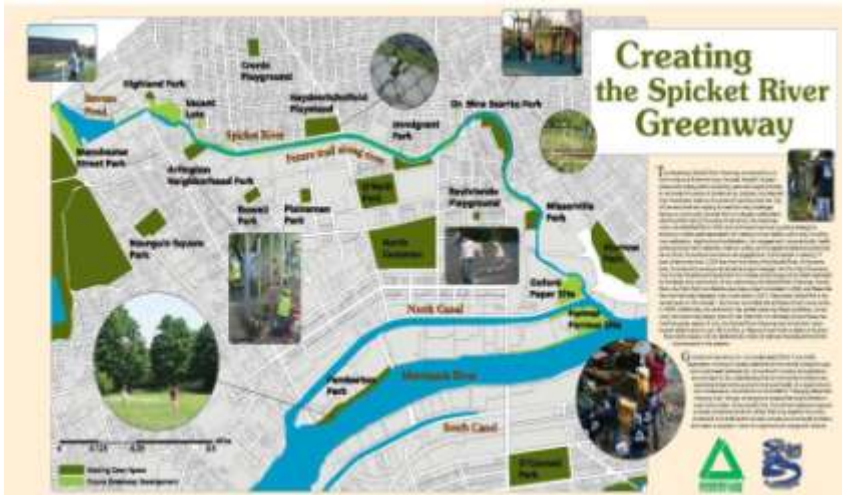
Density of Children Under 15 and walking distance to parks

City of Lawrence



Arlington Neighborhood

City of Lawrence



Short Term & Long Term Goals

- Clean up abandoned space
- Utilize abandoned space
- Provide space for growing own food
- Provide opportunity for microenterprise (farm stands)
- Improve stormwater event response
- Improve neighborhoods
- Ideal for teaching life / work skills



Opportunities

- Proximity to urban transportation center makes Lawrence ideal for development
- Density and access to amenities creates opportunities to develop communities that support live/work/play
- Missing component is high quality of life, which will evolve with an enrolled constituency of residents
- These efforts are building blocks and part of a much larger plan
- These projects have become a vehicle for community organizing
- Inclusion of seating for community gatherings or contemplative area



Site Selection

- > 3000 square feet (too small for redevelopment)
- Brownfield site : presence of real or perceived contamination
- Environmental Site Assessment (Phase I, Phase II)
- Located within a floodplain (prohibitive for development)
- Accessible by foot for much of the neighborhood
- A minimum of part-sun exposure / solar orientation
- Consideration of sustainability and stewardship for future care and maintenance
- Highly visible from streets
- Source for water for irrigation
- **Don't be afraid to approach the neighbors for help!**



Partners

[Lawrence Community Neighborhood Garden Initiative](#)

Environmental Protection Agency

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Lawrence Community Works

Lawrence Neighborhood Associations

Groundwork Lawrence

Department of Housing and Urban Development

City of Lawrence Department of Public Works | Police
Department | Inspectional Services Department | Health
Department

YMCA | YWCA

Boys & Girls Club

Youth Build

Spicket River Greenway Building Blocks

Manchester Street Park Gardens (26 beds) Completed Summer, 2009

Former Brownfield Site - Waste incinerator

Partners: EPA, DEP, EOEEA, HUD, ARLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS, PRIVATE SECTOR, GROUDWORK LAWRENCE

Cronin Park Gardens (6 large shared beds) Ribbon Cutting June 17, 2010

Old park site in advanced state of neglect

Partners: HUD, EOEEA, ARLINGTON NEIGHBORHOD ASSOCIATIONS, GROUNDWORK LAWRENCE

Brook Street Gardens (17 beds) Completed in 2006

Part of Scarito Park in the North Common Neighborhood

Former Brownfield Site - Urban Fill

Partners: EPA, HUD, EPA, ARLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS, GROUNDWORK LAWRENCE

Union & Mechanic Alleyway Garden (8 large, shared beds) Built in 2006

Former Brownfield Site – reclaimed alleyway with urban fill issues

Partners: HUD, DEP, PRIVATE SECTOR, LAWRENCE COMMUNITYWORKS, NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

Lawrence Gateway/Canal Neighborhood/Oxford Park Started in 1993 – Est. finish 2012

Significant Brownfield Site – Former Oxford Paper Mill

Partners: DEPARTRMEN OF TRANSPORTATION, ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, HUD, EPA, DEP, MASS FINANCE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, MERRIMACK VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION, PRIVATE SECTOR, LAWRENCE COMMUNITYWORKS

Examples



Manchester Street - Before

Examples



Manchester Street - After



Examples



Dr. Nina Scarito Park – Lawrence, MA



Examples



Dr. Nina Scarito Park – Community Gardens

Alley Ways + Vacant Lots

A Case Study

Abandoned vacant lots and alley ways are being used as illegal dumping grounds and have become host to rodents, trash heaps and blight.

Response #1

The lots are labeled as blight and continue to be a detriment to the neighborhood.

Response #2

The lots are identified as an opportunity to connect the fabric of the neighborhood and link blocks back together with gardens, passive open space, and pedestrian pathways.

Alley Ways + Vacant Lots



Alley Ways + Vacant Lots



Alley Ways + Vacant Lots



Alley Ways + Vacant Lots



Alley Ways + Vacant Lots



City of Lawrence



GWL Farmer's Market



Neighborhood Stabilization Program

Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

- NSP funding can be utilized as part of a longer term plan to help stabilize an area as the longer term plan is implemented. The long term plans are vital
- NSP funds can be used with other available funding sources to leverage related projects
- To demolish abandoned or blighted properties which will be used for gardens or park;
- To rehabilitate properties near gardens or parks so as to cluster projects;
- To acquire vacant undevelopable parcels which are adjacent to private housing and then sold or combined with such housing as side lots or for parking or open space;
- To place in a Land Bank for future development- the use of a Land Bank is not required but it is often prudent to insure a parcel is set aside for the bigger plan;
- Land Banks are particularly useful in cities with large numbers of undeveloped parcels;
- Land Bank parcels can be used on an interim or long term basis as gardens and parks;
- Land Banks can acquire foreclosed homes and hold for future use.

How might all of this work in your communities?

- have long term plan like the Lawrence open space plan;
- break it into manageable parts like Spicket River Greenway Project;
- identify key building block parcels;
- demolish blighted properties in target area;
- set aside vacant parcels for open space or future use;
- combine funding and cluster projects;
 - A. EPA and State environmental funding;
 - B. HUD, CDBG, AND NSP funds;
 - C. Open space funding;
 - D. Private foundation funding;
 - E. Not for profit funding;
 - F. Private sector funding or sponsorship.
 - G. Identify partners and spread ownership



Patience and Perseverance

Thank You

- EPA & HUD Boston & Chicago Regional Offices
- Groundwork Lawrence & Groundwork USA
- Weston & Sampson environmental engineers & landscape architects



Contact

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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Implementing Urban Agriculture Projects

HUD Resources for Communities

Office of Block Grant Assistance

Interested in using HUD funds?

- Identify the source of funding
- Understand the regulations
- Build strong local relationships
- Use HUD funds to leverage additional support



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Potential Sources of HUD Funding

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)



Key Concepts from the Regs

- National Objective
 - LMA
 - LMI Limited Clientele
- Eligible Use
 - Public facilities/improvements
 - NSP1: Eligible Use E
 - NSP2: Eligible Use D



Strong Relationships are Essential

- Interested community groups should connect with their grantee
- Grantees should connect with their HUD field office



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Leverage additional support

- Plan for both the development and operation of the project
- Understand funders' priorities and requirements
 - Seek out flexible funding sources to complement restricted funds



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Other resources:

- NSP Resource Exchange:
<http://hudnsphelp.info/>
- Local CDBG Contacts:
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/contacts/>



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