FoodShare

Good Healthy Food for All

Community Gardening 101

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OVERVIEW

Community Gardening 101
We offered our first online workshop Community Gardening 101 in Nov/Dec of 2002.
We've put together an archive so that you can follow the workshop format. There are readings, questions and links for each week's topics. The workshop was created for those who are interested in starting a garden or bringing some new ideas to their current garden.

Week 1: Let's Get Started

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY GARDEN?
Any group of people that come together to garden is a community garden. Every community garden is different and is determined by what the gardeners themselves want.

Community gardens come in many different shapes and sizes. They can be large or small, on the ground or on rooftops, in plots or in planters. And they can be a mix of all of these things. Some are communal, where everyone shares the work and the harvest. Some have separate, individual plots (allotments) for each gardener, and some are a combination of these two styles, encouraging gardeners to join together to grow some of the crops communally, either to donate to a food bank or to maximize space for plants that need lots of room.

Gardens can be created for a specific "audience", such as children, seniors, single parents, people with disabilities or they can be all inclusive and accommodating for many different types of use. The community gardeners can decide what they want to grow as a group or it can be left up to the individual. Gardens can be focused on vegetables, flowers, native plants, herbs, or some combination of these things. There are as many types of community gardens as there are people. The only hard and fast rule of what a community garden is and how and what is grown comes from the participants. That's what makes it a community garden.

WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY GARDENS?
The ability to plant a seed, to harvest food from that seed, and to return the leftovers to the earth is a true and fundamental value. Making compost from the spent plant materials and then using that compost to enrich the soil for the next year's harvest connects us to the cycles of life on our planet and reminds us that not only are we dependant upon nature for our existence, we are a part of nature. The farther away we get from the earth, the more concrete there is under our feet, the more imperative it is that we can find a bit of earth to plant. There is a community in that need that brings us together.

We move further and further away from growing our own food as a daily activity as our lives have become urban. Our children think that food comes from factories and stores. Why should they think any differently? Pull a carrot from the ground and the typical eight year old will think that you are playing a joke on them. If we don't want our children to inherit a world in which their food really is manufactured in a lab or factory, we had better start now, even in a small way, to create opportunities for all of us to participate in and appreciate the enjoyment and power (yes, power) of growing our own food from seed, in the real earth of our planet.

BENEFITS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES:
The benefits of gardening, especially community gardening, send ripples through the individual, family and community:

- physical exercise

- stress relief and mental relaxation

- sense of community belonging

- increased self-confidence

- more affordable produce

- increased consumption of fruit and vegetables

- greater control over food quality

- opportunities for social exchange

- time with kids and family

- connecting with nature

- a chance to protect the environment

- acquaintance with different foods and cultures

- cooperative experience

- improved gardening skills & food preservation techniques

- a chance to share surplus produce

- a chance to learn marketable skills

BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITIES AND COUNTRIES:
Researchers have found at least three distinct ways in which community gardens and other community greening activities contribute to community development. They provide a more livable environment by controlling physical factors such as temperature, noise and pollution; they help create a community image that is perceived as positive by both residents and outsiders; they create opportunities for people to work together to improve communities in many ways.

These three factors translate directly into tangible economic and social benefits, such as a reduction in crime and violence, higher property values, greater availability of nutritious food, and increased business activity, all because the neighbourhood is more attractive and the people within that neighbourhood are more involved with each other.

Here are additional ways that communities benefit from encouraging community gardens:

- greener cities and towns

- increased food security

- diversion of kitchen waste from landfills, through composting

- chemical-free food consumption

- improved population health

- reduced transportation-related food costs

- community economic development

- reduction in neighbourhood crime

- community beautification

- sense of community empowerment

- participation in local decision making processes

- cross-cultural sharing, exchange

- greater self-sufficiency

- flower pollination

- wildlife habitat protection/restoration

SOME NUTRITION FACTS*:
Community gardeners consumed a greater number of fruits and vegetables compared to national averages: 7.5 servings per day in the fall, and 6.3 servings in the spring. Of the gardeners surveyed, 70-80% consumed at least five servings of fruit and vegetables daily.

- In addition, 74% of gardeners preserved produce from the garden (through freezing, canning, pickling, and drying)

- and 95% shared produce with neighbors, emergency food service providers, and others

- Those involved with community gardens are more likely to eat and continue in the off-season to eat more fruits and vegetables making them more likely to meet "5 to 10 A-Day" goals.

- Of those families and individuals who participated in garden projects, 89% ate more fresh vegetables than usual, 96% planned to eat more fresh vegetables all year round, and 79% learned a new way to prepare fresh vegetables

*Source of the above data:
Ohri-Vachaspati P and Warrix M. Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Among Urban Gardeners. Ohio State University Extension. As published in the 1999 SNE Annual Meeting Proceedings, page 33.

Savoie KA. Growing Good Nutrition: EFNEP Improves Dietary Behavior Through Gardening. University of Maine Cooperative Extension. 1998

GARDENING REDUCES STRESS

These days stress relief is a high priority for us all. Never before have humans had to cope with such as wide variety and type of stressful situations. While many people seek artificial ways of relieving stress, quietly tending your garden can be a real stress-buster, helping relieve feelings of anxiety and giving you a break from the general rush of life. Believe it or not, simply looking at a plant can reduce stress, fear, and anger, and lower blood pressure and muscle tension. Studies have found that prison inmates in cells with windows overlooking greenery need less medical care and report fewer symptoms of stress, such as headaches. Hospital patients whose rooms have windows that overlook trees and other plants spend less time in hospital than those who overlook parking lots. Other researchers have documented that people shown urban scenes with some vegetation recover more quickly from stress than people exposed to urban scenes without vegetation. A visit to even a small community garden can offer a person the feeling of being away from a stressful setting.

GARDENERS LEAD ACTIVE LIVES:

Gardening is the second most popular physical activity in Canada, attracting 72% of Canadian adults. Gardening contributes to healthy active living. Numerous studies have shown that regular physical activity reduces your risk of premature death, heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure, adult-onset diabetes, osteoporosis, stroke, depression and colon cancer. Gardening activities like raking, hoeing, pushing a wheelbarrow and carrying leaves draw on your endurance, flexibility and strength, and will help weight control.

- Endurance activities help your heart, lungs and circulatory system stay healthy, and they give you more energy. Digging in the garden, raking and gathering leaves, hoeing, spreading mulch and pushing a wheelbarrow keep you on the move and bring endurance benefits.

- Flexibility activities contribute to easy movement. They allow your muscles to stay relaxed and your joints mobile. Bending and stretching to plant, weed, prune, mix potting soils and water plants by hand are all great activities to help you stay flexible.

- Strength activities keep your muscles and bones strong, and assist in maintaining proper posture. Digging in the garden, turning compost, carrying wood, hauling branches and other clean-up activities help keep you strong.

- As a general guide, 3-1/2 hours of gardening or yard work "burns' about 1,000 calories.

CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

Community gardens are places where individuals work side by side--neighbourhood children, businesspeople, artists, single parents, and newcomers to this country--everyone all at once. They share stories and shovels, laughter and water, and slowly they build relationships that extend beyond the garden and into our larger community. On any given day, the gardeners toiling side by side in any of Toronto's 100 community gardens may include Vietnamese, Russians, Eritreans, Tamils, Ukrainians, Filipinos, Italians, Cambodians, Iranians, Greeks, Jamaicans, Somalis, Czechs, East Indians, Chinese, Lebanese, West Indians…and many more. Some Canadian-born participants speak English, some French, others Inuktitut. Somehow, from this huge mix of languages and cultures, we are able to find enough in common through our love of gardening to create communities.

The mix of gardeners means many are meeting some foods for the first time. Callaloo, mustard greens, bok choy, edo, water grass, bitter melon, fava beans, Lebanese cucumbers and Bengali beans are unfamiliar to most North American-born participants. In turn, newcomers are

getting acquainted with swiss chard, strawberries, rhubarb, Jerusalem artichokes, kohlrabi and sunflowers. New friendships bloom as gardeners swap tips and ideas, share labour, or stop to chat and rest in the shade. A midsummer potluck dinner features dishes the gardeners made from their own produce. There will be workshops to help them preserve what they and their fellow-gardeners have grown, through pickling, freezing and canning. Many say they share the harvest with friends and family and that on average, seven people eat from each plot. Here's what some gardeners have to say about it all: "Gardening is good for body and soul." "My children will now eat vegetables because they grew them themselves." " Gardening helps me save money for something else." "I just love spending time in the garden-it gives me something to look forward to every day." " The garden plot helped my family relax and have fun together." "Before we didn't know any of them and now we're friends, almost like family."

BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

Creating a successful community garden begins with the people. Sure, having land is important, but it isn't the first thing that you need. Begin by cultivating the group and you will be assured of a successful garden. Spend the time now, before spring is at your door, to find and involve members, create a steering committee and cultivate leadership. The garden's members must be involved in all decisions, every step of the way. If you try to do it all yourself, you can guarantee burnout within 3 years and your garden group will not have the skills to keep it going without you. Week #2 is entitled "Growing The Group" and there you'll learn the skills to help you with this most important, and often overlooked, aspect of starting a community garden. And we'll keep saying it over and over again—it's that important.

Why should this community garden exist? What's the community need? Is it for food, beautification, social interaction, neighbourhood safety, contact with nature, or just plain fun--ask each member of the group and you'll be surprised at the variety of answers. Try to reach consensus on the most important reasons. There can be many equally important reasons and you shouldn't feel that you have to come up with just one. When you have consensus, then write a "mission statement". This will help at every step of the way--to set goals, to make decisions easier, to prioritize, to fundraise, etc.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ESTABLISH GOOD LINES OF COMMUNICATION AMONG ALL PARTICIPANTS

Everyone likes to feel that their voice matters, that what they say and think is acknowledged on an equal basis with everyone else. Good communication is the key to ensuring this. There are often many major decisions to be made in the development of a community garden, especially at the outset. It may sometimes seem easier for one or two people to make decisions for the group, but this usually backfires, especially at the beginning before everyone has had time to get to know each other's strengths and weaknesses. A good garden coordinator will recognize this and give people the opportunity to express their opinions before decisions are made. Obviously there are some things that the coordinator can and should decide independently, or why else have a coordinator. But it is better to err on the side of caution than to pre-empt discussion for the sake of (often imagined) expediency. In addition to regular group meetings, a notice board in the garden is a good way to keep everyone informed about important issues, as is a regular newsletter. And so that no one person is overburdened with the task of telephoning, it is best to set up a telephone tree system.

DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Involve as many like-minded groups and individuals in your project as possible. It is not necessary to be a gardener in order to enjoy and participate in a community garden. Create a "Friends of the Garden" membership category for those people who want to help the project

but aren't able, for whatever reason, to take a garden plot. Actively seek out local politicians and other community leaders, members of the media, health professionals, the landscape industry, anti-poverty activists, and anyone else that could help. The more people that feel a personal attachment to the project, the better.

DON'T RELY ON ONLY ONE PERSON

As important as a good coordinator is, it is equally important to have a good organizational team. The success of the project should not rest on any one person's shoulders. If the garden is associated with a community center or other institution, the coordinator is often a staff member of that organization. But what happens when that person moves on to another position? Without the active involvement of a committed team, the entire project could go into a rapid nose-dive.

THE PERFECT GARDEN COORDINATOR

A good garden coordinator is all things to all people. She or he is dynamic, enthusiastic, inspiring, a diplomat, a veritable garden encyclopedia, tireless, devoted, able to deal with any problem with ease...and just about impossible to find. Since that's the case, make sure that the candidates fully understand the scope of the job and that as many garden members as possible are involved in the selection process. You may decide that the job is too big for one person (especially if it is a volunteer position) and want to have 2 or 3 people share the coordinator's tasks. If so, just make sure that each person knows where her job begins and ends.

START SMALL

Taking on too much at the start of any project usually results in burnout after only a short time. You can always expand in the years to come. Most people are very enthusiastic gardeners in the spring, when that heady combination of sunshine, warm temperatures and sweet smelling soil is too intoxicating to resist. By mid-summer that enthusiasm has waned considerably as the less than glamorous garden chores, like weeding and deadheading, compete with swimming, baseball and other summer fun.

CHOOSE YOUR SITE WELL

Look for a site that is visible, safe, centrally located, in an area that will benefit from a community garden, has plenty of sun, good access, both by foot and for deliveries, and has the support of the neighbours. Other physical features, such as soil and drainage can always be improved upon, if necessary.

KEEP THE GARDEN WELL MAINTAINED YEAR ROUND

Vegetable gardens often have the reputation of being less than attractive. This is usually the result of haphazard maintenance by the people rather than an aesthetic shortcoming on the part of the plants. Don't give any would-be detractors ammunition against the garden. Let the gardeners know what is expected of them with a clearly defined, written set of garden by-laws. Keep the grass trimmed, common areas neat, the beds weeded (or better yet, mulched), pick up trash daily, locate the compost area out of sight as much as possible, plant flowers around the edges of the site as well as within the plots, and try to design the site with imagination– there's no rule that says a garden has to be laid out in perfect 10' x20' rectangular plots.

PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE GARDENERS

Not all, or even most, of the participants will be knowledgeable gardeners when they join the garden. A wise coordinator will understand that a first time gardener's enthusiasm is linked to a successful harvest. That doesn't mean that the first year has to yield a record bumper crop, but it can be very demoralizing if nothing does well. Many novice gardeners will benefit from

a bit of guidance from a more experienced gardener, either formally, as in a workshop, or informally, from the life-long gardener in a nearby plot. Actively encourage these opportunities, if necessary.

BUILD A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY RIGHT FROM THE BEGINING

Most community garden projects don't start out with this elusive quality already intact, unless the group has come together before for other projects. Quite often most of the gardeners have never met before, or are the all too common kind of neighbours who say hello to each other but never really get beyond that. A community garden provides an excellent setting in which to get to know other people without many of the normal barriers to communication that we, unfortunately, create. It's hard to develop respect for someone when you don't have the opportunity to get to know him or her for who they really are. When people are working together for a common cause, enjoying the fresh air, with their hands in the soil and the beauty of nature all around, things like how much money they make and where their grandmother was born don't seem to matter as much as they did before. When we can come together to create something with other people, especially something that adds beauty to our lives and helps us to feel that we are contributing something positive, a very special bond can begin to grow. And with careful nurturing it can blossom into that essential ingredient to human happiness: connection, a sense of belonging, a feeling of community.

TROUBLESHOOTING

To get off on the right foot, you need to involve the potential members from the beginning. That means having a meeting with all those who might be interested before any decisions are made. It may be a slower way to do things but believe me, it will make for a better, stronger, longer lasting community garden. Decide, with the group, why this garden should exist. Without all members having understanding of the garden's reason for being, you'll have a collection of allotment plots, rather than a community garden.

Link: "Green Streets, Not Mean Streets: Vegetation May Cut Crime in the Inner City" by Human-Environment Research Laboratory
www.herl.uiuc.edu/canopy--short.htm

Link: What Good is Community Greening? by David Malakoff
http://www.communitygarden.org/pubs/whatgood.html

Week 1 Questions

Question #1: Identify your &/or your group's reasons for wanting to initiate a community garden

To begin the discussion, simply hit reply and then tell us why you are starting a cg.
Identify your &/or your group's reasons for wanting to initiate a community garden. So after you've read the material, think through all of the reasons that you personally want to be involved in a community garden and, by extension, ask your group (if you have one). To start the discussion, just hit reply.

Question #2: **What resources/skills do you have already? What do you still need?**

Here's how to begin the discussion, simply hit reply and then tell us what you've got. How far along in the start-up process are you and what resources do you have at hand (people, things, money, land, etc)? Have you talked to anyone else about the project? if you have a group already, do an inventory of their skills and also the resources that they might bring to the project. Are there any other resources you can count on? if so, what are they?

Question #3: What personal strengths do you bring? What kind of commitment does it take and can you make? To begin the discussion, simply hit reply. What are your personal strengths and interests, what are you bringing to the project? Dig down and discover your own reasons for wanting to do this, what you think you can handle and what you hope to gain and give to your community. How much of a commitment can you make to the project? If you've been involved with a garden before, how much time/what kind of support did it require from you? Community gardens can be a lot of work, and it's good to go in with your eyes open.

Week 2: Growing the Group

1. Preliminary Planning Stage (Identifying the type of garden for your group, writing a mission statement, setting goals, making a skills & resources inventory, seeking sponsors & allies)
2. Organizational Planning Stage: Developing leadership, the Steering Committee & Other Crucial Committees, the Garden Coordinator; Acceptance & Implementation
3. Developing Garden Guidelines/ Rules/ Rights & Obligations of Membership
4. Community Relations
5. Vandalism
6. Troubleshooting

GROWING YOUR GROUP STEP BY STEP The following lays out the stages of group development for the community garden. Despite what you may think, the creation of a community garden does not begin with getting land and building the garden, but rather with forming and growing a group of people committed to the garden's eventual creation. There is first a preliminary planning stage, followed by an organizational planning stage--and all before you set foot on the site.

1. PRELIMINARY PLANNING STAGE THE FIRST STEP
Hold an informal community / neighbourhood get-together to see if there is enough support, need and interest to start a community garden. If you and a group of at least 5 other people feel that there is, then next step is to form a preliminary planning committee whose job is to create an organizational plan and structure for the proposed community garden by carrying out the following tasks. Some of the tasks should be completed as a group; others can be carried out by fewer members, some will be ongoing into the next phase and beyond. Encourage everyone to participate. If you are with an agency or community group that is sponsoring the project, make an effort not to do everything yourself, even if the rest seem to expect it. Too much dependence upon an outside agency will create a habit that is hard to break.

TASKS:

- If after the meeting there are fewer than 6 people, then do more outreach

- talk it up with community members until there is a large enough group to proceed.

- In either case, seek more members. A group of 6 is large enough to begin the creation of a community garden, but more members are needed to truly make it a garden by its members. Encourage active participation from all members. Discourage any feeling of "hierarchy" between the "old" and "newer" members.

- As a group designate someone to keep accurate records of the meetings of the planning group. Or rotate the task among all.

- Make an inventory of the members' skills, interests, knowledge, and strengths. As new members join, add them to the inventory.

- Create an inventory of other resources that you presently have, such as land, tools, money, etc.
- Create an itemized list of resources needed, such as land, tools, money, etc. Be as specific as possible and include everything you can think of. (more in Week 3)

- Name the responsibilities that must be taken on to meet the needs, acquire the resources and support the mission. Assign tasks based upon the skills inventory and involve everyone according to their interests and expertise.

- As a group, consider if this garden will have a special focus: will it be for seniors, children, youth, low income community members, disabled people, people with specific health problems (such as diabetes), will it be a healing or therapy garden for people with emotional problems, etc. If so, it is essential that people from these groups participate in all stages of planning. Don't create a garden FOR someone , create it WITH them.

- As a group write a mission statement that unites the group and the garden to a larger purpose Vision + Action = Mission. Some examples: "Our mission is to strengthen our neighborhood by creating a beautiful garden where people can get to know each other." or "We believe that everyone has a responsibility to preserve our gardening heritage. Towards that we plant open pollinated, heirloom varieties only." or "All people have a right to eat healthy and nutritious food. The harvest of this community garden is donated to our local foodbank."

- As a group choose a name for the garden. It may seem an unimportant thing at this stage of the project, but naming the garden will make it seem that much closer to reality.

- Set some attainable goals for the next year. Create a timeline in which to reach your goals. Constantly re-evaluate them. Start small–you can always add more.

- Seek allies, sponsors and affiliations within the community, such as community or health centres, city councilors, local businesses, schools, daycares, hospitals, public housing authorities, public service organizations, faith-based organizations, food banks or other non profit organizations.

- See what local experts and organizations exist that could provide help at this and every step of the way. These might include: horticultural societies, garden clubs, other community gardens, local landscape designers and architects, local schools and community colleges that have a landscaping program or offer courses in landscape design and construction, municipal parks and recreation departments

- As a group, consider the garden's format: vegetable, flower, native plants, heirloom varieties, butterfly habitat, etc. or a combination of these and other formats. This decision may or may not be finalized at this stage.

- As a group, develop the conditions of membership and decide upon some recruitment policies. (more work may b e done on this in Stage 2)

- Decide on a contact method for the garden and person to maintain them –a mailing address, telephone number, email address.

- Decide upon a regular schedule of meetings until these tasks are completed.

- Record members' contact information: mailing address, phone, email and distribute to all members, if agreed upon. If members do not yet wish to share their personal contacts with each other, then designate one person to be responsible for contacting all members when necessary (such as calling a meeting, etc). This is definitely more cumbersome and more work for the contact person.
- Identify several possible garden sites and investigate ownership.

- Prepare a preliminary budget and investigate possible funding and revenue sources. The budget will grow and become more specific as the format of the garden becomes more specific. Include such items as land acquisition fees (if any) water access, fencing, soil improvements, removal of existing items on the site, tools, seeds and plants, storage, sitting area, signage, composter, garden coordinator's salary or honorarium (if possible), etc. It may also be necessary to have some form of insurance coverage.

- Once fundraising activities are immanent, the committee should open a bank account with at least two signatures necessary for withdrawals.

PRE-PLANNING STAGE: STEP 2
Hold another community or neighbourhood meeting. At this meeting the Planning committee will:

- Present the organizational plan and structure for the proposed community garden

- Call for volunteers to form an official Steering committee. Many of the members of the first stage planning committee may want to be on the steering committee but an effort to add new members should be made.

- Create the following committees and call for volunteers to join and/or chair them Finance & Fundraising, Membership, Site (Design and Layout, Construction), Communication, Education, Social Activities. (See below for an itemized list of tasks for each committee) A member of the Steering Committee should be on each of the other committees and may be the chairs, although that is not necessary.

- Schedule the first committee meetings, including the steering committee.

- Introduce the sponsor. If no sponsor yet exists, now is the time to brainstorm with the community for ideas.

- If there is no definite site for the garden, seek help from those at the meeting to identify possible sites.

- If you have accomplished the above tasks, the group is now ready to enter the Organizational Planning Stage

2. THE ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING STAGE: DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP, THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND OTHER CRUCIAL COMMITTEES, THE GARDEN COORDINATOR; ACCEPTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Once you have completed the preliminary planning stage, the next step is to create an organization that will guide the community garden not just in the start-up phase but also for the life of the garden. This is done through a committee structure, either formal or informal, and the work of the committees is presented to the general membership for approval before anything is adopted. The more members that participate in this planning stage, the easier it will be to create a community garden organization that is reflective of its members.

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

Strong, responsive, and responsible leadership is the core of any successful community garden. The leadership role is shared between the Steering Committee and the Garden Coordinator and should not rest on any one individual's shoulders. If only one person assumes the majority of the leadership role, the garden's long-term survival can be jeopardized. The steering committee provides direction, motivation, and shapes and develops the garden as a whole. The garden coordinator is the person most closely involved with the day-to-day activities of the garden and is the lynch pin of the organization. A well-organized, knowledgeable, dynamic coordinator can be an instrumental factor in the success of the garden. It should be a goal of the steering committee to find this ideal type of person for the coordinator position, but at the same time to establish a strong organization that ensures the garden's continuity with or without the coordinator. Coordinators may change yearly, but the steering committee must ensure that the garden does not depend on one individual for its survival.

THE COMMITTEES

Membership on committees should be encouraged as a way to grow future leaders, as well as to accomplish key garden tasks. There is a tendency for the same people to take on the majority of the tasks but this should be avoided in order to prevent too much of a hierarchy among members. Sometimes all people need to participate is an invitation, extended sincerely and often. The activities listed below include both preliminary and long-term ongoing tasks and all do not have to be accomplished before the garden is in the ground. By prioritizing them you can decide which need to be accomplished before and which are ongoing. All committees should try to meet at least once a month and should set goals and timelines in which to accomplish their goals.

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee is the driving force behind the garden's creation. It is up to this committee to provide overall leadership and to clearly establish the project goals and objectives.

Responsibilities:

- Planning and setting goals and policy. It is the Steering Committee's responsibility to see that these are accomplished, adhered to, and evaluated and re-evaluated throughout the garden's life.

- Fundraising. Even though there will be a separate Fundraising Committee, this is an important function of the Steering Committee as well.

- Participation in the other committees, each committee should have at least one Steering member, possibly as chair.

- Leadership and active participation at special events.

- Representing the community garden at public events.

- Liaising with other local, regional and national community gardening organizations (i.e., Toronto Community Garden Network, the American Community Gardening Association).

- Decide if there will be a garden coordinator & how will this person be chosen. Will it be a volunteer position or will the group fundraise for it or perhaps it will be a staff person from the sponsoring agency (if there is one). The Steering Committee will oversee the work of the coordinator and will represent the entire garden in this role. See below for a description of the coordinators duties.

- Other things to consider (in conjunction with the Membership Committee) are policies around organic vs. chemical fertilizers and pesticides, plot upkeep, water use, donations of produce to a food bank or shelter, children in the garden. Include these policies in the Rules and Guidelines

- To develop a method for the general membership to vote and make decisions: consensus, majority, quorum, etc.
Possible Membership:

- Representatives of sponsoring agency or group

- Representatives of supporting organizations

- Site coordinator

- Committee chairs

- Garden members

- Community leaders (financial, political, and community service based leaders)

- Advisors (horticultural, administrative, public relations, fundraising)

THE GARDEN COORDINATOR
The coordinator's job involves working longer hours during the peak season, the ability to earn the respect of the gardeners, diplomacy, sensitivity, and tact, the ability to scrounge materials, supplies and favors, as well as basic horticultural knowledge and the firm belief that it is possible to effect change by building community. If at all possible, the coordinator's position should be salaried. The demands on that person's time can be enormous, especially during the first year that the garden is in existence. If a salary is beyond the capabilities of the fledgling garden group, then some sort of honorarium can be considered. But the main requirement for this role remains commitment and time, whether there is a salary or not. The steering committee should go through a thorough hiring process, open to all garden members for comment, not only to ensure that the best person for the job is chosen, but also to avoid any problems further down the line. Though the coordinator reports to the Steering Committee, she or he must have the full confidence and approval of all garden members to be successful. If it is decided, for whatever reason, to have a volunteer garden coordinator, it is still essential

that this person is subject to the same type of approval process. If the first person to volunteer is given the role of coordinator, without any general discussion and approval, there is bound to be someone else who would also like the job and who will harbor bad feelings about the way in which the person was chosen. Everyone must be given equal opportunity to volunteer for the role.

A key attribute of the coordinator (and of any leader) is the ability to listen well, to hear another person from their perspective. A good listener hears not only facts but also feelings. Paraphrasing or restating the person's words in your own terms can help to clarify the message and also shows the speaker that you have heard what they said. Give everyone a chance to voice their opinion, and be sure everyone feels heard. Sometimes it is just as simple as that. "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." Always try for "win– win vs. lose – lose".

Responsibilities:
Depending upon the size of the garden, the coordinator may be responsible for all of the following, or may call upon committees for help:

- Respond to questions and concerns of gardeners and other volunteers.

- Plan, coordinate and supervise special work projects.

- Make sure that the Rules and Regulations devised by the Steering Committee are adhered to.

- Mediate in disputes between gardeners, with the approval of the Steering Committee

- Keep a record, both photographic and written, of the garden's progress.

- Keep a record of minutes from all committee and group meetings.

- Provide horticultural information, with help from local experts, if necessary.

- Assist committees in carrying out projects.

- Coordinate mailings of newsletters or announcements.

- Write reports to donors.

- Disperse money and keep a record of expenditures, subject to the Steering Committee's approval.

- Solicit donations for the garden site and for special events such as seeds, plants, mulch, lumber, refreshments.

- Form relationships and networks with other organizations that can offer support to the garden.

- Recruit volunteers for special projects.

- Assist in planning and supervising planting, maintenance and clean up of the site.

- Assist gardeners in harvesting and weeding, if they are unable to do so themselves.

- Arrange for guest experts to address the group on topics of interest.

- Maintain tools and equipment.

- Represent the garden at events and media opportunities.

- Knows how to listen

THE FINANCE & FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE:
Responsibilities:

- Begin to prepare a detailed budget itemizing all aspects of the garden's development. Use the inventories (Resources on Hand & Needed), prepared in the initial planning stage and add to them as the project becomes more detailed. Remember to include volunteer labour and items that might be donated "in kind" (goods and services, instead of cash). Many organizations which provide funds do so on a matching basis and will usually consider "in kind" donations to be acceptable.

- Identify and approach sources of funding, both public and private.

- Solicit service clubs, local businesses, individuals, and corporations for donations (cash and in-kind).

- Attend special functions and meetings with funders.

- Network and establish relationships with potential funders.

- Plan and conduct fundraising events.

- Oversee expenditures

- Evaluate the success of their fundraising efforts.

- Ensure follow-up and thank you to the donors from the community garden group

- In conjunction with the Steering & Membership Committees decide upon a fee structure (whether or not you will charge a fee for the use of the plots, will it be a flat fee or a sliding scale based upon ability to pay, size of plot, number of gardeners per plot, etc.).

- Be sure to thank donors. Enlist the help of the Communications Committee. Consider having a volunteer appreciation day during the summer to gather all of the garden's contributors together. (in conjunction with the Social Events Committee).

Possible committee members:

- Anyone with past experience as a fundraiser, either professional or volunteer.

- Community leaders (financial, business, and community service)

- Professional administrators

- Writers

- Media, marketing and public relations professionals

- Gardeners

- Steering committee members

- Garden coordinator

THE SITE COMMITTEE
Responsibilities:

- Site acquisition: Create a list of potential sites and evaluate them on their suitability

- Approach site owners about arrangements for the use of the site. If you don't know who the owner is, most municipalities will provide that information through the Planning Department or the Hall of Records. Often a city councilor can help find this information and assist in the approach to the owner.

- Site inventory and assessment: As soon as a suitable site has been acquired, a detailed, scaled plan should be drawn up, showing existing features of the site and its surroundings.

- Decide what materials will be needed and how they will be obtained. Many local merchants may be willing to donate materials such as lumber, soil, seed, sand, paving materials etc.

- Now is also the time to identify construction and gardening skills within (or close to) the group and to assign tasks based upon those skills. If you're lucky there will be carpenters, landscapers or stone masons that are willing to help with the site construction.

- Site design

- Coordination of site preparation, including layout of plots and soil improvement.

- Construction planning, coordination and overseeing implementation

- Coordination of water facilities and irrigation (this may be a job for a subcommittee).

- Ensuring the upkeep of maintenance standards, with the help of the coordinator.

- Organizing spring and fall cleanup.

- Special projects

- Composting facilities

Possible committee members:

- Steering Committee members

- Garden coordinator

- Gardeners

- Master Composters and Master Gardeners

- Landscape architects or designers
- Others with landscape construction or other construction backgrounds

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Responsibilities

- If necessary, the membership committee should outreach into the community to find more participants. Based upon the previous experience of committee members, decide upon an outreach strategy. Often word of mouth is more effective than putting up notices or handing out flyers, but each community is different. Go with what has worked in the past, but don't discount new ideas too quickly. City councillors' offices can often be enlisted to help with this, as can community centres.

- Decide whether there are any membership requirements such as geographic, age, etc. Try to be as inclusive as possible.

- Prepare and maintain an inventory of the members' skills, expertise and interests. This is especially important for recruiting committee membership and during the garden's construction. Make sure to get this information from new members as they join. it can be part of a registration form.

- Decide upon obligations of participation: Most community gardens ask their members to participate in a certain amount of group work days per year, usually for spring and fall clean up. All members should participate in these activities

- it increases the sense of community. If some members are unable to participate because of physical limitations, find something else for them to do. But excusing a member from a group activity because they are: "too busy and don't have the time" is not a good idea.

- Draw up a draft Rights and Obligations of Membership. Establishing clear rules (or guidelines) now can head off arguments later on. Include clear procedures for settling disputes and consequences for contravening the rules. The committee draws up a draft and presents it to the entire membership. Comments and suggestions are incorporated into the draft to create a final set which everyone agrees to. The consequences of contravening the guidelines/ rules should be clearly spelled out and understood by all members, in whatever language they are most comfortable.

- Now is also the time to decide upon a fee structure (whether or not you will charge a fee for the use of the plots, will it be a flat fee or a sliding scale based upon ability to pay, size of plot, number of gardeners per plot, etc.). Consult with the Finance Committee.

- Other things to consider (see Things to consider when drawing up Guidelines, Rights and Obligations of Membership) are policies around organic vs. chemical fertilizers and pesticides, plot upkeep, water use, donations of produce to a food bank or shelter, children in the garden. Include these policies in the Rules and Guidelines. Consult with the Site Committee, if

necessary.

- Once all of the above has been decided, draw up draft "contract" which all members must sign in order to become a garden member and should be available in languages spoken by garden members. This will include the Rights and Obligations, the garden's Rules and Registration procedures, etc. It is also presented to the entire membership and voted on before it is accepted (see Suggested Rules and Regulations from the ACGA).

- Keep a written and photographic record of all garden events, projects and activities with the help of the coordinator.

- Involve and encourage participation by local schools, community centres, social agencies, etc.

- Plan and coordinate special events with the Site, Fundraising, and Social Committees.

Possible committee members Any garden members Garden coordinator Social service sector professionals and volunteers Writers, professional and amateur Lawyers or those with legal experience.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
Responsibilities

- Develop and maintain an up to date list of all garden members, including phone numbers and mailing address.

- Develop and maintain an email mailing list, "telephone tree", or other similar system for quick communication to all members.

- Keep records of the garden's development, including photographs, before, during and after. These will come in handy when seeking donations.

- With the Steering and Membership Committees, assist in outreach to new members and in publicizing the garden to the community. For example, create a flyer or poster about the garden. Or create a website where people can find out more about the garden and your plans. Include photos and contact information.

- Assist the Fundraising Committee with preparing funding proposals and thanking donors. There are many creative ways to do this: create a certificate that can be put up in a local store, write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, give them a basket of vegetables from the garden, write a thank you letter and include photos of the garden, include their name on the garden's sign, include them in the garden's newsletter; etc.

- Write, publish and distribute a newsletter that is informative and educational to all gardeners, donors, and other interested community organizations and leaders. Your first efforts need not be much more than a page or two. As the garden grows in size and activity there will be plenty to include.

- Plan and coordinate special events with the Site, Fundraising, and Social Committees.
Possible committee members

- Writers, professional and amateur

- Anyone with desktop publishing or web mastering experience
- Garden coordinator

- Photographers, professional and amateur

- Members of the local media

- Anyone who enjoys talking on the telephone.

- Graphic artists

- Gardeners

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- Identify local horticultural experts, such as Master Gardeners who would be willing to conduct workshops or answer questions on topics of interest to the gardeners.

- Schedule and advertise workshops and talks by these experts.

- Survey the gardeners themselves to find out the level of existing knowledge and what they would be interested in learning more about.

- Setup a workshop series.

- Develop and maintain a resource library for the use of the garden members.

- Form alliances with other garden organizations.

Possible membership:
- Master Gardeners

- Master Composters

- Local garden experts

- Community Food Advisors

- Gardeners

- Garden coordinator

- Teachers

- Librarians

- Landscape Architects and designers

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The social committee can be one of the most important groups of the garden. It is through social events that the gardeners begin to get to know each other and a sense of community is created.

Responsibilities:

- Planning, coordinating and hosting at least two large social get-togethers during the gardening season (i.e., Spring Welcome, Mid summer barbecue, Autumn Harvest festival), as well as one during the colder months to keep the sense of community alive. Celebrate your achievements at every step of the way. There is no reason to wait until spring to hold a garden party.

- Propose, plan and coordinate other social activities such as trips to botanical gardens, pick-your-own farms, plant nurseries, etc.

- To be responsible for refreshments at meetings, group work days, etc.

- To participate in the newsletter, perhaps with a column of upcoming events. Possible membership

- Anyone who likes planning or hosting parties

- Cooks, amateur and professional

- Garden coordinator

- Gardeners

2. THE ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING STAGE STEP 2: ACCEPTANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Hold another meeting of the general membership and report on the work of the committees and the progress made towards the creation of the community garden.

- It is at this meeting that the draft Guidelines / Rules / Rights and Obligations of Membership will be presented and possibly accepted as is. The Steering & Membership Committees will have proposed a method of voting (either by majority or consensus), which should also be included in the Guidelines.

- If not accepted as is, the committee will meet again and incorporate suggestions before presenting it again.

- Depending upon decisions made in committee about a garden coordinator, a search for suitable candidates can begin.

- If garden sites have been identified, the membership can offer their opinions on suitability.

- Assess priorities and decide upon next steps. If it is getting close to spring, the committees should meet as often as necessary to ensure that the garden will be ready in time for planting.
- The work of the Site Committee will become a priority until the garden is in the ground. (Week 3 will deal exclusively with Getting the Garden into the Ground)

3. DEVELOPING GUIDELINES, RULES AND REGULATIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

No matter what you call them, every garden needs a basic set so that all members know what is expected of them and what they can expect in return. Having them in place from the beginning can head off many problems down the line. Keep them positive and strive for "Guidelines" rather than "Rules". For example, "We value our resources. Be sure to put all tools away." vs. "No leaving tools out." provides a reason that people can understand and respect and will, hopefully, comply with.

The Membership Committee will draw up a draft and then present this to the general membership for comments, changes and approval. Comments and suggestions are incorporated into the draft to create a final set which everyone must agree to. The consequences of contravening the guidelines/ rules should be clearly spelled out and understood by all members, in whatever language they are most comfortable. This now forms the basis of the contract among gardeners (and sponsoring agency, landowner, etc.) and is signed by each person when registering for membership. (See a sample of suggested rules by the American Community Gardening Association, below)

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN DRAWING UP GUIDELINES, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP:

- What are the eligibility requirements for membership in the garden?

- What rules will be needed?

- How will the rules be adopted?

- How will the rules be enforced?

- If a gardener ignores these and other rules, what is the procedure for dealing with this?

- Will there be a fee for the plots? How much and what services, if any, will be provided to gardeners in return?

- When are fees/dues collected?

- Will the gardeners meet regularly? If so, where how often, at what time and for what purposes?

- Will the garden be run communally or will each gardener have his or her own plot?

- If communally, how will the harvest be shared or will it go to a food bank or other organization?

- How will plots be assigned: by family size, by residency, by need, by group, lottery or first come, first served?

- When someone leaves a plot, how will the next tenant be chosen?

- Will there be a waiting list? Who keeps it?

- If there is a fence, will the garden be kept locked at all times? Who may have a key? - How will the group deal with vandalism?

- Will the group do certain things cooperatively (such as turning in soil in the spring, planting cover crops, or composting) or is it up to the individual?

- How will maintenance be handled both in common areas (such as along fences, in flower beds, and in sitting areas)?

- Is there a group work responsibility? If members do not contribute, what will be the consequences?

- What will be the generally accepted level of maintenance that gardeners must adhere to (weeds, messiness, etc.). How will this be enforced?

- Will the garden be organic (no chemical pesticides or fertilizers)? How will this be enforced.

- Will gardeners share tools, hoses, and other such items? How will they be provided and maintained?

- Is watering to be the responsibility of each gardener or will that duty be shared. How will it be shared?

- Will there be any plants that should not be grown (e.g. corn gets too tall, squash takes up too much space, etc.)?

- How big should a garden plot be? (this will depend entirely upon the size of the overall garden site and the experience level of the gardeners For example, 4ft x 8ft. (1.2 x 2.4M) might be a good size for a senior or first time gardener but would be too small for a family or experienced, enthusiastic gardener.)

- Do all plots have to be the same size? Or, should new gardeners begin with smaller plots? Working with a basic module may be the easiest way--experienced gardeners can have 2 modules.

- Is there any restriction to the hours that the garden is open?

- How will extra money be raised?

Sample Rules and Regulations from the American Community Gardening Association The following guidelines are just suggestions. You should adapt them to your particular situation and needs. The best rules are those that the gardeners participate in drawing up. Make sure that the rules that you adopt are enforceable and fair. Every gardener should be given a copy in a language in which they are comfortable and they should also be posted in a prominent place.

I will pay a fee of $ to help cover garden expenses. I understand that of this will be refunded to me when I clean up my plot at the end of the season.

- I will have something planted in the garden by (date) and keep it planted all summer long.

- If I must abandon my plot for any reason, I will notify the manager.

- I will keep weeds down and maintain the areas immediately surrounding my plot if any.

- If my plot becomes unkempt, I understand I will be given 1 week's notice to clean it up. At that time, it will be re-assigned or tilled in.

- I will keep trash and litter cleaned from the plot, as well as from adjacent pathways and fences.

- I will participate in the fall cleanup of the garden. I understand that the $ deposit will be refunded only to those who do participate.

- I will plant tall crops where they will not shade neighboring plots.

- I will pick only my own crops unless given permission by the plot user.

- I will not use fertilizers, insecticides or weed repellents that will in any way affect other plots.

- I agree to volunteer hours toward community gardening efforts. (include a list of volunteer tasks which your garden needs).

- I will not bring pets to the garden.

- I understand that neither the garden group nor owners of the land are responsible for my actions. I THEREFORE AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS THE GARDEN GROUP AND OWNERS OF THE LAND FOR ANY LIABILITY, DAMAGE, LOSS OR CLAIM THAT OCCURS IN CONNECTION WITH USE OF THE GARDEN BY ME OR ANY OF MY GUESTS. Date_____
Signature of garden member: Signature of the Coordinator:

4. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Any new use of land in an established community will stimulate curiosity and positive and negative reactions. As the new kid on the block, it's important to inform the neighbours about what you are doing and why. And it's equally important to invite them to participate in the garden, even if you know or think you know that they are not interested. Make sure to include an invitation and method to join on the garden's sign.

Neighbours can also be a wonderful resource to the garden. If they are willing, ask them to keep an eye out for trouble, as you will offer to do for them. It is well documented that community gardens increase public safety by having more "eyes on the street", often at irregular hours, such as early morning and evening. Ask about local soils and growing conditions, wildlife, pedestrian shortcuts, historic uses of your site. Don't forget to invite everyone in the neighbourhood to the garden's parties, even if they aren't members--maybe they will join. And sharing a bit of the harvest is a neighbourly thing to do.

If the neighbours seem reluctant to endorse the idea of a community garden, or express the opinion that the garden is sure to become an eyesore, show them photos of other successful community gardens and, of course, make certain that the garden is always well maintained. It's also a good idea to include some flowers in your garden, especially in high visibility areas. With foresight and planning, the garden can become a source of neighbourhood pride, rather

than a point of contention. Tend your neighbourhood as well as your garden.

5. VANDALISM

Vandalism is an affliction of just about every community garden at one time or another. There is no one handy answer on how to prevent it, but most community garden groups are able to control it after a while. Most vandalism occurs because of boredom, jealousy, and ignorance.

The immediate reaction of just about every fledgling community garden group, when confronted by that first raw evidence of vandalism, is to put up a fence. While this can sometimes be effective, it can also incite even more destruction. Even if you put up an enormous fence, topped by razor wire, there will be some incredibly persistent individual who sees it as his life's mission to get over (or under, or through) that fence. Besides, who would want to garden inside that sort of prison?

A situation in which a fence makes sense is where the garden is likely to be a target of dogs or balls. In these cases, a four foot high fence is plenty. What's more, with this type of fence you can take the opportunity to create a garden feature. Encourage a friendly competition among gardeners, neighbours, children, friends, to design individual wooden pickets for the fence. Fences can also be used to grow flowering vines, such as morning glories, or as supports for grapes, beans, cucumbers or other space-greedy climbers. Or come up with some other creative approach to fence building. It doesn't need to be expensive, as professionally installed anti-vandal fences usually are.

The most successful anti-vandal strategy seems to be to invite the vandals to participate in the garden. You may be scoffed at, both by the vandals and by your fellow gardeners, but there are numerous examples of the success of this tactic from all over North America. The vandals, usually bored kids, often turn out to be the most active gardeners, as well as an excellent deterrent to other vandals. Get past anger and feeling victimized; don't grow animosity; grow gardeners! Like with conflict, youthful indiscretion is an opportunity to learn and teach. If this strategy isn't possible, the next most successful approach is to keep repairing the damage that they do. Hopefully, they'll eventually get bored and move on. It can be quite heartbreaking to be confronted with the terrible evidence of their work, especially after your group has put its heart and soul into the gardens, but the best way to keep your spirits up is to quickly replace and repair, just as you would if the damage occurred because of a hail storm or other naturally occurring garden destroyer.

And finally, some vandalism isn't purposely malicious, but happens because there are, unfortunately, too many homeless people who, in addition to being without shelter, do not have access to affordable, nutritious food. Community gardens located in areas of this kind of desperation can expect this kind of "vandalism". It is far better to plant an extra plot or two and invite them to help themselves. Better still, invite them to join the garden. It is, after all, a community garden.

HERE ARE A FEW COMMON SENSE PRECAUTIONS TO FOLLOW:

- Locate the garden in a highly visible area. Ask neighbours of the garden to keep their eye on it and reward them (from the garden) for their efforts.

- Know who belongs to the garden and who doesn't. Exchange names and phone numbers. Pass out membership cards or buttons, or come up with some other method of easily and discreetly identifying gardeners.

- If the garden has a locked gate or storage bin, keep careful record of the keys. If you use a combination lock, remind the gardeners to keep the combination to themselves.

- Keep the garden well maintained to show that you care about the space

- Repair damage immediately to send a strong message that the gardeners are in control of the garden, not the vandals.

- Display a sign saying who the gardens are for and how to participate.

- Harvest produce daily during peak season. If some gardeners will be away during harvest time, arrange to have someone else harvest the plots. The less temptation, the better.

- If your garden seems to be beset by a nightly "harvester", a discreet stakeout by two or more gardeners may be necessary to identify the culprit. But be careful! Don't try to confront him or her on the spot. That is better left to daytime hours, and by the coordinator and another person in authority

- Plant more than you need and set aside a plot, near the entrance, for people who truly need the food and are not malicious vandals. Add a sign saying "If you need vegetables, please join our community garden. If you need food today, then please pick from this plot only."

6. TROUBLESHOOTING

At this stage of the startup process most problems occur because of trying to move too fast, not taking the time to find enough members, and most importantly, not sharing the responsibilities among members. No matter how well this principle is understood, there is always the temptation to do it yourself, if not everything then most things. It may be easier at the time but in the long run it will create problems and will be more difficult to recruit others into positions of responsibility. Time taken at the start to ensure that there is a sharing of the load will be time well spent.

Week 2 Questions

Question 1: How would you deal with last minute opposition?

You've done all of your advance work, put flyers up in the neighbourhood, held 2 community meetings at your house, got a tight group of 7 people all keen to create a community garden, and everything is ready to go for the first work day in the garden. The night before you get a call from your city councillor who has gotten a call from an irate neighbour of the site, who claims not to have heard anything about the project until today. The person is convinced that "welfare bums, homeless and worse" are going to invade the neighbourhood. The councillor isn't familiar with the particulars of your project, though you did send him a flyer. 1: What will you do and what could you have done to have avoided the problem in the first place?

Question 2: Too many people, too few plots…

Everyone is excited about the new community garden–30 people have signed up but you only have 25 plots. What will you do?

Question 3: too many weeds, too few gardeners…

The new community garden has gotten off to a roaring success. Some of the gardeners are very experienced and some are first-timers. The first timers are enthusiastic and are planting every square inch of their plots. Many of them are in their plots every evening after work during May

and June, really getting into gardening. Now it's the end of July, hot and humid and the first-timers aren't spending every spare moment in their plots anymore--in fact, 2 of the plots are getting quite over grown, plants are going unharvested and the weeds are starting to move out of the plots and into the paths. The other gardeners are getting a bit perturbed about the weeds and want you to do something about it. QUESTION 3: What do you do?

Question 4: Groundrules: how do you ensure that all understand them?
It was decided at one of the planning meetings to make the garden strictly organic This was included into the garden's bylaws, which were handed out to everyone with their registration form. Since everyone in the garden seems to speak passable English, translations were not made. It's the end of June and aphids are invading the garden. One of the older gardeners, Mr. Nowicki, sprays his tomatoes with a very un-organic chemical spray. He decides to be neighbourly and also sprays his neighbours' tomatoes on each side of his plot. When some of the other gardeners see him doing this, there's an uproar. Mr. Nowicki, for whom English is a second language and whose eyesight is poor, doesn't understand what the fuss is about. As far as he's concerned he has done his neighbours a favour. QUESTION 4 :What will you do and how could you have avoided this situation?

Question 5 : A sustainable start-up?
The mother of a friend of your 9 year old daughter calls you with the idea of starting a small garden at your kids' school. You think it's a fantastic idea and agree to help her get it started. You volunteer to talk to the principal and see if it's feasible. The principal is cautiously enthusiastic and suggests that you talk to the teachers at their monthly staff meeting the following week. The other mother thinks that's a good idea but she can't go to the meeting because she's too busy that day. You go anyway and the teachers seem to be interested and think they might use a garden for science class if lesson plans were available. The principal agrees to a small test garden. When you tell the other mother she is very excited and tells you that, although she can't be there, she can get her husband and her teenage son and lots of his friends (who have a community service requirement) to dig the garden that weekend. The ball is really rolling now. QUESTION 5: What's going on here, what do you think happens next & why?

Week 3: Getting it into the Ground

1. ACQUIRING A SITE 2. SITE SELECTION 3. SITE DESIGN

ACQUIRING A SITE
As a starting point, look for empty parcels of land within your neighbourhood. If none exists, look for businesses with large lots that are under utilized or a school, hospital, nursing home, or senior's residence that is interested in sharing the garden, or for possible sites within a municipal park. If you are in a rural area, perhaps there is a farm or market garden nearby that would be willing to rent your group some land. Once you have identified a potential site, you must now find out who owns it and come to an agreement about the use of the site. Ownership can be determined by checking records in your municipality's Land Registrar office, if it is privately owned, or if it is public, by checking with the municipality's Buildings Department for the zoning and permitted usage. If there are zoning problems, the next step is to contact the Planning Department to see if a community garden can be accommodated or if the zoning can be changed. Some municipalities are willing to accommodate community gardens within their parks. It's also good idea to enlist the help of your local Councillor or alderman and the residents' association in the neighbourhood.

Something to remember whenever dealing with any office of your local government: be persistent and be patient. It always takes longer than you would think possible. Once you know who owns the land, schedule a meeting with the owner to discuss the use of the land as a community garden. If possible, invite a prominent member of the community who is a supporter of the project as well as someone with a legal or real estate background.

It's helpful to have ready a one page description of your project to give to the land owner, neighbours, city officials and potential fund-raisers. Keep it brief and include the following information:

- Definition of community gardening, aims and purposes

- Your garden's mission statement

- Names of garden members

- What will be grown

- Year round maintenance plan

- Background of the sponsoring agency or group

- Name, address and phone numbers for at least two contact people

- Attach letters of support

Talk with the neighbours of the site, especially those immediately adjacent. Explain your intentions, invite them to participate and assure them of your commitment to maintain the site. Ask them to sign a letter of support for the project. Once you have agreement in principle with the site's owner, you must now work out the terms of use and prepare a written agreement that will form the basis the site lease. Points to consider include:

- General purpose

- Property description and location

- Utilities (water, electricity, etc.)

- Inspection of site

- Length of lease

- Option to renew

- Lease termination

- Lease modification

- Fees

- Maintenance

- Insurance

- Hold harmless clause

- Nondiscrimination clause

Many private owners require that you carry your own liability insurance, while municipalities can often include your group in their insurance. There is no one policy that covers community gardens. The best advice is to work it out with a sympathetic insurance broker. Some owners may be willing to have all participants just sign a "Hold Harmless" clause. This sets out in writing that you will absolve the owner of any liability but it will not provide any sort of coverage for the injured.

A presentation to the City Council or a Residents Association may be required. Be well organized, clear and have examples and pictures of other successful community gardens. Bring as many supporters as possible to these types of meetings. Landowners need to feel confident in your group's ability to carry out the project. Keep them well informed, in writing, of your plans, past experience in community-based projects, and of your progress. Make sure to send them the monthly newsletter and, most of all, invite them to become a member of the garden.

SITE SELECTION

What makes a good site for a community garden? Location, location, location…and plenty of sun! Community gardens should be just that–a garden within the community. Ideally they are located within easy walking distance of all participants or are accessible by public transport. If you have to drive or travel more than a very short distance by bus or subway, chances are that you won't garden as often as you would if the garden is located just down the street from your home. In order for it to truly be a community garden it must be an integral part of everyday life in the neighbourhood. Of course there are several important factors in choosing a garden site. These are:

SUNLIGHT: A vegetable garden should receive at least six hours a day of sunlight. A bit of dappled shade in part of the garden is desirable for a sitting area, but the growing areas must receive full sun for as long as possible. If you don't have this kind of sun, and there is no other available site, look into growing those plants that can tolerate more shade than most. There isn't a wide range of typical garden vegetables that do well in the shade, but don't despair–think creatively.

SOIL QUALITY: The most important factor for success of any garden, whether it is a community vegetable garden or a meadow regeneration project, is the soil. Without a living, healthy soil every ounce of energy and every penny that you put into your garden will be wasted. It makes much better sense to concentrate the garden group's energy, especially in the first year, into adding organic matter (compost, manure, mulch) than in buying expensive, synthetic fertilizers that promise astonishing yields and giant vegetables. These chemical fertilizers need to be applied every year and, in the bargain, kill off the natural, beneficial soil organisms that do the work for free.

Chemical fertilizers are to plants what steroids are to bodybuilders. Every site should have a soil test, not only for nutrient content but also for contaminants. But first, investigate the past usage of the site–was it used for housing, commercial or heavy industrial use? If so, there is a

good chance that the soil contains toxic contaminants and may make the site unsuitable for gardening without first replacing or otherwise remediating the soil. Contaminant tests can be quite expensive, so if you can narrow the scope of the tests by providing information that will tell the labs what to suspect, you can save some money.

Nutrient tests will tell you the ratio of nitrogen to phosphorous to potassium, or NPK–the 3 numbers on fertilizer labels–as well as the soil's pH. Some testing services will also report organic matter content, calcium, magnesium, sodium, sulfur and trace minerals. OMAFRA (Ontario only) supplies a list of these accredited labs to gardeners, as do many other provincial and state agricultural extension offices. The cost for nutrient testing is usually under $20.00 (contaminant testing is considerably higher), and depending upon the time of year, it may take a month or more to get the results. If time is of the essence, many nurseries and garden centres sell kits for testing pH and NPK at a comparable or slightly higher price.

In addition to nutrient content, soil texture is another important selection criteria. Soil is made up of organic components (humus) and inorganic components (sand, clay and silt). The ideal soil has lots of organic matter and a combination of the tiny rock fragments of sand, silt and clay. The relative proportion of these factors influences the soil's water retention capabilities, drainage, oxygen content, and fertility. Sandy soil drains too quickly to hold water for long and so adversely affects the soil's fertility. Clay soil sticks together, forming hard, dense crusts that roots and water have trouble penetrating. The addition of organic matter, especially in the form of compost, can improve any type of soil.

DRAINAGE: In addition to the soil's characteristics, the drainage of the site as a whole is very important. Improving the soil texture will help the general drainage, but if the site is unevenly graded, the low areas will hold water regardless of the texture. If your site has problem areas, regrade it to redirect the water elsewhere, but also examine the texture. If the problem doesn't resolve by regarding and adding organic matter, the cause may be underground. Often subterranean springs, leaking water pipes, buried paving and other unknowable factors are the cause of wet areas that just won't go away. In cases such as these, don't fight it. Plant a miniature wetland or use plants that love to have their feet wet at all times.

Water: Easy access to water is vital to garden success. If there isn't any running water on the site, investigate the cost of providing it. If that is too prohibitive or is not possible due to zoning or lease conditions, perhaps an adjacent neighbour will allow the (newly formed) Water Committee to run a hose or fill holding barrels once a week, either for contributions to the water bill or for a share of the harvest. And if that isn't possible, the committee should purchase some rain barrels (there are several good ones on the market these days) and the gardeners encouraged to practice water conservation techniques, such as mulching and bottle drip irrigation.

PROXIMITY TO POLLUTION SOURCES: Air born pollution is an ongoing vexation for any gardener who wants to use organic gardening techniques, whether in the city or in more rural areas. The wind knows no boundaries and pollution that originates in one part of the country is quite capable of affecting a garden hundreds or even thousands of kilometers away. Combating long range pollution requires a political approach. Combating more immediate pollution sources can take a more horticultural approach.

The most common source of air born pollution that you can do something about comes from car exhausts. Common sense tells us to keep the garden, especially the food plants, as far away as possible from busy roads, parking lots, situations where cars sit idling their engines (traffic

lights, stop signs, drop off and pick up areas). If that just isn't possible, plant an ornamental (non-edible) strip, such as a hedge or a vine on a fence, to act as a filter. Remember, the farther away from the pollution source, the better.

Lead paint is another problem pollution source. The soil of many older building sites are contaminated with minuscule flakes of lead-based paint. This is especially hazardous to children, who have a much lower tolerance of lead than do adults, because of their smaller body size. The only way to determine if lead is a problem at your site is to have the soil tested for contaminants. Be sure to alert the soil lab to the possibility of lead when you send in your sample. If you get a positive test result, the only way to use the site safely would be to remove the contaminated soil and replace it with healthy soil. Depending on the size of the garden, this could be prohibitively expensive. Look for another site or build planters that will allow you to grow food crops in the good soil and keep the other soil for ornamentals only. If you use this approach, make sure that all of the gardeners are aware of the health hazard and that children are not allowed to play in the contaminated soil. Even the small amount of lead absorbed by just getting your hands dirty is too much for a child.

Another type of pollution that occurs more often in urban areas than in rural ones is from road salt. Again, locate the growing areas as far away from the pollution source as you can, and encourage garden neighbours as well as your municipality to use sand rather than salt on their sidewalks and roads. Small areas of salt contamination can be improved by removing the top 5–20 cm. (2"–8") of soil, watering the excavated area heavily in order to dilute the salt as much as possible, and then replacing it with healthy soil with a high organic matter content. Plants used in this remediated area should have shallow root systems that will remain within the new soil zone.

SAFETY: A good location for a community garden is in a highly visible, well traveled area. Out of the way locations are potentially unsafe and open to vandalism. A garden that is visible is much safer and is more likely to become a source of community pride if it is in view at all times. Some type of lighting is also advisable, especially if members like to visit the garden at night. Take care to adjust the lights so that they illuminate the garden and do not annoy the neighbours. And finally, make it possible for the gardeners to identify each other and to distinguish between friend and foe.

ACCESS AND SERVICES: Look for a site that allows easy access by the gardeners, their bicycles and, occasionally, their cars and by delivery trucks. Nearby public transportation and adequate parking is important if the gardeners are coming from outside the neighbourhood, but make sure that they don't take the locals residents' spaces. Another vital site criteria is the proximity of public washrooms and telephones. If there are no public facilities, consider renting a portable toilet, but get the approval of the neighbours first. Locate it in such a way that it will be as unobtrusive as possible and plant some tall flowers around it as an added precaution.

SITE DESIGN BASE PLAN The first step in designing the garden is to prepare a drawing done to scale, called a base plan, showing the exact dimensions of the entire site. Depending on the size of the site and the size of your paper, a scale of 1/4"=1'-0" (or 1:50 metric) is a comfortable scale to work with. You may be able to obtain a survey of the site from the owner which you can enlarge. If not, get a long tape measure (50 ft. or more) and measure it yourself. Base your measurements from a fixed point, such as a sidewalk, building, or light pole.

SITE INVENTORY After you have drawn the basic site outline, plot all of the existing features

of the site on one or more tracing paper overlays (tracing paper is available in rolls at art and craft supply stores). Include such features as:

- sun and shade patterns throughout the day
- drainage patterns
- objectionable views, noises, smells, etc. that need screening, or conversely,
- desirable views that you do not want to block
- wind patterns and direction
- changes in elevation (slope)
- existing trees, shrubs and other plant material: type, exact location, trunk diameter, canopy spread, height, planting bed shape and dimensions, condition and quality
- existing buildings that border the site
- existing structures within the site (fire hydrants, steps, signs, light poles, sidewalks, etc.)
- circulation patterns: pedestrian and vehicular inside and outside the site (i.e. is there a traffic light or parking lot adjacent to the site that will result in pollution from car exhausts or has the site been used for a long time as a pedestrian short cut?).
- soil quality: texture, contaminants, pH, organic matter, areas of compaction, etc.
- and any other things that you can think of, the more the better

DESIGN Landscape design, whether for a small community garden or for a large park, is a process of taking stock of what you already have (the site inventory), brainstorming what you would like to have, and combining the two to see what it is possible to create. Ideally, the entire group should participate in the brainstorming exercise. Put several large sheets of paper (flip charts are handy) on the wall and write down every idea, no matter how impossible it may sound at the time. List them all without prioritizing them at this point in time.

Some of the types of features you may want to include are:
- individual plots
- communal plots (for fruit, flowers, tall or space-greedy crops such as corn and squash)
- raised accessible beds
- children's plots
- shady sitting area
- sunny sitting area
- picnic / barbecue area
- compost bins
- garbage containers
- signage
- storage shed
- notice board
- children's play space
- pathways: paved and unpaved
- water
- naturalized area (i.e. butterfly garden, bird habitat)
- fencing
- lighting
- screening of objectionable views
- border planting for pollution filtering

After you've listed everything, put more tracing paper over top of the base plan and the inventory drawings and explore different layouts of the various features you have in your list. At this stage just use a bubble diagram style of drawing–show the approximate size and shape

of the feature, not the details. You can do a more specific drawing after you've settled on the basic layout. The important thing to remember is to explore every idea and possibility. And don't be stingy with the tracing paper.

PLOT LAYOUT The most important feature of any community garden is the garden plots themselves. It is a rare site in which every plot is blessed with perfect sun, gentle breezes and easy access to water and the compost pile. Since some areas of the site will be more desirable as garden plots than others, make sure to use the best areas for plots and the secondary areas for non-growing functions, such as sitting and children's play areas.

There is no one perfect size for a plot. It will depend upon the size and shape of the overall site, upon the interest and abilities of the individual gardeners and upon the number of people eating from that plot. Devise two (or more) standard size plots for your site. Make one half the size of the other, to give gardeners a choice. Not everyone wants, or is capable of dealing with, a large plot and the work it demands to keep it in good shape. And there isn't any law saying that plots have to be square or rectangular. Circular or curved plots can be an efficient use of space in an oddly shaped site, as well as providing visual interest.

A good size for a basic plot where space is not an issue is 3M x 6M (approximately 10' x 20'). This size will enable a family to grow a good supply of vegetables for the summer, and with planning, have enough to put up for the winter. Within these dimensions, gardeners can layout their crops in rows or in the more space-efficient intensive beds, whichever appeals to them. Rows allow for better air circulation and are easier to cultivate, weed and harvest if there are a lot of plants involved. Where space is an issue, a plot can be as small as 1.2M x 2.4 M (4' x 8'). In this situation, intensive planting techniques are key. Intensive beds are designed to accommodate more plants in a smaller area than row layout can, so for a small urban site they will enable gardeners to harvest much more per plot. Another advantage of this type of layout is that, because of close spacing, the vegetable plants themselves shade out weed seedlings in much the same way that plants in a natural ecosystem do. If you use a bed layout system, beds with a path on both sides should be no wider than 1.2 meters (4 feet). This allows the gardener to reach halfway across the bed comfortably from either side. Any wider and the bed should have an internal path.

PATHS A well defined path system is essential, not only to make it easy to get gardeners and materials to and from their individual plots, but also to keep the plots well defined and to keep the peace among gardeners. Cover the paths in some well-draining material that is different from the mulch used in the plots, such as shredded bark, pea gravel, sod, etc., and, if the budget permits, edge the paths with wood, plastic edging, bricks or stones. Garden plots have a way of slowly gobbling up any unclaimed space, and fights between gardeners can break out if any one's plot gets noticeably bigger while the paths become increasingly narrower. For paths between plots, plan on a minimum width of 75 cm. (30 inches.) to allow a wheelbarrow to be pushed up to a garden plot with relative ease. For main paths (between sections of plots), 1.2 meters (4 feet) is desirable. When you first layout the site, these will seem too wide, but don't be tempted to narrow these minimum widths. Any smaller than that and you'll have a difficult time of it, especially by mid-summer when the growing plants will be overhanging the paths.

SHARING THE SUN AND THE SPACE If possible, orient the plots along a north-south axis, that is, with the longest sides running from north to south. This will give the plants maximum exposure to the sun and minimize shading problems. Encourage gardeners to plant with regard to their neighbours. That means not planting tall crops, such as corn or sunflowers, in such a way that they'll shade out another gardener's smaller plants. If this is likely to be a

problem for several, consider preparing a communal corn plot at the back (north end) of the site, so that everyone can have fresh corn without contention. Several community gardens ban corn, potatoes and squash from all plots because of the problems they cause, but this seems like overkill. Having just-picked corn is one of the reasons many people garden in the first place. As for the space-hungry squash family, they're also ideal candidates for the communal plot. They can be grown along the fence, if you have one, or on some other vertical means of support, if you don't have a fence. Just remember to locate the trellis where it won't eventually shade out other plants.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU A community garden can provide a opportunity for people to be creative in ways that they haven't explored since childhood. Some of the most successful community gardens offer many ways in which to grow. Not everyone involved in the garden has to be a gardener. Some can rediscover art, carpentry, or learn about composting. A skills and interests inventory of the garden members can yield interesting results. Many gardeners will want to identify their plot with a sign or other marker. The group may want to take the opportunity to design similar plot signs for everyone or may want to start a friendly competition to design the most individual marker. Remember to make any competition fun and an occasion for everyone to get to know each other better. It's virtually impossible for all gardeners to be in the garden at the same time. Someone with carpentry skills could build a rainproof bulletin board for announcing garden events and for passing along information to the gardeners. People can do many amazing things–if you ask them.

TO FENCE OR NOT TO FENCE? Will you put in a fence? In areas with a lot of vandalism fences can help to cut down on pilfering but only an 8 ft high razor wire will give guarantee and who wants to garden behind that? They do prevent dogs, balls and the casual vandal from entering. If you decide that a fence is needed, consider something other than a chain link fence, if the budget will permit. If not, then hide the fence by using it to grow vines.

THE WORK PLAN: Well, you have the land, your group has come up with a design that everyone is happy with, it's springtime and you're more than ready to get going. After much discussion, the Site Construction committee decides that the work can be done in 2 stages: the first Saturday will be clearing and preparing the land and the second one will be laying out the plots and paths.

The dates are set (as well as rain dates) and here's what you have to do (not just you–remember it's a group effort):
- Organize work crews (the more the better) well in advance of your work day. Know who is going to show up and what their skills are. Call them the day before to confirm that they will be there and to remind them to wear the proper clothing (boots, gloves, etc.).
- Have several copies of the design and layout plan on site. They always seem to get lost, wet or muddy so keeping one in reserve is a good idea. Your layout plan should have measurements of all of the important design features easily readable. (plot and path dimensions, distance from fence, etc.)
- Figure out in advance what soil amendments you will need (based upon your soil test). If you are planning to add compost or topsoil, make sure it is at the site the day before your work bee. (see note below to figure out how much to order)
- Call before you dig–the catch phrase that reminds us to find out from the local utility companies what services they have underground at our site and which ones we'll be in danger of hitting if we don't get a stakeout. This service is usually free but can take a week or more to schedule. Call them well in advance.
- Have all the tools you will need ready and waiting. Don't leave it up to the workers to bring

whatever they may have at home. Make a list ahead of time and tell people what they need to bring. If tools need to be rented, arrange for someone to do that. Have work gloves and other necessary safety protection available.
- Have plenty of refreshments available, especially water. Encourage people to wear hats and have sunscreen on hand if the weather demands it. This is a task for the Social Activities Committee!
- Depending upon the work to be completed and the number of volunteers, you may want to organize into work crews with specific tasks. Perhaps someone in your group has experience in landscaping or in managing construction crews. If so, delegate!
- First up is cleaning and preparing the site. That means removing the sod, tilling the soil and adding compost and manure. Taking up sod by hand is not easy but can be made less difficult by using sharp straight-edged spades and lots of volunteers. Sharpen the spades with a file and keep the file handy for re-sharpening. Mechanical sod lifters can be rented but do not use a rototiller for sod removal. They are meant to till soil, not chop up grass. Start by perforating a length of the grass with the sharp edge of the spade. Then do the same to a length parallel to the first line but spade's width away. Then slip the flat end of the spade under an end of the grass and skim it just below the grass roots, getting as little soil as you can. With some practice and if your spade is sharp you should be able to roll up the sod into nice neat rolls. (This takes practice :-)
- Don't forget you'll need to get rid of the sod once it is lifted. Shake off as much soil as you can to reduce the weight. If there is a bare spot somewhere else on the property, and if you have removed the sod neatly, you can place it there. If not, then stack them off to the side for later use.
- Depending upon the design of the site you may want to add the soil amendments to the whole site or just to the individual plots. If to the plots only, then layout the plots first and till in the amendments after. The following is when you are adding to the entire area:
- Use a tiller or dig in by hand to mix in the soil amendments.
- Rake the soil as level as possible, but allow for a slight slope for drainage.
- Lay out the plots with string and stakes. You have already figured this out on paper ahead of time so it should be relatively easy.
- If possible, plan to have some kind of paving material for the paths. Seniors and disabled people will appreciate a firm surface to walk on. This doesn't need to be hard paving–it can be shredded bark, straw, pebbles, patio slabs, or even grass (if you want to mow it).
- Celebrate your achievements! The first step towards a summer of gardening has been taken.

RESOURCES: TEN TOOLS EVERY COMMUNITY GARDEN NEEDS

Gardeners may not agree on the best mulch or the perfect fertilizer, but there's one thing that every gardener agrees on: when it comes time to purchase tools, buy the best. Quality garden tools are an investment that yields dividends over time. Here are the top 10 gardening tools every community garden should own.

1. Trowel A well-made trowel is your most important tool. From container gardening to large beds, a trowel will help you get your plants into the soil. Every gardener should have one.

2. Hand Fork A hand fork helps cultivate soil, chop up clumps, and work amendments into the soil. A hand fork is necessary for cultivating in closely planted beds.

3. Hoe A long-handled hoe is a gardener's best friend. Keeping weeds at bay is the purpose of this useful tool.

4. Secateurs (Hand pruners) Invest in a pair of quality pruners, such as Felco, which is clearly a cut above. This sturdy pruner is used for clipping rose canes, cutting back perennials, and any other trimming jobs that need to be done.

5. Watering can Haws are the best in the business. This English watering can creates a fine even stream of water that delivers with a gentleness that won't wash seedlings or sprouting seeds out of their soil.
6. Fork You can't dig and divide perennials without a heavy-duty fork (and some dividing methods even suggest you own two!).
7. Shovel The sharper the better, a shovel is a requisite tool for planting large perennials, shrubs, and trees. The most basic act in the garden is breaking ground, so it stands to reason that a sharp shovel will be a key player
8. Wheelbarrow Wheelbarrows come in all different sizes (and prices). They are indispensable for hauling soil, compost, plants, mulch, hoses, tools...everything you'll need to garden.
9. Gloves Unless you want to wear your favorite hobby under your nails, use gloves. Leather gloves hold up best. If you have roses, get a pair that resist thorn pricks.
10. Hose. This is the fastest way to transport lots of water from your water source to your garden.

TOOL CARE TIPS: You didn't spend all that money / effort to get your tools, only to have them rust away. A true gardener values her/his tools.
- Clean up. Clean all soil from digging tools after each use. If soil has dried, use a wire brush or even a knife.
- How to handle handles. If wooden tool handles are damp, set the tools in the sun to dry before storing. At the end of each gardening season, rub linseed oil or tung oil into handles.
- Stay on the cutting edge. Don't forget to sharpen cutting tools and blades of shovels and spades during the gardening season. Frequently used tools dull quickly, so keep a whetstone or a sharpener in your tool arsenal.
- Chase rust away. Damp tools welcome rust. After each use, wipe down metal parts of pruners, shears, and loppers with an oily rag. This will help keep rust at bay.

- **HOW TO FIND WHAT YOU NEED** Most gardeners are born scroungers or eventually learn to become one. There's a lot of free or nearly free material out there that, with a little effort, can be turned into something of use for the garden. Keep your eyes and mind open!

RESOURCES
- Manure: It doesn't have to be bought in bags. Check local stables, including the police, if you are in an urban area.
- Leaves for mulch and compost: Most municipalities now collect leaves for their own composting programs. Either beat them to it on collection days or order their finished product.
- Grass clippings for mulch and compost: Rake it up yourself, raid neighbour's curbside collection bags, but beware of herbicide-treated lawns.

- Wood chips for mulch and pathways: Power companies, tree service companies and municipalities chip their trimmings, usually right on site.
- Miscellaneous mulch and soil amendments: Food processors, coffee grounds, rice, peanut and buckwheat hulls, apple and grape pomace; monument companies for granite dust (a potassium source); feed mills for corncobs, farmer's spoiled hay and straw, construction companies for straw and topsoil.
- Scrap wood: Old pallets (great for making compost bins), dumpsters at lumber yards and construction sites, wooden packing crates (often perfect as planters, just as they are). Just make sure that it isn't pressure treated wood (the stuff with a green color).
- Scrap metal: Pipes for posts, trellises can often be found in dumpsters at construction sites.
- Fencing: Scrap wood from various sources (see above), used snow fence (sometimes free from

fence companies who rent it to construction companies).
- Gallon plastic buckets: These come in handy for watering, container gardening, hauling anything and everything, protecting newly transplanted seedlings, mixing ingredients. Can be found at restaurants, construction sites, dumpsters.
- Trellis materials: Plumbing companies will often throw out damaged or small pieces of PVC (plastic) pipe. Also, old snow fence makes good plant supports. Free or inexpensive seeds and plants: Many nurseries, garden centres, seed companies, and Parks Departments will give away seeds and annual plants at the end of the planting season (usually around mid
- June).
- Tools: Garage sales, auctions, second hand stores, tool lending libraries.

- **COMMUNITY GARDEN WISH LIST** If your group is just starting up and needs everything, or if you're looking for something specific, consider publishing a "wish list" in your garden newsletter, local newspaper, or tell your local garden or service club. Horticultural Items:
- topsoil, compost, potting soil
- seeds, bulbs, bedding plants, cover crop seeds
- perennials, shrubs, fruit bushes and trees shade trees
- manure, bone meal, blood meal, other natural fertilizers
- soil testing kit
- mulching materials such as shredded leaves, cocoa bean hulls, coconut straw, hay,
- shredded bark, wood chips, black plastic, corrugated cardboard
- insecticidal soaps, hand held sprayers Equipment and Supplies:
- hand tools: forks, spades, shovels, trowels, dibbles, rakes, hoes, cultivators
- secateurs (pruning shears), loppers,
- child-sized hand tools
- wheelbarrow and garden cart
- garden hose, soaker hose, drip irrigation systems and parts, spray nozzles, hose reels, water barrels, watering cans
- rototiller, chipper-shredder, mower, edger (you may only need these items once a year so think about renting or sharing with another garden)
- plant labels, plot markers, signs, indelible markers
- plastic, wood or metal edging
- plastic and clay flower pots, all sizes
- seedling trays, peat pots
- wooden planters
- locks and chains
- fluorescent lights, timers
- fabric row covers, cloches
- gloves, kneeling pads
- tool caddies, tool aprons

HOW MUCH DO WE NEED AND HOW MUCH WILL IT COST? Everyone's first question is, "How much does it cost to start a community garden?" Well, that all depends upon what you have and what you want. Much can be scrounged or recycled (see "How to Get What You Need" below), and the rest can be bought or donated. But you have to know how much you need before you can figure out what it will cost. And when you know that, then always best to call local suppliers and get more than one price for big ticket items, to make sure that you are getting the best value for your money. Calling landscapers, fencing companies, soil suppliers and lumber yards for prices will help you put together a budget and if you tell them it's for a community garden project, maybe you'll get a better price or even a donation!

FENCING Fencing is sold by the linear or running foot (or meter), prices depending upon the height of fence you want and the type (wood, chain link, snow,wrought iron, etc.). The price usually does not include a gate. So if you want to have a 6 ft high fence around the garden, add up the sides: for example for a garden that measures 70 ft + 85 ft + 72 ft + 90 ft = 317 linear ft. When you get the price of $15 per linear ft that would be 15 x 317=$4755. Since that's waaay too expensive for your budget, consider a 5 ft or 4 ft high fence instead. Hint: ask if the price includes installation

FIGURING OUT SOIL VOLUMES: Remember geometry class? To figure out how much volume of topsoil, mulch or compost to order, you need to find the volume. Take the area (length x width) and then decide how deep you want it and multiply by that number to get the cubic measurement (volume). It sounds easy, but there's a little wrinkle. Chances are you've figured your depth in inches (or centimeters), but your length and width in feet (or meters). If so, you have to convert the inches to parts of a foot so that everything is in the same unit of measurement. (if you are working in metric, just move the decimal point) 6" =0.5 ft; 4"=0.33 ft, 2"=0.15 ft, etc. OK so it looks like this: an area of 50 ft x 70 ft = 3500 sq. ft times a depth of 0.33 (3") = 1155 cubic feet But soil is sold in cubic yards, not cubic feet. So now divide your cubic feet by 27 and you'll wind up with cubic yards: 1155 / 27=42.78 cubic yards. (that's because one cubic yard is 3' x3' x 3' or 27) Hint: the smaller the amount you want, the more expensive per cubic yard it will be because you are paying for the delivery.

TIMBER: If you are building raised beds, retaining walls, or wood fencing, remember that a 2x4 really measures 1-1/2" x 3-1/2" and a 4 x4 is really 3-1/2" x 3-1/2". Strange but true. These days, using pressure treated wood is a no-no, because it's made with toxic chemicals that leach into the soil and can get taken up by plants. Cedar last just as long as the p-t but isn't toxic. However, it does deplete our forests. So look for reused or recycled timber or find another solution. Hint: Don't use old railroad ties --they've been treated with creosote which is toxic to plants.

Week 3 assignments

Assignment #1: make a list of materials, suppliers and prices

1. Make a list of local suppliers and prices for the following items. Even if you don't need this stuff right now, it will come in handy when you do and you'll impress everyone with your knowledge. Get at least 2, better yet 3, prices:

- chain link fencing, 4ft ht, 5ft ht, 6ft. heights
- cedar 2x4, 4x4 in 8 ft, 10ft and 12ft lengths
- concrete patio squares in 18"x18" and 24" by 24" sizes. What colours do they come in?
- triple mix topsoil: 2 cubic yds, 7 cubic yds. How many yards in a truck load?
- round cedar fence posts, 8 ft & 10 ft lengths--what diameter do they come in?
- wire fencing 4"x4" square (sometimes known as hog wire or farm fencing) How is it sold--by length or roll, how long is a roll? How wide is it?
- rental of a rototiller by the hour and weekend. What size (horsepower) is available?

Assignment #2: make a site inventory 2. If the weather permits, make an inventory of your site and locate all of the elements onto a base plan, drawn to scale. This will involve measuring the entire site accurately and is best done with 2 people--one to hold the tape measure and the other to write it down. If you already have a garden started, do it anyway. It will come in handy.

Assignment #3: calculate yards of composted needed 3. Your site measures 64 ft along the

west, 97 ft along the north, 45 ft along the east and 98 ft along the south. 75% of the site will be plots and the other 25% will remain as is, to accomodate a sitting area, compost etc. You have decided that the soil needs to have 4" of compost added to improve the quality. How many cubic yards will you have to buy? (Hint: don't forget to change inches into feet and cubic feet into cubic yards--see HOW MUCH DO WE NEED AND HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?)

Week 4: Fundraising

1) KEYS TO FUNDRAISING SUCCESS
2) THE ABC'S OF PROPOSAL WRITING
3) AFTER THE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN SUBMITTED
4) TIPS FROM FUNDERS

1) KEYS TO FUNDRAISING SUCCESS Though many of these ideas seem pertain to grants from foundations, the basic principles still hold true for other, less formal fundraising methods. Even if you are holding a bake sale or asking your local hardware store for in-kind donations, the keys to success are the same--know your project, prepare a realistic budget, and thank the donors!

SOME BASIC FUNDRAISING RULES:
1. Know your project inside and out. Be thoroughly familiar with your group and the project, its mission or mandate, goals and objectives, the benefits to the members and to the community, the organizational structure, activity time lines, etc. (all the work you did in Week

2. Research potential sources of funding thoroughly. The internet is the best place to start. Find out if they fund projects like yours. Just because their published information indicates that they might, things change year by year and this may not be reflected in that information. Call them up and find out before you go to the trouble of writing a long application. Some foundations require a letter of intent (a brief description of the proposed project) before they will let you apply. And some foundations want you to speak to a grants officer directly or even submit and outline of your proposal before you apply. Do not send a generic, boiler plate, unsolicited proposal to a long list of funders without first finding out if they are a suitable match for your project.

3. Read the Instructions. When dealing with any funder, remember to read the instructions carefully before applying. Simple as it may sound, this advice is very important. Because grantmakers receive so many applications, they are often quick to discard those that do not comply with the instructions. Although the remaining applications may not be the best of those submitted, they have made it over that all-important first hurdle. Follow instructions! Repeat the funders words back to them. If they state that job creation is a priority for them, then you had better have something about how many jobs you will create. Funders look for this and don't mind if they find their own words in your proposal. Just make sure you have tell them how you will accomplish your goals (and theirs) in your own words. And don't be afraid to repeat yourself from section to section, expanding as you progress. It shows consistency of your project and ensures that the important points get across to the grantors, who may not read every page of your proposal. You will find that I have repeated many important things in this week's lesson, on the same principle.

4. Prepare a well thought out, thorough budget, but don't box yourself into a corner by excessive itemization. Always ask for slightly more than you need--there's always something you didn't foresee. But be careful about artificially inflating your budget. Grantors make it

their business to know how much things cost and will see through $5,000 for photocopying–unless your proposal involves creating a resource manual or large mail campaign . Be sensible.
4. Ask for in-kind donations for items such as tools and seeds from a local businesses. That way you don't need to spend the money that you raise on these items. Community-based businesses are likely to be interested in your project and want to support you but they may not be able to give you money.

5. Be creative! If a business that has nothing to do with gardening wants to help, hold a community fundraising auction of donated items. Don't turn any donations down even if you can't figure out what to do with them at that particular time.

6. Submit letters of endorsement from community partners, well known people or groups active in the community gardening field, community leaders and activists, politicians supportive of your project, and individuals and groups who have been helped by your project or others like it.

7. Ask an experienced fundraiser or someone with similar skills to read and comment on your proposal before submitting it. Ask a friend or group member to double-check for typos and inconsistencies and to make sure that you have included all asked-for appendices. And double check your math!

8. Timing is important–willingness to contribute may depend upon the ups and downs of business. Many funders have deadlines for applications while others receive them at any time. Also look to see what the timing is between submitting your proposal, when you will be notified of acceptance and when you will receive the money. Some have fast turn around times and others are very slow–which could affect your start time and the eventual success of your project. Waiting till June or July for garden start-up money is VERY frustrating.

9. Spread out your requests over several donors-don't put all your eggs into one basket. Most donors know that they cannot fund all aspects of each project. They like to see other funders and partnerships.

10. Make sure to thank your donors, both privately and publicly. This holds true for a $20 private donation as well as a $20,000 grant. It is essential and will help to get repeat donations in subsequent years. Some creative ways to publicly thank donors: include their name on a sign, write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper, create a certificate of appreciation for hanging on a wall (especially good with store owners). For example, if you hold a bake sale and couldn't possibly thank each person who bought a pie, then write a letter to the editor of your paper, thanking all who participated in the event. They will like it and it has the added advantage of making more people aware of your project and need for funds.

11. Keep a scrapbook with media clippings, letters of support, design drawings, photos, etc. Take before, during and after photos of the site and give them to the donors. They like to see what their money accomplished–and they'll be more inclined to continue the support.

12. If your proposal is not approved, ask the funder how the proposal could have been better and try again, perhaps with another funder or with the same one.

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2) THE ABC'S OF PROPOSAL WRITING

A. BEFORE YOU APPLY

a . DO YOUR HOMEWORK:
There are a lot of funding bodies out there--all levels of government, large and small private & family philanthropic foundations, corporate foundations. But don't send out generic funding proposals or letters of inquiry. Taylor your proposal to the funder. Just about every granting organization has a website. It is there that you will find everything you need to know: who are the funders that might be a fit with your project, their mission, aims, and focus, their granting process, deadlines, past grant recipients and descriptions of projects funded, probably even their proposal form. Speak to other organizations who have received money from the funder. Ask for tips in styles of approach that the funder might like. Find out if they are a hands-on or arm's length funder. Depending upon your project, you might appreciate a funder who sees themselves as your partner. The more you know about the funder, the better they like it and the better your application will be because of it.

b. LETTER OF INQUIRY/INTENT Many funders do not like unsolicited proposals. They prefer a a letter of inquiry to determine whether you and your proposal falls within the their guidelines. In this case, an inquiry letter is sent or they may prefer for you to contact a grants officer by phone with the same intention. This should also be on their website or you can call to inquire. A letter of inquiry or intent is very succinct, and attachments are not included. If the funder determines the group and project fit within it's scope, you will be directed to submit a complete proposal. If not, a decline letter is usually issued at that time. A letter of inquiry should have the following:
- Does not exceed two pages (one page is recommended)
- Includes funder's name, title, and address
- Is directed at the individual responsible for the funding program
- Provides a brief overview of the organization and its purpose
- Includes the reason for the funding request
- Includes the amount requested (if required by funder)
- Describes the need the project intends to meet (including target population, statistics, example)
- Provides a brief description of the project
- Lists other prospective funders for the project
- Includes thank you and next step to be taken
- Includes name and phone number of contact at the organization -Is signed by the person who can speak with authority on behalf of the organization

B. WRITING THE FUNDRAISING PROPOSAL Fundraising proposals are all about imagining how things could be better and how you would make that happen. No matter which funder, all proposals are essentially the same, just the specifics are different. But before you write anything, check to see if your funder has a particular form or format they want you to follow. It will still ask for these items, but perhaps with a slight twist.

THE PARTS OF THE PROPOSAL
All fundraising proposals must contain the following: a. Cover letter b. The community need that you are addressing and why c. Who you (& your group) are and why you have the ability and credentials to take on the project d. Your program's goals and objectives and how this will address that need e. The project activities and a timeline to accomplish the goals and objectives--be specific. f. The project budget: what resources you need to make it happen and how much it is going to cost, item by item as well as other sources of funding, including in-kind

donations g. Future and other sources of funding (what you will do after their money has run out) h. Evaluation: what are your project's deliverables (what did you say you would do for their money) and what method will you use to measure and evaluate the success (or failure) of the program. i. Attachments and appendices

a. THE COVER LETTER Cover letters are normally brief, just one page to introduce the applicant and summarize the attached proposal. Never make the mistake of stating the requested grant amount or some crucial project detail ONLY in the cover letter–some foundations separate the cover letter and attachments from the proposal itself during the application review process. Do not worry if some sentences from the full proposal are repeated exactly in the cover letter. The first paragraph traditionally indicates why the project is a good match for the funder's guidelines and refer to any relationship with the funder (Did you meet with a program officer? Do you know a board member? Did you hear a foundation representative speak at a conference?). If applying to a company, you can indicate how many employees volunteer for your organization or if an executive serves on your board of directors.
The second paragraph should give a summary of the project and the "ask amount," suitable for the program officer to use in internal documents that list all pending proposals. The third paragraph might note your enthusiasm for the project and describe how other funding can be leveraged for this gift. If appropriate based on your funder research, offer to host a site visit or provide additional information or call the funder in two weeks to check the proposal's status. Indicate the contact person for the proposal, who might be different from the Executive Director or Board President who signs the letter. Some writers include an emotional story in the cover letter, but unless you know that a small family foundation appreciates a personal and dramatic appeal, keep the cover letter short and to the point. Leave the stories and anecdotes for the proposal itself.

b. THE COMMUNITY NEED THAT YOU ARE ADDRESSING AND WHY Needs documentation is the process of finding evidence of the need in your community for grant funds. Needs documentation is at the core of grant writing and is a critically important section of the proposal. Information based on objective research, not subjective impressions, should be provided to justify the need or problem. (See Readings for Week 1 for some data) A problem statement or needs assessment should meet the following criteria:
- Describes the target population to be served
- Defines the community problem to be addressed and the need in the geographical area where the organization operates
- Is related to the purposes and goals of the applicant (the garden group's goals–remember the mission statement and goals from Week 2?)
- Is of reasonable dimensions

- not trying to solve all the problems of the world
- Is supported by relevant statistical evidence (also from Week 1)
- Is supported by relevant anecdotal evidence
- Is supported by statements from authorities
- Is stated in terms of the community's needs and problems

- not the applicant's personal needs (you may be writing it because you need a job, but you can't state that in the proposal)
- Is developed with input from participants and beneficiaries
- Is not the "lack of a program", unless the program always works
- Makes no unsupported assumptions

- Is as brief as possible
- Is interesting to read
- Is free of jargon
- Makes a compelling case Additional needs documentation can be attachments to the main proposal or they can be anecdotes within the body. In either case, keep them short.

c. WHO YOU (& YOUR GROUP) ARE AND WHY YOU HAVE THE ABILITY AND CREDENTIALS TO TAKE ON THE PROJECT In addition to convincing the funder of the extent of the need for the proposed project, you must also demonstrate that your group has the ability to complete the project and meet the deliverables.

This section describes the group and its members and the sponsoring agency (if you have one) and your qualifications for carrying out the project. It establishes your credibility. If yours has previous history as a community group, the past programs and accomplishments will be examined in light of how they addressed community needs. If you are a new group, the abilities and experience of your individual members will be important, as is the work you have done to date in creating your organization (Week 2's work). It is important to convince the funder that you are approaching this project in a responsible and organized manner.

Many funders require that you be a registered charity or nonprofit organization. Since this can be beyond the capacity of a neighbourhood group that wants to start a community garden, it is often permissible to partner with another group or organization with charitable status. In this case, they act as the contractual partner and are legally responsible for the deliverables of the grant. A contract should exist between your group and the contractual partner to ensure for most eventualities. It is important, when seeking a contractual partner, that their mandate supports yours and that you are not in competition for the same funder now or for the duration of the grant. Many funders will not fund more than one project from a group at a time. Others will.

Having said that, a proposal will often sink or swim based on the need for the project and the project methodology, not on the accomplishments of the overall organization. Therefore, don't make the mistake of devoting half of the proposal to the history or previous programs of the group or sponsoring agency. The qualifications section should meet the following criteria:

- Clearly establishes who is applying for funds
- Briefly addresses the rationale for the founding of the group or the sponsoring agency
- Describes applicant agency's purposes and long-range goals, or your group's mission statement
- Describes applicant's current programs and activities
- Describes the community makeup
- Provides information and proof of the applicant's accomplishments
- Offers quotes/endorsements in support of accomplishments
- Supports qualifications in area of activity in which funds are sought
- Describes qualifications of key members
- Provides other evidence of competence
- Leads logically to the problem statement
- Is as brief as possible
- Is interesting

d. YOUR PROGRAM'S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AND HOW THIS WILL ADDRESS THAT NEED

This section of the proposal is a succinct description of what the organization hopes to accomplish and how your goals will address the need that you identified in the previous section. You will have done this work when first organizing the garden group–in the Readings & Assignment for Week 2 your group wrote out a mission statement for the garden project. You have also written up the group's goals and objectives which should support the mission statement. Be reasonable when selecting your goals and objectives. Be sure that you can deliver them. You cannot change the world, just a little part of it.

Program goals and objectives should meet the following criteria:
- At least one objective for each problem or need committed to in the problem/mission statement
- Objectives are outcomes
- Objectives are not methods
- Describes the population that will benefit from the program
- States the time by which objectives will be accomplished
- Objectives are measurable and quantifiable (if at all possible)

e. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINES This section describes the specific activities to be conducted to achieve the desired objectives. Generally, a straightforward, chronological description of the activities of the proposed project works most effectively. You can even use a bar chart with a time line but be sure to include enough information about each activity. This section:
- Flows naturally from problems and objectives
- Clearly describes program activities
- States reasons for the selection of activities
- Describes sequence of activities and the length of time they will take
- Describes who will be doing the activities
- Presents a reasonable scope of activities that can be accomplished within the time and resources of the program
- Provides a timeline of activities and milestones for the deliverables of the project

f. THE PROJECT BUDGET: WHAT RESOURCES YOU NEED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN AND HOW MUCH IT IS GOING TO COST, ITEM BY ITEM All proposals should include a budget which clearly delineates costs to be met by the funding source and those provided by other parties, as well as donations in-kind. Most funders will provide you with the budget form they would like you to use. If not, it's best to use a columnar, bookkeeping format or Excel spreadsheet format. (Unfortunately the limitations of the Community Zero website do not allow me to format the sample budget below.)

Budgets should not be submitted in narrative form. Depending upon the size of the project and the amount of money you need, the budget will be more or less complicated than the following information advises. In other words, if you are asking for $5000, your budget will be a lot less complicated than if you are asking for $50,000.

A project budget should be detailed, including all anticipated revenues and projected expenses, including in-kind donations of volunteer labour and things (see the Wish List and Resources List from Week 3). Expenses should relate directly to the tasks in your work plan. Show how estimates were made for any large items (for example, if you are requesting $5,000 for tools, provide details such as what the tools are and what they cost to buy or rent)

All expenses to be covered by the granting foundation should be clearly identified. Keep each

source of funding and what they cover separate from the items for this funder but show them all in the same chart nevertheless. Funders don't get jealous if you have other sources of money.

When you list in-kind donations (volunteer hours, space, rent, equipment) attach a dollar value if possible. The accepted average value of volunteer hours is $12.00/hour. In-kind donations and volunteer hours should be listed in a separate column from other revenues.

Budget expense information should delineate personnel costs (if any) such as salary and benefit information, and non-personnel expenses such as facility and site costs (rent/mortgage, utilities, insurance, maintenance, taxes), equipment, supplies, fundraising and outreach expenses (including printing, postage, etc.), meeting or workshop costs, travel, administration/bookkeeping. These should be reflected in both the expense and income columns. In other words, what the item is, how much the item costs and who is paying for it. Sources of income should be listed separately because budget sheets may be separated at the time of review.

Sources should be actual funders, not merely prospects. However, pending proposals (ones that have already been submitted) may be listed separately, if desired. Sources of income may include proceeds of fundraising events, government funds, corporate/private grants, individual donations, etc. A budget should meet the following criteria:
- Tells the same story as the proposal narrative
- Is detailed in all aspects
- Includes project costs that will be incurred at the time of the program's implementation
- Contains no unexplained amounts for miscellaneous or contingency
- Includes all items asked of the funding source
- Includes all items paid for by other sources
- Includes all volunteers
- Includes all consultants
- Details fringe benefits, separate from salaries
- Separately details all non-personnel costs
- Includes separate columns for listing all donated services
- Includes indirect costs where appropriate
- Is sufficient to perform the tasks described in the narrative.

SAMPLE BUDGET
This is just a sample budget, drawn from several funding experiences. The dollar amounts are completely arbitrary and are not based upon any particular project or current costs. I have not included information in the TOTAL column, but you should. And my math may not be perfect, so don't try to catch me out ;-) This is NOT the format in which you should submit your budget. Your funder will most likely supply the format that they want you to follow. Unfortunately the limitations of the CommunityZero website do not allow me to format it in a chart or Excel. It is best to start the budget on a separate sheet from the narrative part of the proposal. Many funders have separate committees looking at different aspects of the proposal.

Round out figures to dollars--no cents--and round up by $5 ($20 rather than $18), if sensible. Remember, if you get too specific you will regret it later. Give yourself reasonable latitude but don't pad the budget.

Name of Project: COMMUNITY GARDEN : Start Up year 1
BUDGET ITEMS XYZ FOUNDATION OTHER IN-KIND TOTAL PERSONNEL

- volunteer labour in-kind 200hrs@ $12/hr
- paid part time garden coordinator-
- $20,000 Federal Job Creation Fund (if you are looking for a separate grant for this, list the name. If it is in-kind–from sponsoring agency–list that) SITE costs associated with acquiring the site, including fees paid to govt. for title info, insurance, and rental of land, if necessary.
-land rental $1/year
- water $5,000
- soil test $100

EQUIPMENT:
- Tools to buy $3000 (for 10 spades, 40 trowels, 10 rakes, 10 garden forks)
- Tools to rent $200-rototiller in-kind Jack's Rentals
- Composter $15
- Picnic Table $45 Home Depot in-kind
- lawn mower $150 in-kind Jack's Rentals $30/month x 5 months)
- Hose & sprinkler $100
- Storage shed $600 Wheelbarrow $75

MATERIALS
- Plants $1500 (Friends of the Earth Fdn)
- Seeds $500(Friends of the Earth Fdn)
- Soil $400
- Planters $600
- Amendments $300
- Lumber for gazebo $1000
- hardware $300
- Paving $1000
- Gravel $250
- Fencing $2500
- Paint $400

OUTREACH
- photocopying of flyers $50 in-kind The Agency
- design and artwork $500 in-kind The Agency
- Mailing costs $100 in-kind The Agency
- meeting & workshop expenses $600 in-kind The Agency (ie. room rental, PA system, refreshments, etc.)
- Garden sign $500
- website design services $500 (in-kind R&B Design)
- domain name fee $100

RESOURCES
- gardening books $500 in-kind private donation
- gardening magazines $300 in-kind private donation

PROJECT EVALUATION
- cost of designing and implementing survey $500 in-kind The Agency
- printing/copying $150 in-kind The Agency OTHER specify TOTAL EXPENSES $16,241 $21,500 $7,195 (per column)
REVENUE List amount received from each funder separately: -Grants from other funders – (Rotary Club, United Way, etc.) -Fundraising Revenue – (bake sales, fundraising dinners, events,

etc.)
- Other Revenue – (membership fees, etc.)

- In-kind Revenue, including labour from volunteers (figured @ $12.00/hr Federal Job Creation Fund: $20,000 for salary of part-time garden coordinator (I should have broken it out to include the benefits, etc.) Friends of the Earth Fdn grant pending $1500 for plant material Bake sale $250 Auction $1000 Garden membership 30 members @ $10 each $300 In-kind: In-kind volunteer hours 200 hrs @$12/hr $3600 The Agency -in-kind donation of admin. and office costs, postage, printing, mailing, phone ...etc.–you get the picture Jack's Rentals... TOTAL REVENUE FROM IN-KIND AND OTHER DONATION SOURCES $_____ AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM XYZ FOUNDATION $_____

g. FUTURE AND OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING (what you will do after their money has run out) This section describes a plan for continuation beyond the grant and/or the availability of other resources necessary to implement the grant. Is the project sustainable without more funding–if so, how have you ensured that it will be; if you need more money, do you have a future fund raising plan? The section on future funding should meet the following criteria:
- Presents a specific plan to obtain funding if program is to be continued
- Describes how maintenance and future program costs will be covered (if applicable)
- Describes how other funds will be obtained, if necessary, to implement the grant (include individual solicitation efforts specifically aimed at this project)
- Includes list of other funders approached on behalf of project (name of funder, date of proposal submission, amount requested, current status)
- Has minimal reliance on future grant support from this same funder ----------

h. EVALUATION Proposals must include a plan for determining the degree to which your objectives are met and the methods are followed. This section is extremely important as funders pay particular attention to evaluation methods since they need help determining whether a proposed project represents an intelligent investment for them. They want any project with which they are associated to succeed. The evaluation section should meet the following criteria:

- Presents a plan for evaluating accomplishment of objectives

- Presents a plan for evaluating and modifying methods over course the program

-Tells who will be doing the evaluation and how they were chosen

- Clearly states evaluation criteria

- Describes how data will be gathered

- Explains questionnaires to be used

- Describes the process of data analysis

- Shows how evaluation will be used for program improvements

- Describes any evaluation reports to be produced Indicators of success are concrete & tangible measures that tell you how you will determine if your project is successful. These may include measures with numbers, such as how many people took part, or it may be the

completion of a project or a shift in people's opinion or behavior, depending upon the goals you have identified for the project. For a grant to fund construction of a community garden, this section can be as simple as stating that you will prepare photographic documentation (before, during and after) as proof of the garden's growth, along with any media stories about the garden, workshop flyers, interviews with gardeners. But if your mission statement includes more extensive and lofty goals, such as improving people's health, then your evaluation deliverables will also be more extensive. Include the timeframe for the implementation of each component (i.e. # of weeks, months, etc.) The granting process does not end with the submission of the piece of paper to the funders. You are responsible for whatever deliverables you set for yourself in the proposal--so be realistic. For example, if your goal is to improve participants health through dietary improvement, you will have to document how many servings of vegetables they eat before the garden starts, during the season and after the garden is finished for the season. You'll also need to know information about their health before, during and after
- how much exercise they got/get, how often they visit the doctor, etc. Some of this can be anecdotal, ie. ask them how they feel since being involved in the garden and some will have to be more specific with data to back it up.

i. APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS Some attachments are recommended in all proposals, while others may be included at the author's discretion. The funder may also ask for specific items. Double check to insure that you have included everything. Make sure you submit the number of copies of your complete package that they ask for (this is usually in the very beginning or very end of their guidelines or information for applicants--if you haven't read the form completely, you can easily miss it.

Generally funders will look at only one or two articles/endorsements so carefully select the best recent ones to submit. Letters of support can come from other organizations whose mandate is similar to yours or whose mandate your project will support, from local politicians, community leaders and people who have been helped by the project or by similar ones if yours is not yet in existence. Letters from people add an intangible quality to your application. They paint a picture of the problems in a way that dry statistics cannot. If a parent of a child in your garden, for example, tells you how helpful your efforts have been, ask him or her to write you a letter. Don't wait for a grant application to ask for a letter. The parent won't be as enthusiastic and you might forget who gave you the compliment.

Do a favour to the people you are asking for letters of support. When you first ask for the letter, inquire if it is all right for you to write a draft of the letter for them that they can then put into their own words. Most will welcome this. In the draft, outline the main points of the proposal and why they and their organization support it (e.g. it will be good for the community, it supports their work, etc.) Include the name and address of the funder and don't forget to send them a copy of your proposal and the budget. Remember to thank them, whether or not you get the money.

Appendices may include:
- Verification of tax-exempt status (if applicable)
- Names and affiliation of officers and Board of Directors members (if applicable)
- Financial statements for last completed fiscal year (audited, if available)
- Partnership agreement between your group and other partners/ the contractual partner
- Current general operating budget and special project budget (if applicable)
- List of clients served (if appropriate)
- List of other current funding sources

- Biographies of key personnel (only if requested)
- Articles/endorsements (no more than two unless specified)
- Organization's by-laws

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C) AFTER THE APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED

You followed the rules, filled out the forms, and submitted your application. After a long nail-biting period, finally you hear the results. There are three possible outcomes, denied (oh despair!), approved with a lesser budget, or approved (hurray!). What should you do in each case?

DENIED: Bite your tongue. Avoid the temptation to lash out at the funding agency. Remember, it's likely that you will seek funds from them again in the future. At some point, call and ask for some time to speak with the person that reviewed your application. You want to find out why you were rejected. It's one of several reasons: your agency or your project were deemed ineligible for funding, you failed to document the need, your project was not considered to be an effective response to the need, or you simply ranked just out of the money.

If you were considered ineligible, look elsewhere. You are wasting your time with this program. If you didn't make the case for having a severe need, ask what measures you could apply to your client population to prove the necessity of the funds. If the agency agreed that you showed need, but didn't solve the problems that you found, ask how you could design a more effective program. If the agency liked your proposal, but simply ran out of money, ask what happens next. In some instances, the funding agency sets up a "pipeline" for projects that finished just below the level of funding. If funded projects fall apart, money might be freed up to move down the pipeline to fund more proposals.

APPROVED FOR LESS MONEY: A bittersweet victory, you've been funded for less than you requested. The first temptation is to make do with less, but ultimately this is a losing proposition. If your original budget was accurate, and you received less money, something has to give. You need to achieve less, use a different method of addressing the problem, take more from somewhere else in your agency, take more time to find more money, or decline the grant altogether. The one thing you don't want to do is sign a grant agreement for a project that you can't complete with the allotted funds.

APPROVAL: Total victory, congratulations! As difficult as it was to get here, now the real work begins.

HOW TO KEEP THEM COMING BACK The first thing to do, along with cashing the cheque and lifting a glass of bubbly with your group, is to write a thank you letter to the funder. Then announce it to the community, perhaps as a press release or letter to the editor of a local newspaper, in your agency's newsletter, etc. Keep that letter and include it in the first report to the funder. They like to be thanked publicly and they like as many people as possible to see that they are doing good. Share the credit. Include the names of any supporters in your press releases. This includes volunteers and agencies that provided contributions of labour or materials.

The granting process does not end with the submission of the piece of paper to the funders. You are responsible for whatever deliverables you set yourself in the proposal and for

reporting your progress to the funders and to your community & partners.

Keep the funding agencies informed about your progress. Even if quarterly reports aren't required, they are a good idea and can be simple, if more is not required. You want the funder to feel involved as the project goes along. Most funders will require a more extensive final or yearly report. Make sure that it is submitted on time and that it includes the evaluation information as stated in your proposal and include photos of before, during and after, as well as any media stories about the project, flyers for workshops, a photo of the garden's sign with the funders name in a prominent place, etc. Many funders like to include photos of projects in their annual report or hang them on their walls, so take lots of photos. Take a basket of freshly harvested veggies to the local store that donated tools; fresh cut flowers to the woman who gave you a $100 cheque, etc. Remember, you may be approaching them again in the future
Maintain accurate financial records. Many grant source require an audit at the end of the project. Don't be afraid of the auditor, they should be viewed as an expert consultant hired to help you keep your books. Of course, you have saved every receipt!

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4. TIPS FROM FUNDERS

"One of the most common misconceptions among grant seekers is that the proposals they have submitted are read in full by the committee or board that makes the ultimate decision on grant requests. In the vast majority of foundations, this is untrue – what the committee or board receives and reads is a funding document, written usually by the lead program officer for the grant request. The funding document is typically a summary of the proposal received from the applicant, written in a standardized format, that gives the committee or board essential information about the request and makes the case for appropriating funds for that request." – Joel J. Orosz. Senior Program of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The Insiders Guide to Grantmaking: How Foundations Find, Fund, and Manage Effective Programs, 2000

- When explicit application guidelines are published by the foundation, carefully follow the instructions. If outlines or a series of questions are provided, follow the indicated order, answer each section, and avoid evasive language.
- Before mailing, ask someone else to help you double-check that every required attachment is included.
- Do not send the same generic boilerplate proposal to a random list of foundations. Always tailor the proposal and the specific budget request based on extensive research into the foundation's priorities.
- Use declarative rather than conditional verbs. Avoid the words if, could, and might. Instead, boldly declare that the gift will create a positive outcome.
- Shorter is better. Keep your prose tight and the details condensed. Never exceed the recommended page length or fiddle with margins to squeeze in more words. Foundation officers are buried in paperwork, so make your proposal an easy read.
- Document the "need" or "problem" on multiple levels. If space allows, provide a recent national statistic with the source identified by name or title and date. Next provide a statistic related to your geographic region or town.
- When submitting a proposal to a corporation, use language describing an investment, rather than a gift. Be more explicit on the benefits for the company, such as visibility through press releases or naming opportunities.
- An effective proposal describes a program for change, not a list of wants. Your organization must have a detailed plan that describes exactly where you are going and exactly how you will get there. Be specific about broad goals, measurable objectives, and quantified outcomes.
- Severity of Need: You have to show that your community needs the program. This need must

be more severe, in quantifiable terms, than the need of other communities competing for the funding. If you receive a grant, the funding agency is going to have to defend their decision to all the applicants that were denied. They do that in part by showing, with hard numbers, how you documented a greater need.
- Consistency: Is your application logical from start to finish? Are there gaps where you have outlined a problem but given no solution?
- Cost Effectiveness: Your proposal must efficiently use the grant dollars that you are requesting. Many funders look for a low cost of "deliverables" from the applications that they award.
- Your application must also be in line with what the agency typically awards. If their average grant is $5,000, your $200,000 request won't be considered favorably.

Week 5: How to Keep Them Coming Back

1. DEALING WITH GARDENER DROPOUT
2. MONTHLY TASKS FOR THE COMMUNITY GARDEN
3. CELEBRATE
4. COPING WITH VANDALISM
5. COMMUNITY RELATIONS
6. FINAL ASSIGNMENT

1. DEALING WITH GARDENER DROPOUT There probably will always be a high rate of turnover in community gardens. People sign up for plots and then don't follow through or it's like pulling teeth to get gardeners to show up for the group work days, even when they are required. Some of this is understandable--gardening is hard work especially for a first time gardener, things happen that are hard to control, meetings aren't always scheduled at the most convenient time for everyone, etc.

But if you have worked hard to form a committed group, if everyone has worked hard to overcome an obstacle (the creation of the community garden), there is likely to be a higher level of commitment than if it is all given to you with no effort on your part. The more you invest, emotionally and physically, the more likely you are to be committed. That's why support from an outside agency, while nice to have, can sometimes be a double-edged sword. If you haven't had to work hard to accomplish something special, it's much easier to lose interest and walk away.

That's one part of keeping the spirit of community alive and well. But there is also the need for ongoing stoking of the fires. A variety of strategies can all contribute to keeping the level of gardener interest and participation high. A garden that people are proud of and has something to offer the entire community, is one that will continue to be a source of community pride.

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR KEEPING THE FIRES BURNING:
- Produce a monthly newsletter. It doesn't have to be much more than a page or two and should have gardening tips and info as well as some personal notes to help the gardeners get to know each other.
- Have an email list for rapid communication but be sure to make provisions for those without email. Don't make it difficult for the gardeners to know each other's names.
- Hold at least 3 parties: in the spring, in midsummer, and a fall harvest party. These can be separate from or in conjunction with group work days and the dates should be picked for all three at the start of the season and plans made that include and commit everyone.

- Make sure to have a weather-protected message board so that the garden coordinator can easily let people know what garden chores need doing, announce upcoming meetings , parties, workshops, etc.
- Hold regular, required work days to keep on top of communal chores (keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, etc.) The frequency of these work days should be decided by the garden management group at the beginning of the season. Some gardens require attendance at monthly work bees, others require that you spend a certain number of hours per month or per season in group tasks.
- Hold regular, short meetings throughout the year, even during the winter. (the 3rd Thursday, the first Monday, etc.) . You might cut back to every other month during the winter, but no fewer than that or it will be easier to miss a meeting. Most gardeners do not really want to attend meetings--they would rather be gardening-
- so make the meetings fun and hold them in a pub or cafe.
- Work on a community project together, such as donating extra produce to a local food bank or family shelter.
- The garden coordinator should pick a specific time when he or she will always be at the garden. This can be decided with the group. That way the gardeners will know that some one is always there to help, answer questions, or just be friendly face.
- If your garden is set up in individual plots, have a communal area set aside for something special--butterfly plants, perennials, corn, herbs, etc. Make sure that whatever is chosen is something that at least 6 people want to work on. You don't want it to fall into your hands alone or it will be a sore spot with you and with the others.
- Hold a seedling sale in early spring. Arrange for the group to start seedlings either at someone's house who has a light set up or with a local school, greenhouse, etc. and plant enough so that you can sell the extras to the community and make some money for the garden. Or divide perennials and sell them.
- Hold a friendly competition. Who grows the biggest peppers, the reddest tomatoes, who is the best beginner gardener, who shows the most improvement. Combine it with a party, give out ribbons, report it in your newsletter and even in the local newspaper.
- If your city holds garden tours, get your garden on the tour. Encourage the gardeners to go on the tour to see other community gardens. Well before the day of the tour, make sure to let all your gardeners know that the garden will be visited and the honour of the group is at stake! Hold a group clean up day.
- Have a group construction project every year. It could be a gazebo, children's area, garden gate...
- Some gardens get known for a specialty. It could be producing the best compost or holding a weekly workshops or monthly barbecue and corn roast. Invite the community to participate, not just the garden members.

2. MONTHLY TASKS FOR THE COMMUNITY GARDEN Here's a list of tasks for the garden coordinator, the gardeners, and the committees to carry out. It should be the responsibility of the coordinator and the steering committee to assign the group tasks and see that they get carried out. Gardening tasks are listed here and can also be found in gardening guides that are specific to your area. The garden coordinator's task is to remind the gardeners of what needs to be done when, not to do it for them, unless they need assistance.

JANUARY & FEBRUARY If this is a new garden, these first 2 months will be consumed with organizing. See weeks 2, 3 & 4. Everything you need to do it listed there.

MARCH
- The garden coordinator, whether paid or volunteer, should be in place and involved by mid-

March.
- Order seeds, either communally or remind the gardeners.
- Arrange for an educational workshop, topic to depend upon gardeners needs. Seed starting would be an appropriate one at this time of year.
- Arrange for space in a greenhouse or under lights for seed starting. Start seeds of tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and other long season plants indoors, under lights.
- Confirm arrangements for site preparation, rototilling, etc.
- Do outreach for gardeners, if needed. Put up flyers, announce it on your local radio or newspaper, get the newspaper to do a story on the garden
- Begin to assign plots.

- Do you need any of the following: rain barrels, hoses, buckets, watering cans, tools?Do you have a system for sharing tools?
- Make provisions for secure on-site tool storage, both for small hand tools and for larger ones. If you already have a tool shed, make sure it is cleaned and ready for the season.
- How's the garden sign, the message board? Does it need repainting?
- if you don't have them already, arrange for compost bins (some municipalities provide them at a nominal charge).

APRIL
- Hold an orientation meeting with all gardeners, new and old. Explain the rules and regulation and have everyone sign their agreement to abide by them (see Sample Rules and Regulations).

- Re-assign unused plots to next people on the Garden Waiting List.
- Determine the levels of gardening skills within the group and determine gardeners' needs.
- In the beginning of the month or as soon as the soil is workable, send a sample of the soil for testing if you haven't done that in the fall.
- produce the monthly newsletter
- Weather and soil permitting, begin construction of new garden areas (new beds, plots, paving, arbours, retaining walls, fences, etc.). Don't be tempted to do any digging if the soil is very wet or is still frozen. You'll harm the soil structure and actually set your schedule back.
- When the soil is workable, hold a workbee and stake out the plots and prepare the soil by digging in compost, manure, bone meal and whatever else the soil analysis recommends.
- Encourage the gardeners to plant cool season crops such as peas, lettuce, onion sets, spinach.

MAY
- Finish any landscaping construction.
- if you didn't do so in April, prepare the garden beds after the soil has warmed up.
- Prepare a news release about the garden for the local media.
- Contact all gardeners to see if they need any help.
- Hold a mid-month work day to make sure that all plots are assigned and prepared, Depending upon your climate zone, the time may be right for planting out transplants.
- The coordinator should develop and maintain a demonstration plot, the harvest of which can be donated to a food bank.
- Begin to set out transplants after the 24th of May (or whatever is the last frost-free date in your area), but only if it is warm enough. Tomatoes and other warm weather crops may still need protection from cool night time temperatures well into June.
- Produce the monthly newsletter
- Have an official opening day party for the garden (it doesn't have to be the "real" first day for the garden). Don't forget to invite donors and other important friends as well as local media. --

JUNE

- Finish setting out tender transplants
- All gardens should be planted by which ever date the group has decided. Any plots not planted by that date should be reassigned.
- Begin harvesting peas, radishes, lettuce and spinach that were planted in April.
- Make sure the water system is adequate and that gardeners are able to use it easily.
- Be on the look out for any pest and disease problems.
- Be on the look out for any potential vandalism. Nip it in the bud before it has a chance to escalate.
- Stake tomatoes, put up supports for beans and other vines,
- Plant succession crops .
- Maintain the site, mow borders and pathways, make compost, make sure that all members are able to fulfill their maintenance obligations .
- The coordinator should make sure to have everyone's vacation schedule so that s/he can take care of the plots while the gardeners are away.
- Hold a regular, required work day. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, etc.
- Arrange for educational workshops, such as composting, insect and disease control, as needed.
-Produce newsletter.

JULY AND AUGUST

- Reassign and replant any abandoned plots.
- Continue maintenance chores.
- Make sure that the gardens are adequately watered during the hottest months and encourage gardeners to reapply mulch, as needed.
- Continue monitoring for insect and disease problems.

- Hold a midseason get-together that includes neighbors, entrepreneurs, and local officials who don't garden there. Recognize outstanding volunteers and gardeners.
- Hold a regular, required work day. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, etc.
- Set up a distribution system for surplus produce.
- Hold demonstrations on food preserving techniques.
- Conduct tours of the garden and prepare the gardens for awards judging, if desired.
- Write monthly newsletter.
- Enjoy the harvest

SEPTEMBER

- Conduct an evaluation survey of the gardeners. Find out what worked, what didn't, what they would like to see for next year, etc.
- Order seeds for green manure cover crops, to be planted after gardens are cleaned up.
- Order fall bulbs for late September/early October planting.
- Hold a Harvest Party towards the end of the month.
- Write monthly newsletter.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

- Hold a workday to clean up plots and the rest of the site, after everyone has had a chance to harvest. Remove and compost spent plant materials. Plant green manure/cover crops.
- Send soil sample for analysis
- Clean, repair and store tools for the winter.

- Repair any damage to fences, walls, tool shed, etc.
- Flush and winterize watering system.
- Prune dormant trees, shrubs and vines as required.
- Write monthly newsletter.
- Write thank you letters to volunteers, supporters and funders.
- Begin monthly social gatherings and educational workshops.
- Write annual report. Include budget, summary of activities, recommendations and priorities for the coming year. Distribute to gardeners.
- Have an organizational meeting to evaluate the garden, suggest changes and improvements, choose next year's priorities and get organized for next season
- Evaluate the project and plan changes for next year, based upon gardener surveys, garden coordinator's report, etc.
- Garden leadership committee should evaluate garden plots and determine who will be invited back next year. Notify the gardeners of the decisions, in accordance with garden's procedural guidelines.

3. CELEBRATE! Your ideas and hard work have finally become a community garden. What's next? Celebrate!! Have a grand opening, barbecue, or some other fun event to give everyone who helped to make this happen a special thank-you. This is the time to give all those who gave donated materials or time a special certificate, a basket of freshly harvested veggies, their name on the garden sign, a bouquet, or other form of recognition.

Be sure to make time for celebrations and take every opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of the garden, whether a new one or a garden that has been around for twenty years. Celebrate the youngest and oldest gardeners, the most improved, the opening of the herb garden, the dedication of the gazebo. Any opportunity will help to encourage the spirit of community that is so important to the success of a garden.

4. COPING WITH VANDALISM Vandalism is an affliction of just about every community garden at one time or another. There is no one handy answer on how to prevent it, but most community garden groups are able to control it after a while. Most vandalism occurs because of boredom, jealousy, and ignorance.

The immediate reaction of just about every fledgling community garden group, when confronted by that first raw evidence of vandalism, is to put up a fence. While this can sometimes be effective, depending upon the community, it can also incite even more destruction. Even if you put up an enormous fence, topped by razor wire, there will be some incredibly persistent individual who sees it as his life's mission to get over (or under, or through) that fence. Besides, who wants to garden inside that sort of prison? A situation in which a fence makes good sense is where the garden is likely to be a target of dogs or balls. In these cases, a four foot high fence is plenty. What's more, with this type of fence you can take the opportunity to create a garden feature. Encourage a friendly competition among gardeners, neighbours, children, friends, to design individual wooden pickets for the fence. Fences can also be used to grow flowering vines, such as morning glories, or as supports for grapes, beans, cucumbers or other space-greedy climbers. Or come up with some other creative approach to fence building. It doesn't need to be expensive, as professionally installed anti-vandal fences usually are.

The most successful anti-vandal strategy seems to be to invite the vandals to participate in the garden. You may be scoffed at, both by the vandals and by your fellow gardeners, but there are numerous examples of the success of this tactic from all over North America. The vandals,

usually bored kids, often turn out to be the most active gardeners, as well as an excellent deterrent to other vandals. If this strategy isn't possible, the next most successful approach is to keep repairing the damage that they do. Hopefully, they'll eventually get bored and move on. It can be quite heartbreaking to be confronted with the terrible evidence of their work, especially after your group has put its heart and soul into the gardens, but the best way to keep your spirits up is to quickly replace and repair, just as you would if the damage occurred because of a hail storm or other naturally occurring garden destroyer.

And finally, some vandalism isn't purposely malicious, but happens because there are, unfortunately, too many homeless people who, in addition to being without shelter, do not have access to affordable, nutritious food. Community gardens located in areas of this kind of desperation can expect this kind of "vandalism". It is far better to plant an extra plot or two and invite them to help themselves. Better still, invite them to join the garden. It is, after all, a community garden.

HERE ARE A FEW COMMON SENSE PRECAUTIONS TO FOLLOW:

- Locate the garden in a highly visible area. Ask neighbours of the garden to keep their eye on it and reward them (from the garden) for their efforts.
Know who belongs to the garden and who doesn't. Exchange names and phone numbers. Pass out membership cards or buttons, or come up with some other method of easily and discreetly identifying gardeners.
- If the garden has a locked gate or storage bin, keep careful record of the keys. If you use a combination lock, remind the gardeners to keep the combination to themselves.
- Keep the garden well maintained to show that you care about the space
Repair damage immediately to send a strong message that the gardeners are in control of the garden, not the vandals.
Display a sign saying who the gardens are for and how to participate.
- Harvest produce daily during peak season. If some gardeners will be away during harvest time, arrange to have someone else harvest the plots. The less temptation, the better.

- If your garden seems to be beset by a nightly "harvester", a discreet stakeout by two or more gardeners may be necessary to identify the culprit. But be careful! Don't try to confront him or her on the spot. That is better left to daytime hours, and by the coordinator and another person in authority
- Plant more than you need and set aside a plot, near the entrance, for people who truly need the food and are not malicious vandals. Add a sign saying "If you need vegetables, please join our community garden. If you need food today, then please pick from this plot only."

5. COMMUNITY RELATIONS Any new use of land in an established community will stimulate curiosity and positive and negative reactions. As the new kid on the block, it's important to inform the neighbours about what you're doing and why and to invite them to participate in the garden. Make sure to include an invitation to join on the garden's sign. The neighbours can also be a wonderful resource to the garden. If they are willing, ask them to keep an eye out for trouble, as you will offer to do for them. It is well documented that community gardens increase public safety by having more "eyes on the street", often at irregular hours, such as early morning and evening. Ask about local soils and growing conditions, wildlife, pedestrian shortcuts, historic uses of your site. And don't forget to invite all neighbours to the garden's parties, whether they garden there or not.

If the neighbours seem reluctant to endorse the idea of a community garden, or express the

opinion that the garden is sure to become an eyesore, show them photos of other successful community gardens and, of course, make certain that the garden is always well maintained. It's also a good idea to include some flowers in your garden, especially in high visibility areas such as around the edges or on the street side. And take the neighbours a bouquet of flowers or basket or freshly harvested veggies.

With foresight and planning, the garden can become a source of neighbourhood pride, rather than a point of contention. Tend your neighbourhood as well as your garden.

6. FINAL ASSIGNMENT: Start a community garden, take lots of photos, and write to people about it.