

GREATER LANSING
foodbank
GARDEN PROJECT



MEMBER OF
FEEDING
AMERICA

Garden Portfolio!

(paste/insert photo here)

Our Garden's Vital Stats

Garden name:	
Founding gardeners & year founded:	
Location of garden & relevant landmarks:	
Land owner & contact info:	
Surrounding neighbors:	
Dimensions, soil type & pH:	
Link to most recent soil test:	
Water source, including location of main shut off valve:	
Garden Leadership Team & their best contact info:	
Bank/Neighborhood Association that holds fees:	
Security codes: (gate, shed, etc.)	
Link to webpage on GP site:	
Email/Facebook account info:	

Our Garden's Most Important Contacts

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	NOTES/POSITION

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	NOTES/POSITION

ABOUT OUR GARDEN

Garden Vision:

(optimal goal & reason for garden's existence)

Guiding Principles:

-
-
-

Garden Mission:

WHY OUR GARDEN?

Who will benefit from our garden?

Why is our garden unique or needed?

What are the key benefits of our garden?

GARDEN HISTORY

Year Founded:

Our Garden's History:

Significant milestones, projects, or improvements in our garden's history:

(i.e. 2016 - Shed built; 2017 - garden expands to 20 plots with new section added;
2019 - Added wheelchair accessible raised beds)

OUR GARDEN'S ASSETS

Note assets in each category. Examples are in *italics*.

Be sure to use entities and assets specific to YOUR community or project!

Asset Category	Entity —Be specific!	Assets —Relevant to your project
<p><u>Individual</u> Knowledge, skills, experience, etc.</p>	<p><i>1) Juan Q. Smith</i> <i>2) Mary P. Jones</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>	<p><i>1) Knows all the neighbors</i> <i>2) Is good with computers/facebook /etc.</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>
<p><u>Group/Association</u> Networks, relationships, social capital, etc.</p>	<p><i>Neighborhood meetings</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>	<p><i>Potential project participants</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>
<p><u>Institutional</u> Municipal, health, service, government, etc.</p>	<p><i>MSU Extension</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>	<p><i>Info and support</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>
<p><u>Physical</u> Land, water, leaves, equipment, etc.</p>	<p><i>Yard waste</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>	<p><i>Material to make soil</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>
<p><u>Economic</u> Small and large businesses, grants, funding support, etc.</p>	<p><i>1) XYZ Party Store</i> <i>2) Home Depot Garden Grant</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>	<p><i>1) Location to put fliers</i> <i>2) Assistance with funding project</i> 1) 2) 3)</p>

Use additional sheets as necessary to fully list community assets and map relationships among them

GARDEN LAYOUT

Paste/insert a *before* picture of the garden site

GENERAL map of the garden site:

(Include size of lot or area; trees in the area, cross streets, topography, etc.

See next page for example & use grid paper if you like)

Garden mapping

- Think about directions: N, S, E, & W
- Think about existing uses of the site (i.e. pathways, parking)
- Think about existing vegetation or structures that may impact the garden
- Size of the garden growing space available & whole garden space

A large grid of small dots, intended for garden mapping. The grid consists of approximately 30 columns and 40 rows of dots, providing a space for drawing and planning a garden layout.

Soil Amendment Application Log

This log should be used to record all soil amendments (compost, cover crop, fertilizers, etc.) applied in garden.

Date:	Section of garden:	Quantity Used:	Type of Amendment:	Application Method:	Name:
5/2/2017	North side of the garden	12 yards	Composted manure from MSU	Gardeners dug in by hand	North side growers
4/15/2018	All	75 pounds	Sulfur from Mason Elevator	Tractor turned in	Ben
6/30/18	Plots 4, 22,23 & 40	6 pounds (@1.5 lbs/plot)	Buckwheat purchased from Garden Project	broadcasted	Mary

SITE ASSESSMENT PROMPTER

Total garden lot size available: _____

Growing area to be used this season: _____

Sun exposure: _____

Shade challenges: _____

Topography: _____

Soil texture: _____

Current growth/use: _____

Depth of Topsoil: _____

Drainage: _____

Nutrient and pH data: _____

Water access: _____

Surroundings: _____

Shed or storage (or potential): _____

Composting (or potential): _____

Parking: _____

Wheelchair or other special access: _____

Restroom: _____

Power: _____

Site history, before it was a garden: _____

Special considerations (land agreements, partnerships, etc.):

Site plan:

Other notes (features, potential challenges or opportunities, etc.):

SAMPLE: Garden's Organizational Needs

Communications

- Maintain an up-to-date list of helpful contacts (volunteers, coordinating committee members, resource connections)
- Communication on when meetings and volunteer days are scheduled – what happens at them and what is needed to make one happen.
- Maintain login/passwords and content for Community Garden's email account, Facebook account, etc.
-

Site Coordination

- Maintain a layout plan for the physical space of the garden, over the years.
- Maintain a basic inventory of tools and access to shed/outbuildings.
- Coordinate common areas maintenance: grass cutting, trash hauling, plotting, small repairs, etc.
- Produce donations – where, what, when and how.
-

Membership/Treasurer Duties

- Tracks who has signed the Garden Agreement/Registration and has paid dues.
- Maintain an up-to-date list of bed holders and their contact information.
- Tracking of garden expenses (i.e. water bill, party supplies, compost, etc.)
-

Hands-on Help: Ms & Mr Fix It

- Maintains garden common areas. Mow grass, clears pathways and removes trash.
- Repairs tools, equipment, hoses and raised beds.
- Coordinates supplies of common garden materials such as compost, mulch, tools and hoses.
-

Community gardens depend on a community's willingness and ability to take responsibility for several important tasks. Here are some ideas!

- **Garden co-leaders:** Primary contacts for the garden. Coordinate and facilitate all garden activities and meetings. Recruit gardeners for various jobs. Provide leadership and guidance for gardeners and volunteer positions below. Identify and recruit new garden co-leaders. Chair garden's leadership team.
- **Plot coordinator:** Organizes spring registration, makes plot assignments and garden map, collects gardener applications and manages the waiting list. Creates spreadsheet or other files for gardener contact information.
- **Grounds crew:** Maintains garden's common areas. Mow grass, clears pathways and removes trash.
- **Maintenance crew:** Maintains tools, equipment, hoses and raised beds.
- **Supply crew:** Maintains supply of common garden materials like compost, mulch, tools, hoses, etc.
- **Composting crew:** Maintains and oversees the composting and compost bins. Provides gardeners with clear composting instructions via signs, verbal communication, workshops, emails or memos.
- **Events crew:** Coordinates regular and special garden events including work parties, neighborhood parties and educational workshops.
- **Treasurer:** Collects plot fees, maintains garden accounts, writes checks.
- **Communications crew:** Revises and assembles the Gardener's Welcome Packet with leadership team. Writes and distributes garden newsletter or blog. Communicates with gardeners through email, phone calls or mailings about garden news, meetings and events. Maintains garden bulletin board.
- **Outreach and community relations:** Maintains positive relations with neighbors. Ensures that neighbors are involved in and supportive of the garden. Coordinates social events for neighbors and gardeners with events crew.
- **Horticulture advisers:** Possess gardening experience and a willingness to share it with gardeners. Mentor new gardeners, circulate new gardening resources, and coordinate gardening workshops with events crew.
- **Monitors:** Ensure that all plots are being used and maintained at acceptable levels according to the Gardener Guidelines. Contact gardeners who either appear to have dropped out or are not keeping their plots maintained. Communicate with the registrar about available plots.
- **Security:** Works to minimize theft, vandalism and other unwanted activities.
- **Translation:** Provides translation for gardeners, garden literature and signs. May also make arrangements for others to provide translation.
- **Leadership team:** Comprised of the garden co-leaders and at least three other gardeners. Responsible for reviewing, editing and enforcing all gardener guidelines.

Setting Garden's Guidelines & Answering FAQs

Questions about how the garden operates will arise throughout the year. The following topics should be considered in advance. Public guidelines can be created and shared around the most common issues. Others can be addressed on a case by case basis when/if the issue arises. The Garden Leadership Team and other crew leaders will be thankful for previously set agreements when addressing issues in the garden.

Garden Plots

- How much does it cost to garden here and what is required of me?
- How are plot sizes and assignments determined?
- How many plots can I get? What are the waitlist procedures, returning gardener sign-up deadline, permanent plots, seniority or neighbor preferred status?
- Is this an organic garden?
- What are the plot boundaries & expectations of cleanliness/path upkeep?
- What is the planting deadline & cleanup deadline/expectations? What happens if I don't follow those?
- What can I plant? Are perennials, marijuana, spreaders (morning glory, mint, Jerusalem artichoke, etc.) allowed?
- Walking in, visiting or harvesting from other's plots – what is allowable?
- How much time should I expect to spend at the garden?
- What should I do if I experience or see theft or vandalism?
- What should I do if I am threatened or harassed at the garden?
- Who do I contact for gardening advice?
- What do I have to do to stay in good standing with the garden?

Water & Compost Usage

- How much/how often/when may gardeners water? Is mulch required?
- Can I leave a sprinkler or soaker hose "on" if I am not at the garden?
- Where is the main valve and how do you shut it off?
- Where are hoses and water keys kept?
- What are the tank filling expectations? Should I help? How do I track that?
- What goes in the compost bins? If not bindweed and weeds with seeds, where do I put those?
- Can I bring fruit and vegetable scraps from home to compost in the bins at the garden?
- When and how much compost can each grower take?

Structures & Trash

- Are trellising/sitting structures allowed? What about along north side?
- What are the cleanup expectations of man-made items and tree branch frames that I may bring with me? Can I keep them in my plot over winter?
- Is there trash service? Where does the recycling go?
- What kinds of tools, equipment and supplies are available at the garden?

Shed & Storage

- Who can use items in the shed? Can they be borrowed and go off-site?
- How to return items... cleanliness, promptness, etc.
- Are personal items allowed to be kept in shed/plots? Labeling?
- Can items be stored in the off-season? Where and where not?

Our Garden's Guidelines

Garden Plots

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Water & Compost Usage

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Structures & Trash

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Shed & Storage

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Community Involvement

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SMART Goal Setting

Following are the components of an effective goal.

The SMART acronym can help us remember these components.

Specific Goal should identify a specific action or event that will take place.

Measurable The goal and its benefits should be quantifiable.

Achievable The goal should be attainable given available resources.

Realistic The goal should require you to stretch some, but also allow the likelihood of success.

Timely The goal should state the time in which it will be accomplished.

Here are some tips that can help you set effective goals:

- 1. Develop several goals.**
A list of five to seven items gives you several things to work on over a period of time.
- 2. State goals as declarations of intention, not items on a wish list.**
"I want to start a garden" lacks power. "I will start a community garden, is intentional.
- 3. Attach a date to each goal. State what you intend to accomplish and by when.**
A good list should include some short-term and some long-term goals.
You may want a few goals for the year, and some for two- or three-month intervals.
- 4. Be specific.**
"To outreach to the neighborhood" is too general; "to tell five neighbors about the project before April 30th" is better. Sometimes a more general goal can become the long-term aim, and you can identify some more specific goals to take you there.
- 5. Share your goals with someone who cares if you reach them.**
Sharing your intentions with your family members, your friend, or a mentor will help ensure success.
- 6. Write down your goals and put them where you will see them.**
The more often you read your list, the more results you get.
- 7. Review and revise your list.**
Experiment with different ways of stating your goals.
Goal setting improves with practice, so play around with it.

Our Community Garden's PHYSICAL GOALS

<p><u>PHYSICAL</u> GARDEN GOAL 1:</p>	<p>ACTION STEPS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 	<p>End-of-Season UPDATE on Physical Garden Goal 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 2) 3)
<p><u>PHYSICAL</u> GARDEN GOAL 2:</p>	<p>ACTION STEPS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 	<p>End-of-Season UPDATE on Physical Garden Goal 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 2) 3)
<p><u>PHYSICAL</u> GARDEN GOAL 3:</p>	<p>ACTION STEPS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 	<p>End-of-Season UPDATE on Physical Garden Goal 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 2) 3)

SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL &/or INVOLVEMENT GOALS

<p><u>Social, Educational or Involvement</u> GOAL 1:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ACTION STEPS:</p> <p>1) 2) 3) 4)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">End-of-Season UPDATE on Social, Educational, Involvement Goal 1:</p> <p>1) 2) 3)</p>
<p><u>Social, Educational or Involvement</u> GOAL 2:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ACTION STEPS:</p> <p>1) 2) 3) 4)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">End-of-Season UPDATE on Social, Educational, Involvement Goal 2:</p> <p>1) 2) 3)</p>
<p><u>Social, Educational or Involvement</u> GOAL 3:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ACTION STEPS:</p> <p>1) 2) 3) 4)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">End-of-Season UPDATE on Social, Educational, Involvement Goal 3:</p> <p>1) 2) 3)</p>

COMMUNITY GARDEN LEADERSHIP

Month-By-Month TASK ORGANIZER

January and February

1. Organize a leadership team for your garden group. Hold a meeting for those interested in helping manage the garden. Prioritize your garden's needs.
2. Identify and assign leadership tasks, so no one has an unfair burden.
3. If needed, renew the lease for using the garden land with the land owner.
4. Review your garden's rules; discuss possible changes/additions; agree on rules for distribution at the garden sign-up.
5. Review last year's expenses. Determine if you need new hoses or tools. Prioritize your garden's needs. Determine an adequate, but fair, plot fee amount. Consider a fundraising activity for your garden.
6. Set meeting date, time, and site for your garden sign-up.
7. Review garden plot assignments. Review the names, addresses, and phone numbers of your gardeners and waiting list. Determine if there are gardeners who did not follow the garden's rules and will not be invited back.
8. Draw out a site plan, noting plot locations, water system, landscaping, compost areas, storage areas, sitting areas, etc.
9. Distribute flyers at churches, libraries, and grocery stores to recruit new gardeners.
10. Identify and approach local businesses for donations for equipment or supplies.
11. Ensure that snow is removed from sidewalks adjacent to the garden.

March

1. Inform all gardeners by written notice and/or phone of the dates for the garden sign-up
2. Hold garden sign-up meeting and provide gardeners with a written copy of the rules.
3. If plots are still available, print and distribute flyers to recruit new gardeners at apartment buildings, neighborhood centers, libraries, churches, grocery stores, banks, etc. Maintain a garden waiting list.
4. Invite garden owner to your garden sign-up meeting or spring garden cleanup for an update/review of responsibilities associated with the overall management of the garden.
5. Collect a soil sample and have it tested by Garden Project through MSU or send to UMass Soil Testing Lab, www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest/.
6. Prepare soil in plots as soon as weather permits.

April

1. Hold a spring cleanup, review rules, finalize plot assignments, discuss compost management and trash removal arrangements, etc.
2. Schedule regular, required workdays throughout the growing season.
3. Note repairs needed; recruit garden volunteers or make other arrangements through the garden owner for repairs to fencing, water system, compost site, etc.
4. Ensure there is a current, attractive, readable garden sign visible to passers---by.
5. Utilize, construct, or repair a garden bulletin board to post announcements and information for gardeners.
6. Begin to plant and maintain the garden.

May

1. Have a spring garden get---together. Determine ways the garden can provide a community service: for example, donate extra produce to a soup kitchen, host neighborhood gatherings in the garden, plant and maintain flowers in tree pits, provide a plot for a local day care, etc.
2. Post the regular, required workdays schedule.
3. Continue to plant and maintain the garden.
4. Start a compost pile. Have a compost management plan all gardeners understand.

June

1. Reassign unused plots to next people on the garden waiting list.
3. Encourage gardeners to compost, using the agreed---upon management plan.
4. Hold at least one regular, required workday. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, prune and maintain trees, shrubs, and vines, etc.

July

1. Host garden event that includes neighbors, entrepreneurs, & local officials who don't garden there.
2. Recognize outstanding volunteers and gardeners.
3. Hold a regular, required workday. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, etc.
4. Encourage gardeners to compost, using the agreed---upon management plan.
5. Leadership team sends warnings to gardeners with up-kept plots.

August and September

1. Donate surplus produce to a food pantry or raise money for the garden by participating at a local farmer's market.
2. Contact the Cooperative Extension Service for accurate information on food preservation.
3. Plant fall vegetables.
4. Invite neighboring community gardens and residents to a workshop
5. Invite neighbors, entrepreneurs, and local officials to visit your garden.
6. Conserve water, remove weeds, remove pest-infested materials (don't compost pest-infested plants).
7. Hold a regular, required workday.
8. Hold a harvest party, recognizing outstanding volunteers and gardeners.
9. Leadership team sends warnings to gardeners with up-kept plots

October

1. Organize a fall cleanup date.
2. Plan a rain date to ensure all plant material, stakes, tools, etc. are cleared out of the garden by deadline.
3. Add organic soil amendments.
4. Clean, repair, and store tools and equipment.
5. Note repairs needed and make repairs to fencing, water system, compost site, etc.
6. Encourage all gardeners to sow a cover crop.

November and December

1. Send thank you notes to all contributors and volunteers.
2. Prepare a final report. Include budget, summary of activities, items noted on Maintenance Activities Schedule, and recommendations and priorities for the coming year.
3. 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.
4. Prune dormant trees, shrubs, and vines as required.
5. Have an organizational meeting to evaluate the garden, suggest changes and improvements, choose next year's priorities, and get organized for next season.
6. Ensure that snow is removed from sidewalks adjacent to the garden.

Supporting YOUR Garden Vision

Greater Lansing Food Bank's **Garden Project** supports community gardens within our seven-county service region that are:

- developed by the local community,
- set up for the long-term,
- have leaders that are active in the garden.

American Community Gardening Association states that "community gardening is most successful and long lasting when the people affected by the garden have a role in leading the development of the garden" (Abi-Nader et al., p. 13). **Garden Project** provides network support and trainings that are based on the local community's desire, needs, and strengths. This approach helps to ensure there is enough demand and desire to care for and use the garden for years to come. This also allows the garden to reflect the individual community's needs and uniqueness.

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) is the process of determining and uncovering the community's existing strengths and assets as a means for sustainable development (Kretzmann, 1995). Asset-based community development works from the principle that every single person has capacities, abilities and gifts that can be utilized to build a web of strong community connections. It focuses upon the assets of individuals and communities, rather than the needs, deficits or problems. Such an emphasis allows positive change to occur from within the community. Assets encompass resources, which may include individual gifts, associations, institutions, land and buildings, but the term has a much broader definition.

The collaborative process begins with an **organizing and visioning phase**, which assesses the web of potential assets in the garden community. During this phase, your team identifies community members who might serve as volunteer garden leaders and assist in various steering committee roles to help assure smooth functioning of the garden. Garden Project seeks to empower others in their own process to develop a sustainable garden and we encourage **reciprocal mapping**, an exercise designed to help communities identify

complementary partnerships (Abi-Nader et al., 2005), and, is a natural extension of the ABCD methodology. This exercise asks community gardeners to think outside the garden and identify possible, mutually beneficial partnerships (also known as reciprocal relationships). This will ensure the garden both reflects and is integrated into the surrounding community

During the **actualizing phase**, Garden Project works with volunteer groups, gardeners, community-based nonprofits, businesses and institutions to mobilize and build assets beneficial to the garden. Central to this phase is the concept of allowing the garden to develop slowly, as community capacity increases. Involving a wide array of participants and stakeholders allows gardens to be truly built from the ground up. Gardens depend upon the unique skills and abilities of residents and their willingness to reach out and engage others in a spirit of common unity.

Over time, garden leadership intentionally **reflects** on the evolution of the garden. From soil preparation and plot assignment, to harvesting and an eventual winter period of rest, Garden Project gardens are deeply rooted in the specific goals and objectives of each unique community. Each garden's goals, purpose and day-to-day operation should be evaluated, and driven by community capacity, with a deep respect for cultural perspectives and preferences. This is done by listening to the stories of garden participants, gathering information about how gardens affect members and the surrounding community, and formulating ideas for addressing ongoing and future needs. This allows for opportunities to understand and adapt what works best for each specific garden.

(Narrative page adapted from Denver Urban Gardens, <https://dug.org/gl/>)

Resources available to all community & low-income home GARDENERS



- Canning & preserving supplies
- Individual tool lending
- Misc. free & 'at-cost' resources: Remy, IBC totes, 55-gallon barrels, cover crop seeds, straw bales, etc.
- Printed/online resources
- Seed packets, up to 25 per family per year
- Weekly vegetable transplants during the growing season
- Workshop, events and potluck invitations

Resources available to ALL "In-Network" COMMUNITY GARDENS



- Additional seeds & transplants available to Garden Leaders, by appointment
- Basic garden consults & site visits
- Connection with special projects & partnerships, as available
- GP Network Signage for garden
- Inclusion in "Garden Project Network." (inc. webpage write up & assistance with recruitment)
- Multi-tool rental to Garden Leaders (inc. small engine equipment)
- Notification of volunteer opportunities
- Notification emails when donated supplies are available
- Resource & informational emails (including networking opportunities with gardens/partners)
- Soil test kits, upon request
- Woodchip requests made to arborists, upon request