

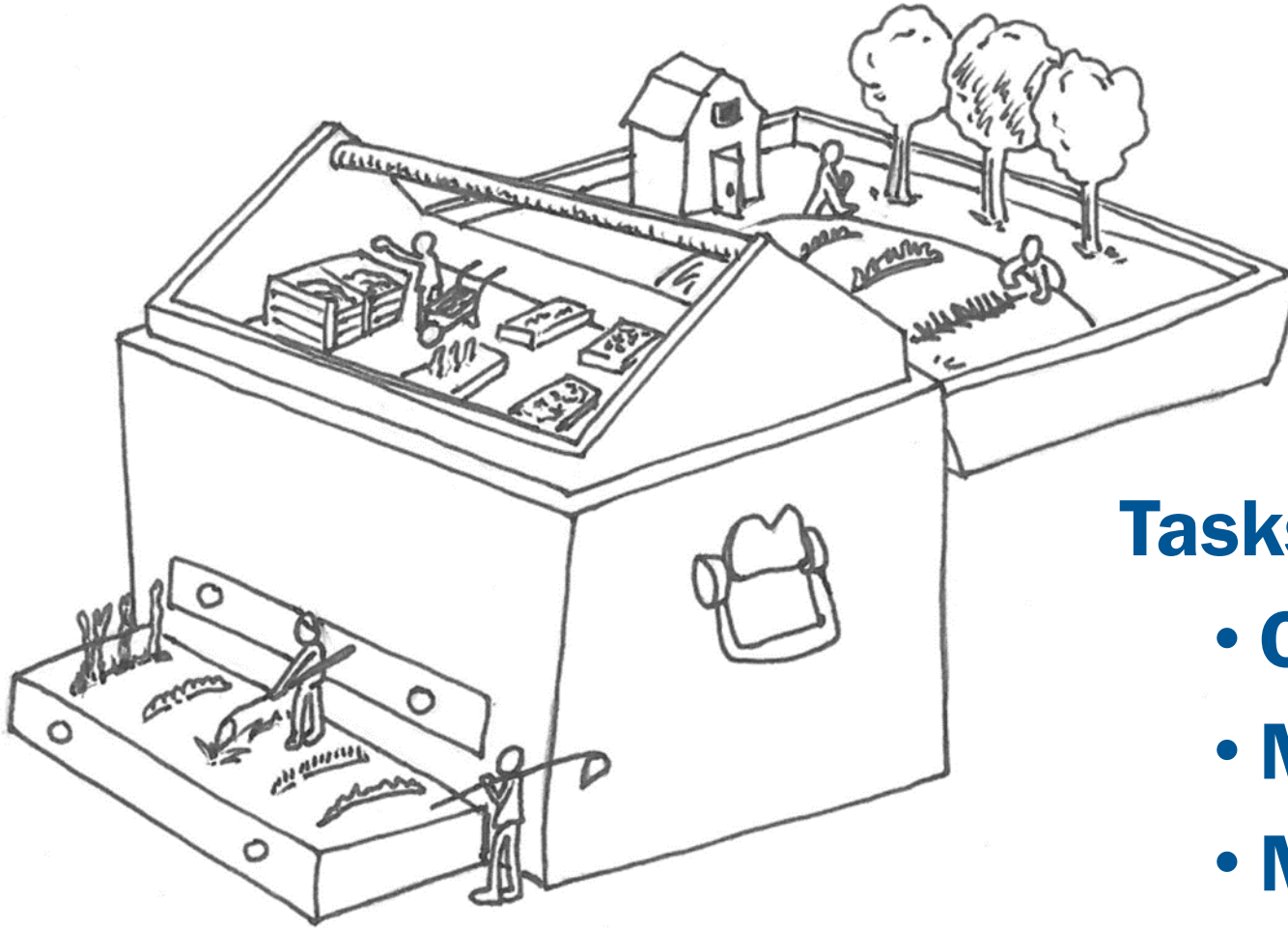
Garden Committee Seminar

Greater Lansing Food Bank's Garden Project

Think about a group or community project that you've been involved with. How did you learn about the group? Why did you get involved?

Share your response in the chat!

Garden Committee Toolkit



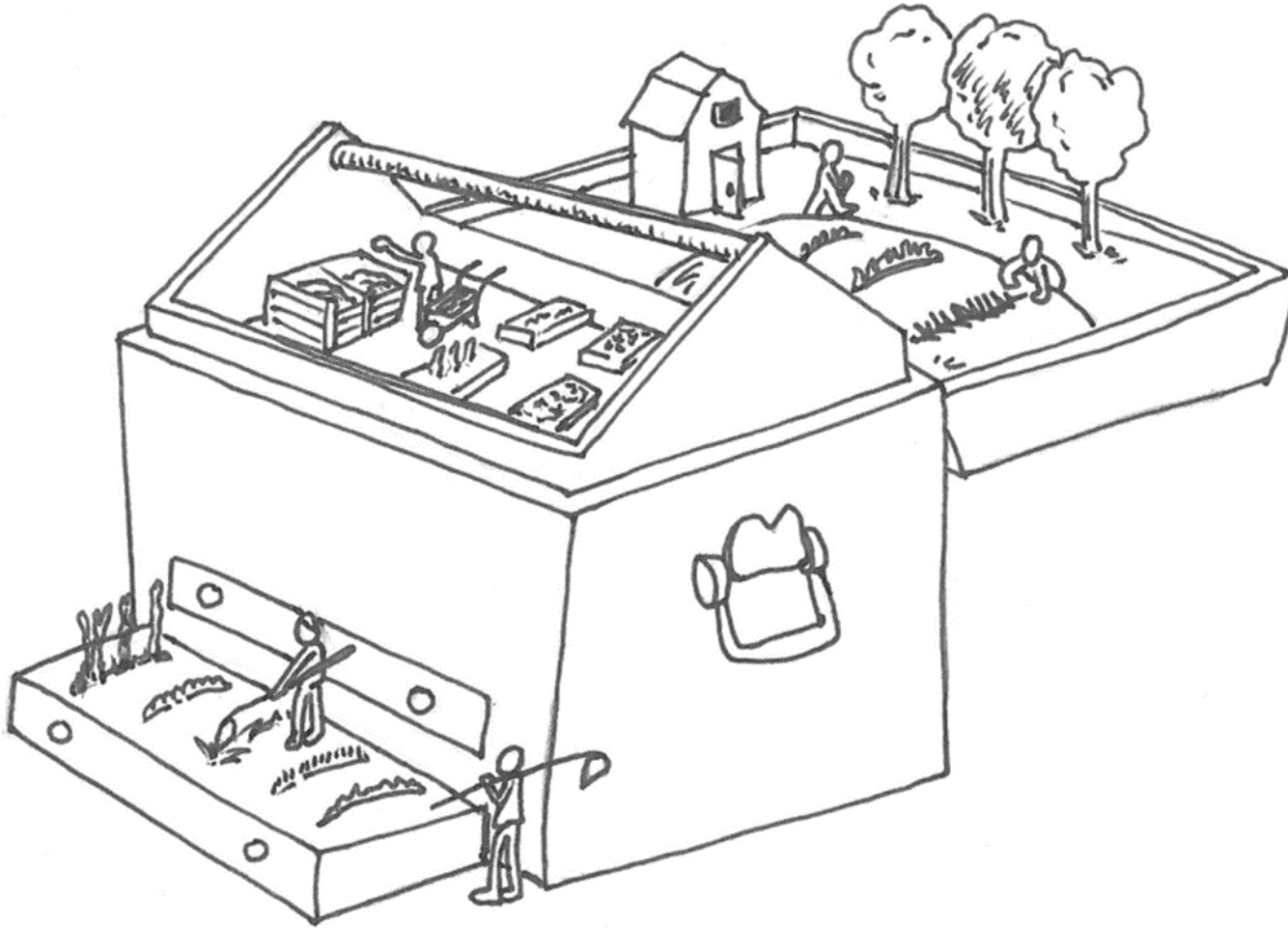
15 tools: shared tasks that will make your garden successful and sustainable.

Tasks organized into 4 sections:

- **Coordination**
- **Membership**
- **Maintenance**
- **Community Building**



Garden Committee Toolkit

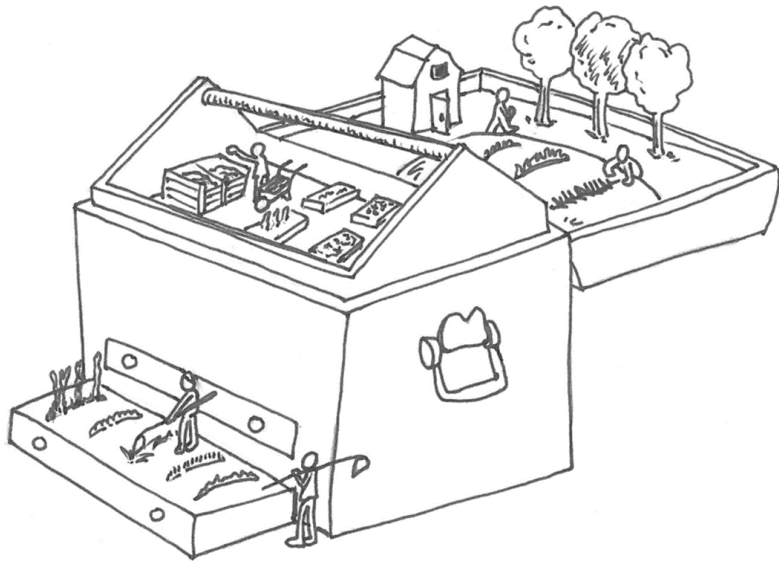


Garden Committee Responsibilities

COORDINATION TASKS: Main point person for all-garden communication	
Serve as a liaison to GLFB Garden Project	Share Garden Project updates with committees. Notify Garden Project of garden status (full, available space, etc.).
Host spring garden orientation	Facilitate spring opening meetings to explain garden guidelines, operations, and other important info. Provide follow-up orientation information over email/phone/in-person/etc.
Communicate general and seasonal updates to all members	Share garden-wide updates with all garden members, such as resource announcements and seasonal updates.
*Committee facilitator and site's record keeper	Bring gardener suggestions/requests to leadership committee. Facilitate committee meetings. Track progress on garden goals. Collect updates from fellow garden committee members. Keep garden guidelines, historical and operational records, vision/mission, and other important documents. Update leadership succession plan.
MEMBERSHIP TASKS: Responsible for plot-specific tasks	
Member registration	Collect member registration, including contact info and plot requests.
Plot assignment	Process plot requests/registrations: assign plots based on registration and available space. Manage waitlist.
*Fund management	Receive and track all incoming garden fees, donations, grants, etc. Make and track purchases on the garden's behalf. Provide financial reports to fellow committee members.
MAINTENANCE TASKS: Upkeep/on-call repair of physical space, garden mapping and volunteer coordination	
Spring plotting	Mark plots and pathways. (Keep map updated to reflect site layout.)
Seasonal maintenance	Organize ongoing upkeep of common spaces. (E.g., Mowing/weed whipping fence line and pathways, hose repair, tidying storage shed, snow removal.)
Infrastructure maintenance	Monitor infrastructure, provide on-call repairs and/or communicate repair needs to group/Garden Project.
*Workday coordination	Host gardeners and visiting volunteers by giving guidance, providing tools, and coordinating tasks at workdays.
COMMUNITY BUILDING TASKS: Outreach with garden members and community building	
One-on-one member communication	Communicate one-on-one with specific gardeners if plots become weedy/abandoned. Work with membership committee to reassign plots. Assist with interpersonal issues if individual issues arise. This may involve conflict management.
*Asset list	Collect a list of the garden's assets (based on gardeners and connections).
*Hospitality and community building	Coordinate outreach and events to members and non-gardening neighbors, via newsletters, organizing potlucks/social events, etc.
*Produce donation	Coordinate produce donation. (Via donation plot or organizing distribution of excess garden produce to neighbors, local pantry, etc.)

Successful Garden Committees...

- **Keep roles clear and straightforward.**
- **Understand that flexibility will be important.**
The garden, the members and committee capacity will change.



- **Make sure more than one person knows how to access essential garden info.**
- **Learn and manage existing responsibilities before they take on more.**

Committee Member Recruitment



How to encourage others to participate in leadership tasks

Gather a Team

- Directly ask people to join and give them a specific way to participate
- Outreach methods:
 - One-on-one calls or sit-downs to make connections
 - Word of mouth
 - Flyers and bulletin boards
 - Social media & e-newsletters
 - Sidewalk talk/elevator speech invitations



Community Garden Web of Participation



40 people who attend garden outreach potlucks, take from sharing box, say hello from sidewalk, and spread the word

25 community garden members who have a plot of their own

6-15 people who help w shared tasks, give suggestions, come to workdays, etc

4-6 leadership committee members

Healthy Practices for forming Garden Committees

- Invite folks directly and often – build reciprocal relationships
- Create a structure where folks have clear roles and can get things done
- Hold meetings where the group can make decisions and plans
- Set shared goals so everyone feels a sense of purpose and agreement
- Make a welcoming, enjoyable and friendly environment
- Build rhythms for the group to repeat naturally, year to year

Healthy Practices for Garden Committees

- Invite folks
- Create structure/roles
- Hold meetings
- Set shared goals
- Make a friendly environment
- Build rhythms for the group

1) Which two practices will you work on this month?

2) What is your next step?

Please put your answer in the chat.

Membership

Responsible for plot-specific
member coordination



Registration

In the pre-season, collect member registration, including contact info and plot requests.





Time Commitment: Concentrated in springtime (March – May)

Keys to Success



Be intentional when deciding what information is really needed from gardeners to participate.



Tailor times to collect returning gardener registrations and new gardener sign-ups.

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2024 Community Gardener Sign-Up

Use this form to request plots in a GP-managed community garden for the 2024 growing season. Returning gardeners who register by April 1 will be assigned the same plot as last year (unless they request something different on this form). New gardeners are placed on a waitlist for remaining plots. All gardeners will receive an email by mid-May telling them whether they will receive their requested plot(s).

Name *

First

Last

Address *

City *

State *

Enter 1 to 2 characters. *Currently Used: 2 characters.*

Zip *

Enter 1 to 15 characters. *Currently Used: 0 characters.*

Phone Number *

 - -

###

###

####

Email *

What is your primary language?

Total

\$0.00

**If you are not fluent in English, please list the name and contact information for someone who can speak on your behalf.

Community Garden Request Information

Did you garden in a Garden Project-managed community garden in 2023? *

- Yes
 No

Are you willing to serve on the garden committee to help your community garden thrive?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

If you require any special accommodations to help you garden, list them here.

Gardener Information

Gardening Experience Level *

- New gardener
 Some experience
 Very experienced

Gardener Age *

- Under age 60
 Over age 60

Collecting Registration Information

Member registration varies from a friendly phone call to full-length forms with demographic questions. When developing your registration procedure, strategically choose questions and information that will be helpful for the entire season.

- Collecting registration information can happen as early as the fall for the next growing season (especially for no-till gardens), and as late as spring at a garden orientation meeting.
- Think about making registration available when you already have gardeners' attention at events.
- Ask gardeners what plot they want and why! Their specific information will help with plot assignment and lets them share their needs.
- Provide clear expectations and consequences for not registering by a specific time (e.g., returning gardeners must respond by April 15th or plot will be reassigned).
- Maintaining a waitlist encourages early sign-ups, which can be helpful during pre-season planning.

Diversity and Accessibility

- Garden Project prioritizes diversity and food-growing gardens.
- There are many types of diversity, including race, creed, religion, color, national origin, ethnic origin, age, gender, sex, disability, marital status, and sexual orientation.
- The registration form is a good place to share the garden's values and state a commitment to diversity.
- Additionally, registration could include a question that asks about any accommodations that a gardener may need, such as tools with foam grips, a plot closer to water or pathways, language translation, etc.

Tech, Language, or Literacy Barriers: If gardeners face barriers that you are not sure how to address, contact Garden Project for assistance.





Communication Tips

- Include garden guidelines and expectations within registration information.
- Develop an active and inclusive membership by communicating additional requirements at registration, like committee service, workdays, meetings, and events.
- Be consistent with expectations throughout the whole year and uphold garden guidelines. As necessary, remind gardeners of the guidelines they agreed to when they registered.

TM

**If you were going to take applications/registration, how and when would you gather than information? (via phone, email, paper forms, Google form, etc.?)
And why?**

Feel free to unmute yourself & share or submit your thoughts in the chat.





Community Building

Community building and outreach with
garden members and greater community

Member Communication



Communicate one-on-one with specific gardeners if their plots become weedy/abandoned. Work with membership committee to reassign plots.



Assist with interpersonal issues if individual issues arise. This may involve conflict management.

TM

Keys To Success

- Be consistent in how you implement your guidelines. Set yourself up for success by having templates and step-by-step procedures.
- Document, document, document!
- Do not take anything personally. Assume best intentions and come from a place of support.

Many conflicts arise out of miscommunications and a lack of comprehensive and written garden policies. Conflict will always happen, but if we can learn to avoid miscommunication, that will go far in averting issues.





Possible Scenario

Sue has a weedy plot. You have asked her multiple times to weed. Other gardeners have offered to help. She always responds that she will take care of it soon, but it has been a month, and the weeds are encroaching into the neighbor's space and are about to set seed.

Best Possible Result

You remind Sue that she received a copy of the gardener handbook at the beginning of the season (which was also emailed to her) and that she agreed to abide by the garden's guidelines. You have emailed her a photo of her plot and a deadline of two weeks. You followed up with a phone call, and an offer of help, all of which you documented. Now, per the garden's procedures, you must weed whack and tarp her plot, and she may not receive a plot next year.

Important Steps

- **Set clear guidelines and processes:** Sue received the guidelines and procedures in multiple formats.
- **Confrontation:** You communicated help was available and set a two-week deadline.
- **Document:** You kept records of how often you tried to remind or help Sue weed her plot.
- **Consequences:** Although the consequences may seem harsh, they are the agreed upon procedures that were created to benefit the entire garden.
- **Follow Through:** You weed whip and tarp the plot.



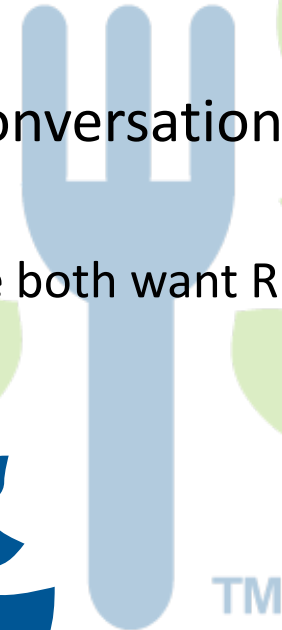
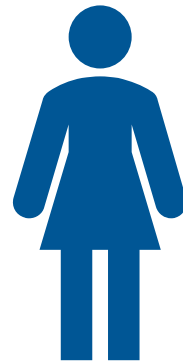
Techniques

Be direct about the issue and offer ways to solve it.

Frame the issues as outside of the other person. The problem is a weedy garden, not Sue. How do we work together to fix the problem? This kind of framing helps keep us from taking the situation personally and makes the other person more receptive.

If someone does get defensive, take a moment to step out of the conversation and reset trust and affirm shared goals.

- i.e.- Sue, I appreciate that having a new baby takes all your time and focus. We both want Risdale to be a successful and beautiful space for everyone, right?



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Further Reading

- Crucial Conversations book
 - Conflict management technique
- The Sandwich Method Not Very Tasty article
 - Offers alternatives for giving negative feedback

Updated with New Approaches for Today's Communication Challenges

OVER 5 MILLION COPIES SOLD

crucial conversations

— THIRD EDITION —



**TOOLS FOR TALKING WHEN
STAKES ARE HIGH**

JOSEPH GRENNY • KERRY PATTERSON • RON McMILLAN
AL SWITZLER • EMILY GREGORY

What advice do you have for conflict management?

Please put your answer in chat.





Maintenance

**Upkeep/on-call repair of physical space,
garden mapping, and volunteer coordination**

Workday Coordination

Host gardeners and visiting volunteers by giving guidance, providing tools, and coordinating tasks on workdays.

Workdays can be organized to complete projects that benefit the garden as a whole and require more than individual effort.

Time commitment: a few days between May and October



Keys To Success

- Keep a running list of projects that volunteers can work on.
- Be a great host! Think about what you appreciate on a hard workday and make it available to the volunteers.
- Garden Project is available to help connect you to volunteers and tools for bigger projects.



Two types of workday participants...

#1 With fellow gardeners:

- Host a scheduled and structured time for gardeners to invest in common spaces.
- This helps foster community within the garden as members participate in shared tasks together.



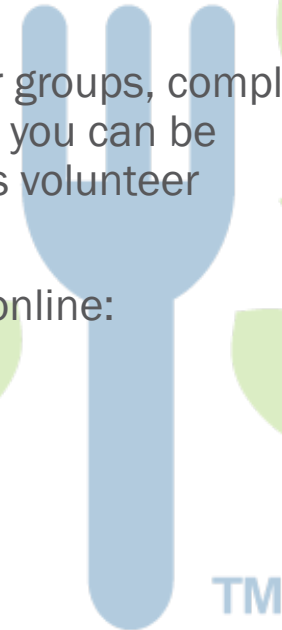


VolunteerMatch



#2 Outside volunteers:

- Can be an opportunity to build connections between gardeners and the wider community.
- If you need help connecting with volunteer groups, complete the form on Garden Project's website, and you can be connected to Greater Lansing Food Bank's volunteer network.
- Consider posting volunteer opportunities online:
 - Volunteer Match
 - Idealist
 - Facebook
 - LinkedIn



A Workday checklist

Volunteer Workday Prep

- Keep a running list of physical tasks that require more than one person (e.g. spreading woodchips, building picnic tables, etc.)
 - Primary tasks require strong supervision.
 - Secondary tasks can be done with less supervision.
 - Busy work can be done if there is time.
- Collect supplies (Garden Project has a tool lending library)
 - Gloves
 - Trash bags
 - Water
 - Tote for recycling
 - First aid kit
 - Sunscreen and bug spray
 - Scissors/boxcutter knife
 - Volunteer sign in sheet
- Email leaders and participants with event details, including garden address and your phone number.
- Take a “before” picture!

A Workday checklist (...continued)

Introduction

- Welcome the volunteers and explain a little about the history of the garden and current gardeners.
- Give a timeline of the day and describe or demonstrate the projects.
- Explain the safety rules, e.g.- gloves and protective eye wear for weed whips, sunscreen, and water for hot days, etc.
- Tell volunteers where the nearest restroom is located.
- Remind the volunteers to sign in.

During

- As workday leader, your main task is hosting.
- Make sure that volunteers are taking breaks.
- Watch out for safety issues.
- Gauge your time and how fast volunteers are completing projects. Direct volunteers to other projects as necessary.

Clean Up

- Leave time for volunteers to clean up, e.g.- put tools away, throw away trash, etc.
- Have the volunteers do a sweep of the garden to look for forgotten tools, gloves, trash, or any other item that needs to be packed up.

A Workday checklist (...last one!)

Closing

- Gather everyone together.
- Thank the volunteers for taking time out of their day to support the garden. Remind them how their work will make a difference to the garden and gardeners.
- Take a group photo if the volunteers are comfortable with it.

After

- Finish up with cleaning and return any borrowed tools to the Resource Center.
- If the volunteers agree, send pictures and a short description to Garden Project so that we can also thank them.
- Consider sending the group a thank you card or email. Share any photos that you took and invite them to future volunteer opportunities.

**What work tasks do you think you
would most need volunteers for?
And when would you need them?**

Please put your answer in chat.



Coordination

**Main point person for all-garden
communication**



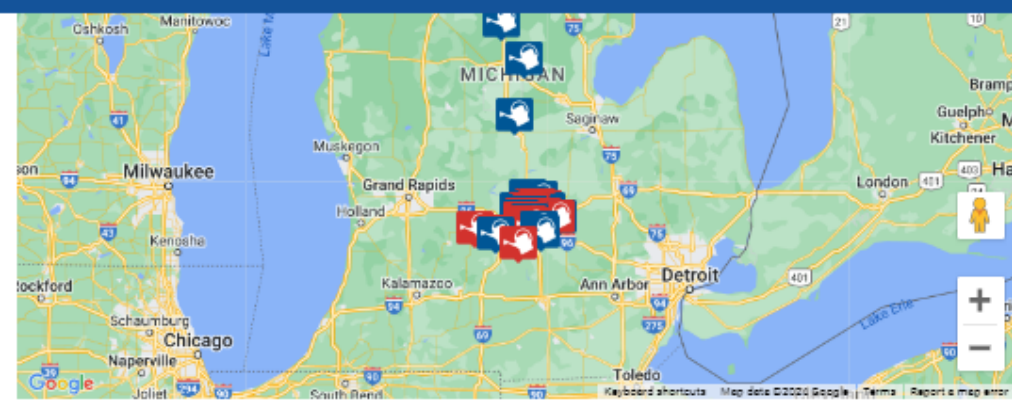
Serve as a liaison to GLFB Garden Project



- Share Garden Project updates with fellow committee members
- Notify Garden Project of garden status (full, available space, etc.)

Liaison to GLFB

Monitor available garden plots and contact GP when the garden is full, or if your garden needs help recruiting gardeners.



AGENCY LOG-IN | CONTACT US

DONATE NOW



VOLUNTEER ABOUT NEWS & STORIES

Search ...

Home » Donation Garden » 123 Garden



123 Garden

Location: 123 Garden St., Lansing, MI 48910

Public Garden Donation Garden Grow-Your-Own Garden Youth Garden

Established as a community garden in 2011, neighbors remember the house and family that once occupied the now cultivated Ingham County Land Bank parcel. Residents from up and down the street contribute and reap in their own ways, enjoying fresh, healthy food right on the block. This is one among several gardens in this area supported by Village Summit.

There are no plot or water fees, all are invited to come plant and help maintain the garden. However, it is requested that animals not be allowed inside the perimeter.

This is a pesticide-free zone!

- **How to get involved:**
Contact Dottie via [email](#) or phone, (517) 574-6515
- **Location:** 123 Garden St., Lansing, MI 48910

First
Last
Email*
Enter Email
Confirm Email
Phone
By submitting this form, I agree to receive email communications from Greater Lansing Food Bank.
 True
Phone
This field is for validation purposes and should be left unchanged.

Home » Get Help » Garden Project » Community Gardens » **Garden Leadership Committee Resources**

Garden Leadership Committee Resources



A solid leadership team is the key to a community garden's success. It's as invaluable as irrigation and good soil. Successful community gardens share responsibilities among members and build community together rather than expecting one person to lead by themselves. See below for resources to help your community garden thrive.

[Community garden leadership committee share responsibilities](#)

2024 community garden toolkit series

Join Garden Project for a series of **free trainings** to learn practical skills and tips to help your community garden thrive.

[Learn more](#)

Additional resources for community garden leadership teams

Garden Leaders: Specialty resources are available for existing garden leaders in the network! Let us know how we can best support your good work.

- Advice for managing theft in the garden
- "Do Not Pick" sign download
- Lansing area community garden resource guide

Common phrases list by language

- Arabic
- Burmese

Garden Improvement Grant Application



[MORE INFO](#)

Resource Request for Compost and Volunteers



[MORE INFO](#)

Maintenance Assistance Request



[MORE INFO](#)

- Emails from Matthew!
- Seminars w supporting docs
- Friday Drop-In Hours at Resource Center for Leadership Committee Members in May & June
- A webpage of resources just for you!

Committee Facilitator



- Facilitate committee meetings
- Bring gardener suggestions/
requests to leadership committee
- Track progress on garden's goals

Gather a Team

- Host and advertise regular open meetings
 - Generally accessible time and location
 - Child-friendly
 - It's great to have food
 - Explain background info and acronyms to newcomers as you go
- Set a friendly, sociable tone with time to hear how everyone's doing
- At each step, genuinely seek and value input from all members



Facilitating Garden Committee Meetings


HAPPY MEETINGS

- Friendly, sociable feeling
- Facilitators and participants are prepared
- Timing is right
- Goals are met
- Conflicts are addressed with care
- Conversations, decisions feel clear and easy

IS-IT-OVER-YET MEETINGS

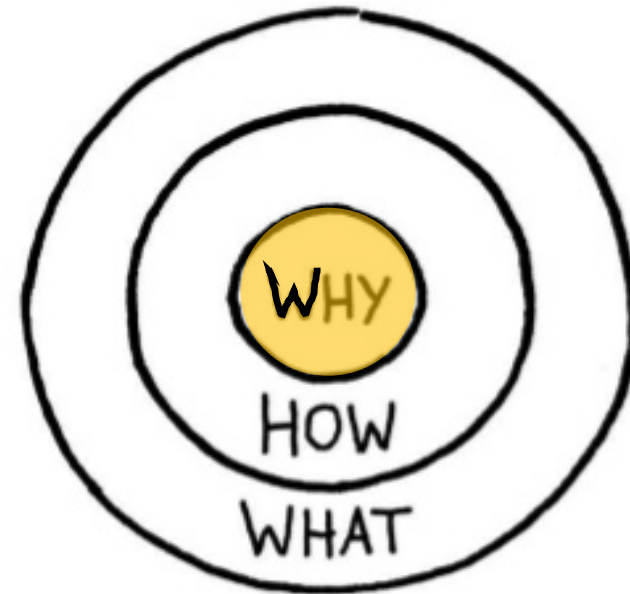
- Tense bad vibes
- No one seems ready
- Too rushed or too long
- Doesn't meet goals
- Conflict is ignored or overwhelming
- Hard to follow
- Takes forever to make a decision together

Good Committee Facilitators

- Come prepared
 - Listen carefully
 - Guide without controlling
 - Problem solve creatively
 - Understand that a facilitator's energy is high-impact
 - Check in with the group for understanding and to change course
 - Strive for the magic balance of good connection and getting things done
- 

Setting shared goals

The Golden Circle



Bring gardener suggestions/requests to leadership committee



Setting shared goals

What impact do we envision for the garden?

PHYSICAL GOALS:

- Increased yields
- Outdoor gathering space

SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL OR INVOLVEMENT GOALS:

- Beautification of the neighborhood
- Food access

What will we do to work towards these goals?

- Improve soil w compost & cover crops
- Install seating & play space

- Plant natives along the entry
- Grow food to donate

Specific

The what, where, when, who & why

Measurable

How can progress be quantified?

Achievable

Should be attainable given available resources

Realistic

Stretch some, but will likely be successful

Timely

Set a timeline for progress



Summary, questions, comments, feedback?

**What is 1 idea that resonated with you?
How can you put it into action
(develop SMART goals)?**



Contact Info

Julie Lehman

Garden Project Manager

Julie@glfoodbank.org

Matthew Romans

Program and Education Specialist

matthew@glfoodbank.org

517-853-7809

