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Final Report



Community Garden Program Study

for the City of San José
Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services

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1. Introduction



The City of San José is drafting the Community Garden Program Study to examine opportunities to promote urban agriculture, health, community interaction, and neighborhood identity through an innovative expansion and improvement of the existing Community Garden Program. The study aims to review and improve the Program’s administration, garden development, and operations. In addition to providing a vision for the future of the Program, the study results will be incorporated into the upcoming Greenprint’s Strategic Plan update, which is expected to take place in Fiscal Year 2015-2016. By promoting urban gardens, the City can achieve community benefits in health, environmental sustainability, and economic vitality, while also creating unique places that build community identity.

This study includes an existing summary report which provides information about the current status of community gardens in the city of José in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 includes best practices and trends from three successful and innovative community garden programs: Chicago Park District’s Community Gardens in the Park Program, the Seattle’s Department of Neighborhoods, P-Patch Community Gardens Program, and Philadelphia’s Department of Recreation program, Farm Philly. Recommendations for growing the program, identifying new sites, increasing the number of gardeners and operations are provided in Chapter 4. Potential opportunity sites are explored in Chapter 5.

INTRODUCTION

2. Existing Conditions



2.1 INTRODUCTION

This existing conditions chapter provides information about the current status of community gardens in the city of San José, as well as the barriers and opportunities related to supporting and expanding the Community Garden Program. Key elements explored are Citywide guiding documents and policies, the current operating model of the Program, the existing garden inventory, demographic information about potential gardeners, responses to surveys about program satisfaction and needs of existing and wait-listed gardeners, and potential new garden sites. As a component of the study, this chapter provides the City with key background information that will inform plans for the evolution of the Community Garden Program, thereby supporting the health, sustainability, and vitality of its residents and community.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.2 POLICY CONTEXT

Local policy documents, such as the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, promote the development of community gardens and ensure their long-term viability. By adopting policies that address urban agriculture and access to healthful foods, the City provides guidance and operating standards that ensure that the Community Garden Program can be carried out in a manner that protects public health, reduces conflicts with neighboring uses, and minimizes nuisances. San José's existing policies are quite supportive of community gardens. For instance, the Zoning Ordinance allows for community garden opportunities in a wide variety of zoning districts; the General Plan emphasizes development of community gardens in underserved communities, as well as within access to the city's schools; and the *Greenprint* emphasizes the ease of accessibility for community gardens to all residents. Standards in all these documents provide guidance as to how many parks or community gardens should be provided to the public. These documents are described further below.

2.2.1 ZONING ORDINANCE

The City of San José's Zoning Ordinance (Title 20 of the Municipal Code) does not explicitly mention community gardens or urban farms. However, neighborhood agriculture is permitted in all residential, commercial, and industrial zoning districts under Sections 20.30.100, 20.40.100, and 20.50.100, respectively. San José defines neighborhood agriculture as food or horticultural crop production less than one acre, and prohibits the sale of produce in the gardens. (see Section 20.200.798 for the full definition). Inclusion of neighborhood agriculture in several zoning districts allows a multitude of possibilities for determining locations of possible future community gardens.

2.2.2 ENVISION SAN JOSÉ 2040 GENERAL PLAN

The *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*, a document that guides land use and development, was adopted by the City Council in November 2011. The *General Plan* features several goals, policies, and actions that affect the goals, operation, and location of future community gardens. Some of these policies encourage the development of future community gardens, including school gardens, in the city's low-income communities (Action PR-2.8, Action PR-2.9, Policy PR-3.3, and Policy LU-12.1). Others encourage the integration of small-scale agriculture, such as community gardens, within existing and planned parks and open spaces (Policy LU-12.8). The overarching goals of the *General Plan* that relate to the Community Garden Program are identified in Table 2-1, below, and specific policies and actions are listed in Table 2-2.

2.2.3 CITY OF SAN JOSÉ GREENPRINT 2009 UPDATE

The *City of San José Greenprint 2009 Update for Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Trails* was adopted by the San José City Council in 2009 as an update to the 2000 *Greenprint*. The *Greenprint* is designed to assist the City in identifying future needs for parks, recreation facilities, and trails, and to reflect and define the goals of both the community and the City Council to provide for the social, cultural, and economic needs of the City. Its guiding principles, goals, and strategies for the city's parks and recreation facilities also inform decisions about future community gardens.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

TABLE 2-1 GENERAL PLAN GOALS RELATED TO COMMUNITY GARDENS

Number	Goal	Description
Goal VN-1	Vibrant Neighborhoods	Develop new and preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods to be vibrant, attractive and complete
Goal VN-3	Access to Healthful Foods	Ensure that all residents have sufficient access to healthful food, as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture
Goal CD-7	Urban Villages Design	Create thriving, attractive Urban Villages that reflect unique urban characteristics of an area and provide complete neighborhoods for residents, workers, and visitors
Goal PR-2	Contribute to a Healthful Community	Build healthful communities through people, parks, and programs by providing accessible recreation opportunities that are responsive to the community's health and wellness needs.
Goal PR-3	Provide an Equitable Park System	Create a balanced park system that provides all residents access to parks, trails, open space, community centers, dog parks, skate parks, aquatics facilities, sports fields, community gardens, and other amenities.
Goal PR-8	Fiscal Management of Parks and Recreation Services	Provide fiscally sustainable recreation programs, facilities, and infrastructure assets.
Goal LU-12	Urban Agriculture	Expand the cultivation and sale of locally grown agriculture as an environmentally sustainable means of food production and as a source of healthy food for San José residents.

TABLE 2-2 GENERAL PLAN POLICIES AND ACTIONS RELATED TO COMMUNITY GARDENS

Number	Policy/Action Text
Chapter 4 – Quality of Life	
Policy VN-1.4	Design new development to contribute to the positive identity of a neighborhood and to encourage pedestrian activity.
Policy VN-3.2	Work with the Valley Transportation Authority to ensure that public transit provides access to full-service grocery stores, farmers' markets and other retailers of healthful food.
Policy VN-3.5	Encourage the location of healthful food retail, including farmers markets, in neighborhoods with high concentrations of fast food outlets compared to full-service grocery stores and fresh produce markets.
Policy CD-7.6	Incorporate a full range of uses in each Urban Village Plan to address daily needs of residents, businesses, and visitors in the area. Consider retail, parks, school, libraries, day care, entertainment, plazas, public gathering space, private community gathering facilities, and other neighborhood-serving uses as part of the Urban Village planning process. Encourage multi-use spaces wherever possible to increase flexibility and responsiveness to community needs over time.
Policy CD-7.7	Maintain and implement land use policies that are consistent with the urban nature of Urban Village areas. Incorporate spaces and support outdoor uses for limited 24-hour uses, so long as the potential for significant adverse impacts is mitigated.
Policy PR-1.1	Provide 3.5 acres per 1,000 population of neighborhood/community serving parkland through a combination of 1.5 acres of public park and 2.0 acres of recreational school grounds open to the public per 1,000 San José residents.
Policy PR-2.1	Encourage healthful food choices, exercise, and the production of locally grown agriculture for personal use by providing community garden facilities.
Policy PR-2.3	Design and construct new parks, trails, and amenities in a manner that promotes their safe utilization and which allows access to each type of recreation experience for people of all abilities to the maximum extent possible.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

TABLE 2-2 GENERAL PLAN POLICIES AND ACTIONS RELATED TO COMMUNITY GARDENS

Number	Policy/Action Text
Policy PR-2.4	To ensure that residents of a new project and existing residents in the area benefit from new amenities, spend Park Dedication Ordinance (PDO) and Park Impact Ordinance (PIO) fees for neighborhood serving elements (such as playgrounds/tot-lots, basketball courts, etc.) within a ¼-mile radius of the project site that generates the funds.
Policy PR-2.5	Spend, as appropriate, PDO/PIO fees for community serving elements (such as soccer fields, dog parks, sport fields, community gardens, community centers, etc.) within a 3-mile radius of the residential development that generates the PDO/PIO funds.
Action PR-2.8	Partner with the County and non-profits to promote community gardens in low income areas as an opportunity to grow affordable and healthful food.
Action PR-2.9	Develop partnerships with non-profits and the school districts to connect school children with community gardens, providing children with educational opportunities and access/exposure to healthful foods.
Policy PR-3.3	Apply resources to meet parks, recreation, and open space needs in underserved areas of the city, prioritizing lower income and higher density areas, which may have a demonstrably greater need for these amenities.
Policy PR-8.1	Partner with the community and businesses to promote volunteerism in the care and programming of parks and recreation facilities.
Policy PR-8.10	Encourage the development of private/commercial recreation facilities that are open to the public to help meet existing and future demands (i.e. plazas, swimming pools, fitness centers and gardens).
Chapter 6 – Land Use and Transportation	
Policy LU-12.1	Maintain existing and facilitate the development of new and expanded community gardens and farmers markets throughout San José, prioritizing the provision of these gardens in low income, nutritionally-deficient neighborhoods.
Policy LU-12.8	Support the efforts of non-profit organizations and the County to integrate and/or maintain sustainable small scale agriculture within existing and planned parks and open spaces including the planned Martial Cottle County Park, Guadalupe Gardens, and other publicly or privately owned properties where appropriate.

GREENPRINT VISION, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

The City of San José’s *Greenprint* vision is to be a national parks and recreation leader in cultivating healthy communities through quality programs and dynamic public spaces. Its mission is to build healthy communities through people, parks and programs. To meet these objectives, the *Greenprint* provides the following guiding principles, goals, and strategies that should inform the development, operation, and maintenance of new and existing community gardens. The guiding principles overarching the entire *Greenprint* are:

- Accessibility
- Inclusivity
- Affordability
- Equity
- Diversity
- Sustainability
- Flexibility

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The *Greenprint* is guided by six goals, which aim to provide focus and direction to the *Greenprint*, as well as seven strategies, which give more direction to the aforementioned goals. The six *Greenprint* goals are listed below.

- Provide environmentally and financially sustainable recreation programs and infrastructure assets.
- Provide environmentally responsible recreation facilities.
- Provide accessible recreation opportunities that are responsive to the community's health and wellness needs.
- Partner with the community to promote environmental stewardship and volunteerism.
- Improve community image and livability by providing quality recreation facilities and programs.
- Provide nationally recognized parks, trails, open space, recreation amenities, and programs to meet the community's growing needs.

The seven *Greenprint* strategies are listed below.

- **Environmental Sustainability.** Design, build, maintenance, and operation of recreation facilities to last for many years, preserve the environment and encourage a healthier community.
- **Economic Development.** Provide attractive recreation facilities and programs to enhance the City of San José's economy and its ability to strengthen neighborhoods.
- **Financial Sustainability.** Fully fund recreation programs and facilities in partnership with community resources.
- **Quality Services.** Enhance recreation opportunities offered by encouraging community participation and encourage healthy living.
- **Civic Engagement.** Increase public awareness, foster community input and enhance participation in parks, recreation facilities, programs and services.
- **Productive Partnership.** Expand the number of productive partnerships to maintain quality service levels while minimizing fiscal impact on the City of San José's General Fund.
- **Inclusion for All.** Offer accessible recreational facilities and programs to encourage the mixing of the masses including persons with disabilities, and therefore enhancing the quality of life for all.

COMMUNITY GARDEN GUIDANCE

In addition to the overarching goals and strategies discussed above, the *Greenprint* directly addresses community gardens in a section of Chapter 4, Facilities and Programs. In addition to describing the history of the Community Garden Program, this section provides an informal overview of the program's goals. These include:

- Building a sense of community.
- Providing a mechanism for literally sustaining the community.
- Filling socialization needs, particularly for people isolated by language or culture.

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- Strengthening and maintaining neighborhoods through gardening together.
- Providing those with limited resources with a source for fresh, low-cost fruits and vegetables (including many not readily available in American markets).
- Promoting healthy living by giving people an opportunity to grow their own food.

Additionally, the Community Gardens Program section of the *Greenprint* describes some strategies that the City already uses to operate the program:

- Providing technical assistance to community gardens run by outside organizations.
- Continuing to develop partnerships with school districts and the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) for use of open space as community gardens.
- Shifting away from direct service in favor of providing facilitation for community gardens.

2.2.4 STANDARDS

The City of San José does not currently have an objective or policy standard specifically addressing the amount of community garden space per resident. However, the *Greenprint's* "Ideal Planning Area Model" calls for a community garden in each of its Urban Planning Areas. There are 15 Urban Planning Areas within the City's service area. The City also has standards for provision of parkland, which include community gardens. In accordance with the Urban Environmental Accords, which the City of San José signed in November 2005, the City has a goal to provide "... an accessible public park or recreational open space within half-a-kilometer (approximately 1/3-mile) of every city resident by 2015." Using this measure, the City had 51 underserved areas as of 2009.

Additionally, Policy PR-1.1 of the City of San José General Plan lists a service level objective of providing 3.5 acres per 1,000 residents of neighborhood and community parkland. These 3.5 acres should be provided with a combination of 1.5 acres of public parklands and 2 acres of recreational school grounds open to the public. As parkland, community garden acreage is included in this calculation.

2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS

Community demographics such as population, housing units, age, income, nationality and mobility, as well as projections for growth and change, can be indicative of existing and future need for community gardens and garden amenities. For example, it is likely that increasing numbers of residents and households lead to greater need for garden access, dense populations require more gardens per acre, and residents who have lower incomes and/or rent their homes are less likely to have their own land for gardening or easy access to stores selling healthy, fresh produce.

2.3.1 POPULATION

San José is the third most populated city in California, and is growing rapidly. As of the 2010 U.S. Census, San José had a population of 945,942. It is estimated that San José's population as of January 1,

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was 1,000,536. Projections from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimate that by 2040, San José will have 1.3 million residents. Figure 2-1 shows the location of existing community gardens relative to the population density in San Jose. The highest population density in the city currently occurs near the intersections of Council Districts 3, 5, 7, and 8. While there are some gardens, such as Green Thumb, Bestor, and Mayfair, in locations of high population density, there are some high density population areas that do not contain any gardens.

2.3.2 HOUSEHOLDS

Plan Bay Area is ABAG's long-range integrated transportation and land-use/housing strategy through 2040 for the San Francisco Bay Area. *Plan Bay Area's* Jobs-Housing Connection Strategy integrates priorities across housing, economic development, transportation, and land conservation policies. According to Appendix A of the Jobs-Housing Connection Strategy, San José had a total of 301,370 households in 2010. It is projected that this number will grow by 130,550 by 2040 for a total of 431,910 households. This represents a 43 percent total growth in number of households. As of 2009-2013, 42 percent of housing units were occupied by renters.

2.3.3 INCOME

According to the 2010 Census, in 2009-2013, median household income was \$81,829 compared with a median of \$61,094 throughout California. However, San José's median income is lower than the \$91,702 in Santa Clara County overall and 12 percent of San José's citizens live below the poverty level.

2.3.4 NATIONALITY

San José is a diverse city, with over 39 percent of its residents born outside of the United States. Language can be a potential barrier, with 56 percent speaking a language other than English, and 46 percent speaking English less than "very well." The primary language groups are Asian and Pacific Island Languages and Spanish or Spanish Creole.¹

Within some community gardens, a significant number of gardeners originate from the same country. Many garden participants bring not only their language but their cultural foods and traditions with them to their community gardens.

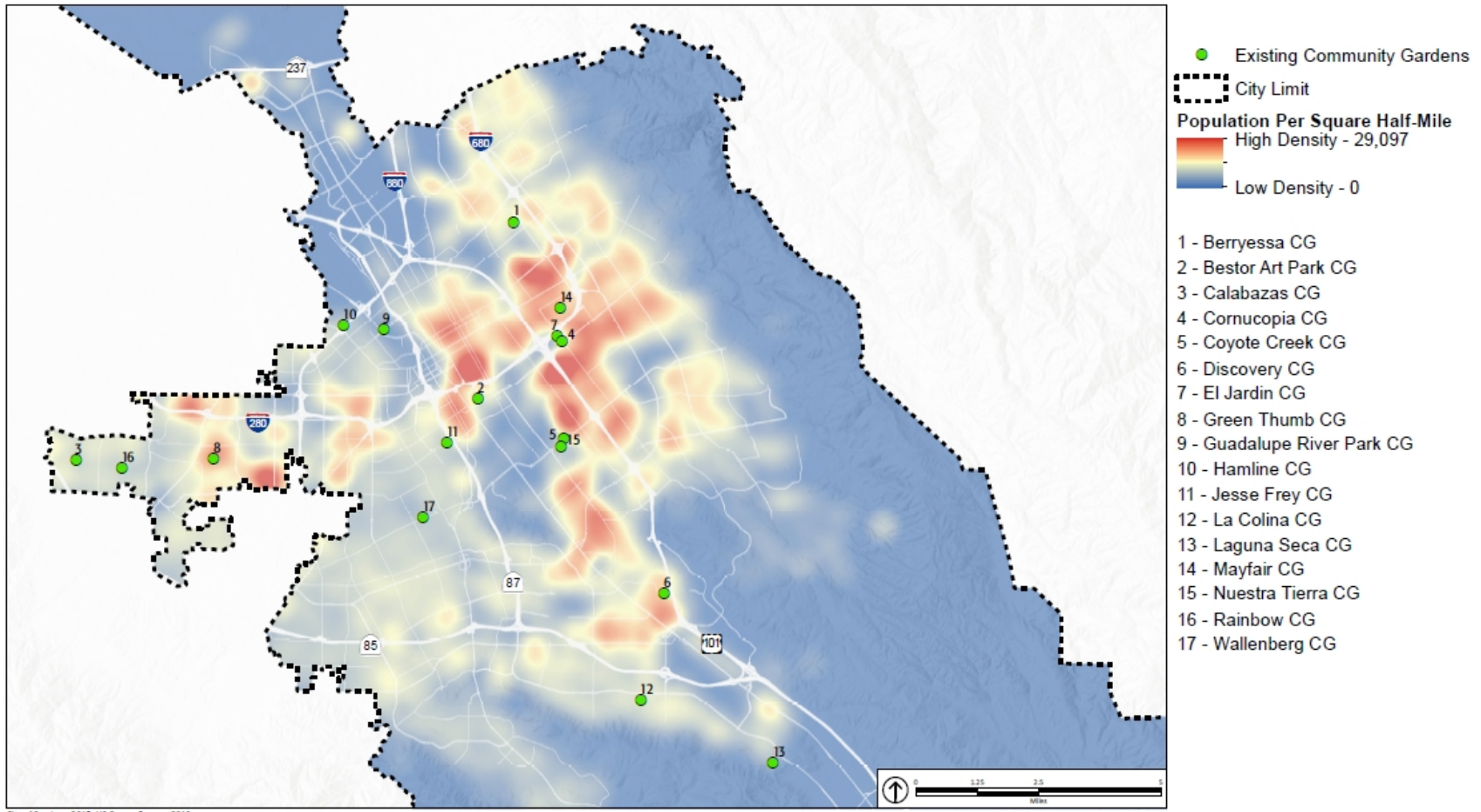
2.3.5 MOBILITY

Many factors can limit mobility, including income, access to a vehicle, age, and disability. According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, 27 percent of San José residents do not have a vehicle available, for a range of reasons that could include age, cost, choice, legal reasons, or physical limitations. Residents under the age of 16 are unable to drive, and 27 percent of residents are age 19 or younger. 11 percent of San José's residents are age 65 or older. Of this population that is age 65 or older, 36 percent have

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey.

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Figure 2-1 Housing Density and Existing Community Gardens



*Population Density is calculated on a people per square half-mile basis.

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hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care or independent living disabilities; 24 percent have an ambulatory difficulty, which may keep them from walking long distances; and 7 percent have a vision disability, which likely limits their ability to drive to services and recreation. A total of 8 percent of San José's civilian population has a disability regardless of age.

San José's Community Garden Program has been running since 1976, is funded by Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), and operates on land owned by PRNS as well as land rented from other land-owning agencies. Recently, the City has shifted its involvement to focus more on providing facilitation instead of direct service. Information about the current program's garden inventory, service goals and provision, operations, and processes for selecting new participants and sites has been collected through analysis of City data, discussions with PRNS staff and gardeners, tours of selected gardens, and a stakeholder meeting. This section presents information on the structure of the current program as well as additional feedback from stakeholders about the program.

2.3.6 GARDEN INVENTORY

There are currently 17 community gardens that are part of the San José Community Garden Program. Currently Council Districts 2 and 6 have three gardens each, and Council Districts 8, 9, and 10 have none. The City currently has plans to open and develop two future community gardens: Watson Community Garden in Council District 3 and Martial Cottle Community Garden in Council District 10. In addition to the 17 community gardens that are part of the Program, there are an additional two private gardens located in San Jose. One garden is located at the Foothill Presbyterian Church, and the other is located at St. Stephens in the Field Church.

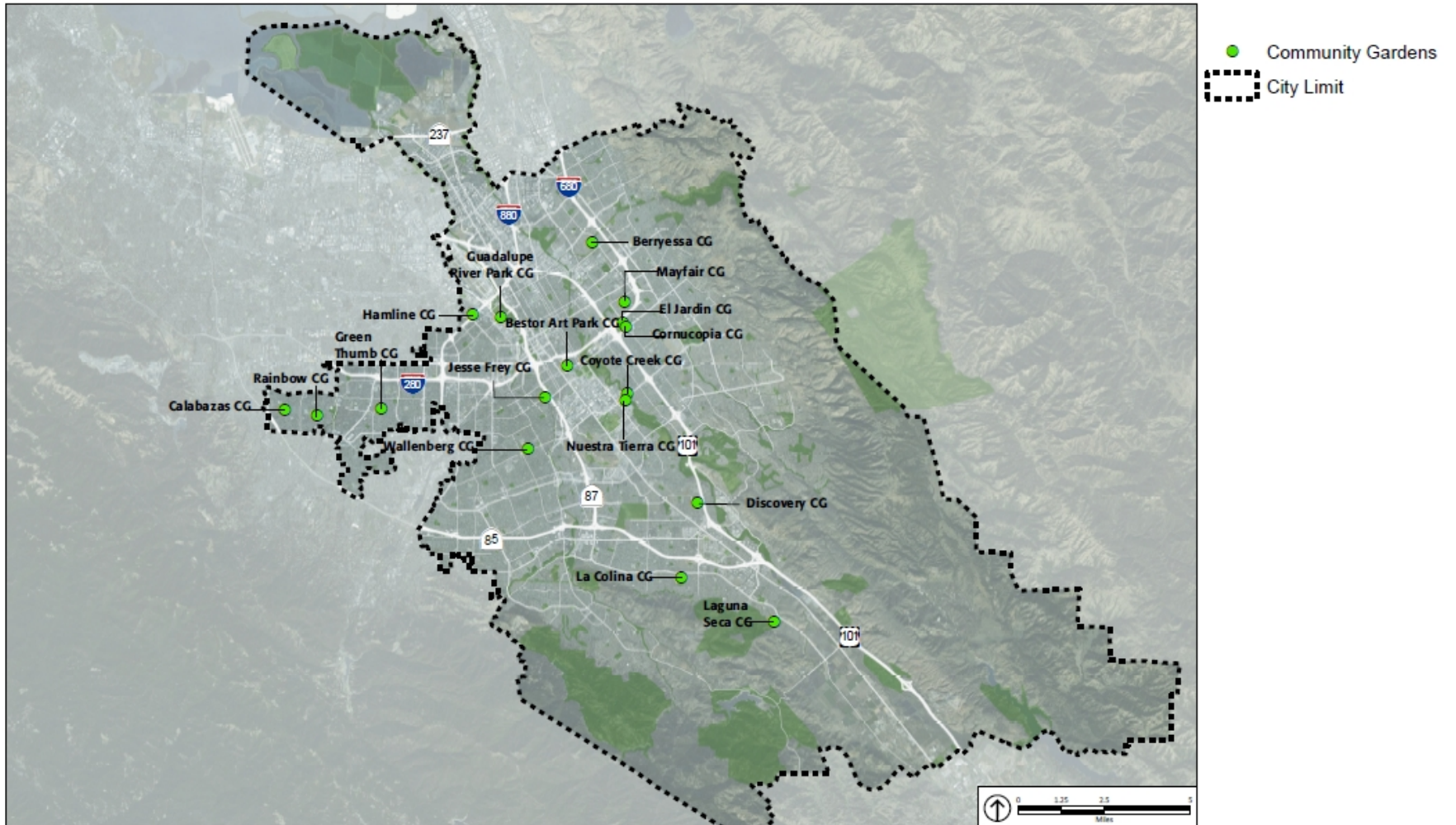
The most recent garden built was Discovery in 2007. The location of each community garden within the city of San José is displayed below in Figure 2-2. Table 2-3, below, also lists the name, location, number of plots, size, and landowner of each community garden. There are also other community gardens in San José not run by the City of San Jose's Community Garden Program, which are not shown here.

Excluding the closed Alviso Community Garden and the under-construction Martial Cottle Community Garden, there are a total of 1,014 plots available at the community gardens, which includes a total of 1014 gardeners, as of January 2016, though this number may change. As of January 2016, there were 342 residents on the community gardens' waiting lists. However, these residents are waiting for only 12 gardens, including Martial Cottle; seven gardens have plots available with no waiting list.

Plot sizes vary from garden to garden. Some gardens have very large plots, and to make more plots available for households on the waiting list, these are being divided as prior gardeners leave and the plots turn over to new gardeners. Current plot sizes range from 144 to 781 square feet, with an average of 458 square feet.

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Figure 2-2 San José Community Garden Locations



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TABLE 2-3 SAN JOSÉ COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM SITES

Garden Name	Council District	Garden Location	Acres	Plots	Typical Plot Size sq. ft.	Land Owner
Berryessa	4	Cape Colony and Commodore Dr	2	80	300 & 600	School District
Bestor	3	S 6th St and Bestor St	0.1	10	144*	CSJ
Calabazas	1	Blaney Ave and Danridge Dr	0.3	33	300	CSJ
Cornucopia	5	S King Rd and Story Rd	1	43	504, 781	CSJ
Coyote Creek	7	Tully Rd and Galveston Ave	1	81	n/a	CSJ
Discovery	2	Branham Lane E. & Discovery Ave	0.5	40	n/a	CSJ
El Jardin	5	S King Rd and Story Rd	2.5	86	363, 726	CSJ
Green Thumb	1	Rhoda Dr and Roewill Dr	1.3	64	400	School District
Guadalupe	3	Walnut St and Asbury St.	1.5	78	220	CSJ
Hamline	3	Hamline St and Sherwood Ave	0.8	32	473	CSJ
Jesse Frey	6	W Alma Ave and Belmont Way	0.5	34	382	SCVWD
La Colina	2	Allegan Circle near Lean Ave	2	93	400	CSJ
Laguna Seca	2	Manresa Ct and Bayliss Dr	0.75	28	545	SCVWD
Mayfair	5	Kammerer Ave and Sunset Ave	2.75	127	300, 600	CSJ
Nuestra Tierra	7	Tully Rd and LaRagione Ave	3	100	300, 600	CSJ
Rainbow	1	Johnson Ave and Rainbow Dr	0.1	4	362	CSJ
Wallenberg	6	Curtner Ave and Cottle Ave	1.25	81	439	CSJ
Total			21.35	1,014	458*	

*Average.
Source: City of San José, 2016

2.3.7 LEVEL OF SERVICE

The *Greenprint* identifies underserved areas within each Urban Planning Area, and lists a priority order of need for new park acreage. This priority is calculated by assigning points for the ratio of acres per 1,000 residents for developed parkland, population density, and the number of households that do not lie

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within the ½-kilometer (approximately ⅓-mile) distance the Urban Environmental Accords have established as a goal.

These priority rankings for each Urban Planning Area are listed in Table 2-4. The Urban Planning Areas with the highest need for additional parkland are West Valley, Willow Glen, Central/Downtown, and Edenvale. The location of Urban Planning Areas in relation to Council Districts is shown below in Figure 2-3. Despite Council Districts' irrelevance to either the Urban Environmental Accords' ⅓-mile standard or the City's 3.5 acres standard described above under Policy Context, Council Districts are important because under the current participant selection process, residents are required to use a community garden within their own Council District unless their Council District does not have a garden.

Commonly, a ½-mile radius is used to indicate walking distance. Figure 2-4 displays a ½-mile, 1 mile, and 1½-mile distance from each existing community garden, illustrating that there are large portions of San José that are not within walking distance of a City-run garden.

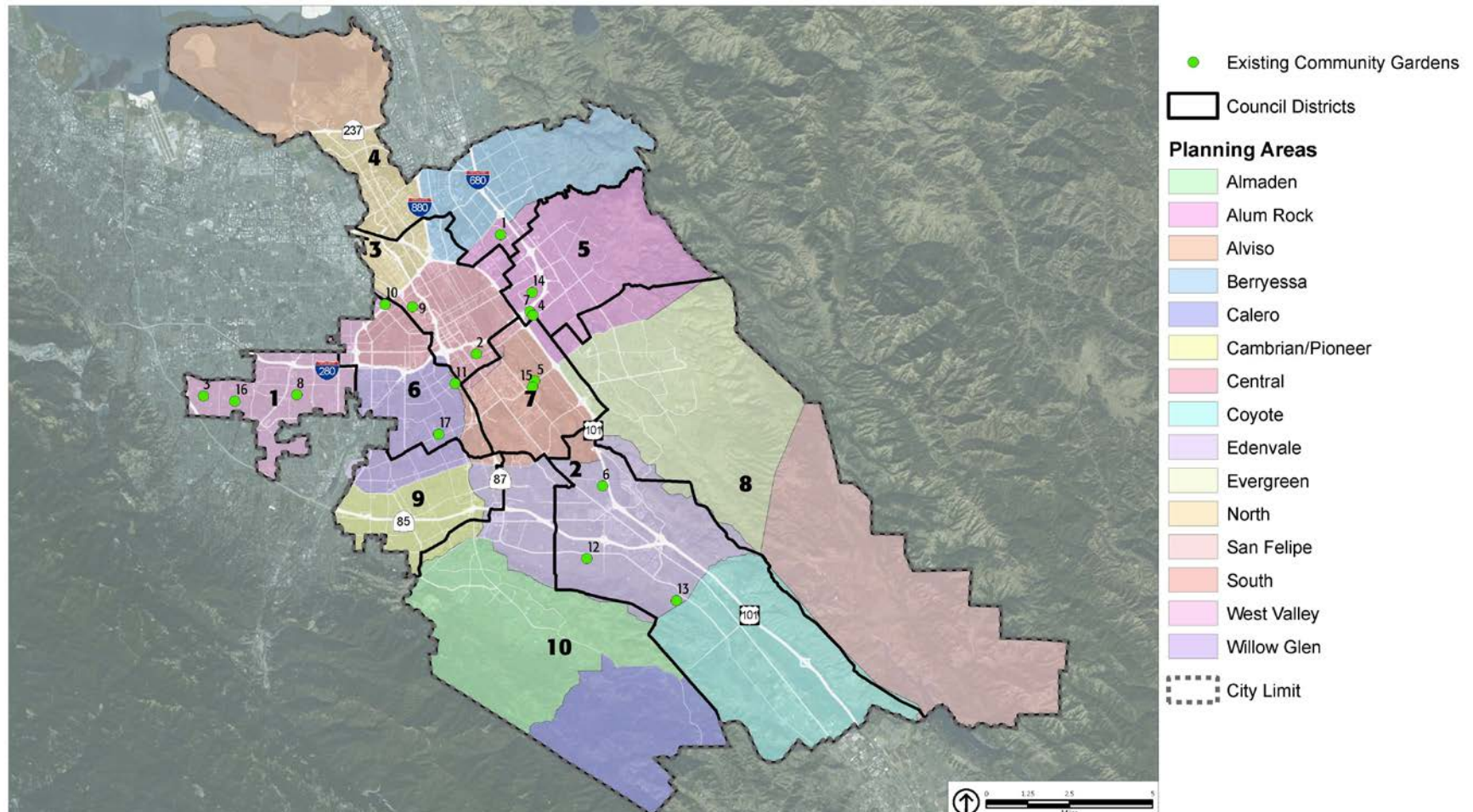
Level of service analysis also needs to account for density; some neighborhoods have more residents per acre than other neighborhoods and dense multi-family housing is less likely to have gardening space than lower-density single-family home areas, so the need for community gardens may rise with the density of the neighborhood. The population density map in Figure 2-1 shows density around existing community gardens.

Finally, because other community gardens are provided by private or nonprofit organizations to the community, these may be meeting some of the need in areas that are otherwise underserved by the San José Community Garden Program.



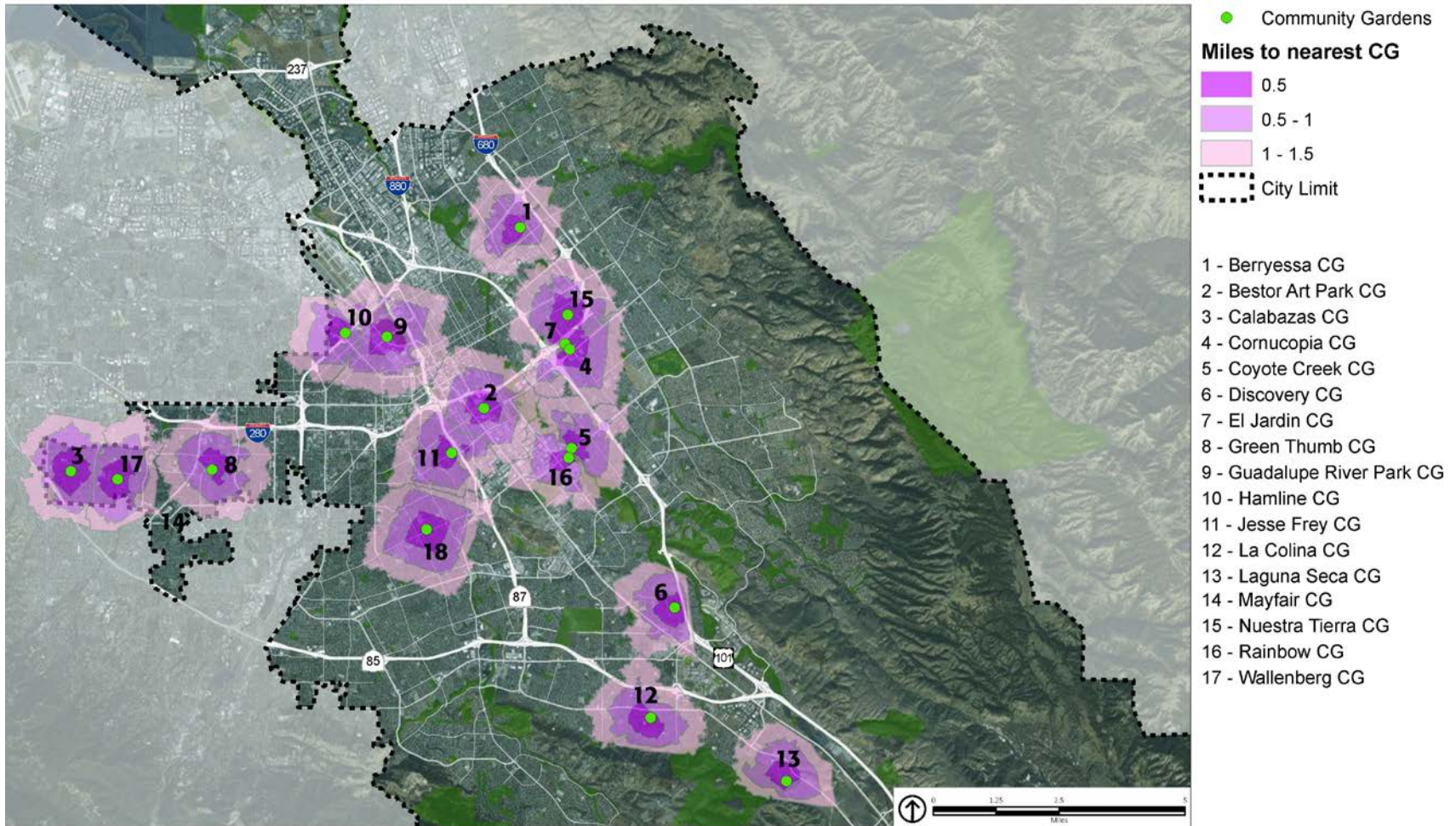
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Figure 2-3 San José Urban Planning Areas and Council Districts



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Figure 2-4 Walking Distance to Community Garden



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TABLE 2-4 RANKING OF PARK NEED BY PLANNING AREA

Level of Park Need	Planning Area	Points by Ratio (3.5 Acres/ 1,000 Residents)	Points by Underserved Households	Population Density Points	Total Points
High	West Valley	2	5	5	12
	Willow Glen	3	4	4	11
	Central/Downtown	4	1	5	10
	Edenvale	1	4	4	9
Medium	Alum Rock	1	2	5	8
	Cambrian/Pioneer	2	2	4	8
	South San José	2	0	5	7
	North San José	4	0	2	6
Low	Berryessa	0	1	4	5
	Evergreen	0	1	4	5
	Almaden	0	1	2	3
	Alviso	0	0	0	0

Source: City of San José Greenprint Update, 2009.

2.3.8 OPERATIONS

CITY PARKS, RECREATION, AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services (PRNS) is responsible for facilitating and providing infrastructure to the gardens participating in the Community Garden Program. With a budget of only \$202,161 for 2015-2016 the City provides a 1.25 full-time equivalent (FTE) employee to support the program. Staff roles include:

- Providing administrative support.
- Coordinating volunteers.
- Coordinating educational workshops on topics such as Integrated Pest Management and leadership.
- Promoting cohesiveness through group interactions and mediation.
- Running meetings.
- Adjudicating conflicts between gardeners.
- Coordinating with local and government agencies including other City departments.

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- Managing each garden's waitlist.
- Onboarding new garden participants.
- Answering questions.
- Coordinating development of program materials such as policies and procedures and marketing materials.
- Maintaining City facilities.
- Fixing major issues such as water breaks.
- Acting as temporary garden manager when necessary.

The City provides compost pick-up and free wood chips for gardeners. PRNS's Volunteer Management Unit has recently developed an "adopt-a-trailer" program, with a tool truck and trailer that can be borrowed for park or garden work days. PRNS plans to add a second tool truck to this program in the coming year.

VOLUNTEER GARDEN MANAGEMENT TEAM

The gardens themselves are each run independently by a group of volunteers called the Volunteer Garden Management Team, consisting of a garden manager, assistant manager, treasurer and secretary. This group holds a garden-wide annual registration meeting, and at least other two meetings per year, collects gardener fees, and pays the City administrative and water fees annually. Each team also manages any funds collected on top of the administrative and water fees for collective garden use.

Each garden has its own culture and history of volunteerism, upkeep, activities, and sense of community involvement. Some gardens have Master Gardeners, who are trained in gardening through the University of California Cooperative Extension. On a volunteer basis, these Master Gardeners provide information, run workshops, and sometimes even coordinate at-cost plant sales.

FEES

Each household with a plot is required to pay a water fee based on the water charges for the previous year, which are divided among gardeners based on the square footage of their plots. Because the cost of water has increased, these fees often increase from year-to-year. However, actual water use fluctuates, and garden managers often try to inform the gardeners about options to reduce their water use.

Gardeners are also required to pay an administrative fee of \$0.05 per square foot of garden plot. These fees go towards the 0.75 FTE Community Garden Program Coordinator. This administrative fee was instituted in 2012 when funding from the General Fund was reduced, to keep the program from closing or discontinuing garden support.

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RULES AND REGULATIONS

PRNS has developed rules and regulations in order to ensure that community gardens are safe, pleasant places to be and to look at; to establish fairness and equity among gardeners; to prevent damage to land and groundwater; and to protect the future of community gardens in San José.² Other requirements include participation in garden work days, and attendance at an annual meeting. The complete set of Community Garden rules is included in Appendix A of this Summary Report.

WATER CONSERVATION

Due to the current drought, PRNS has changed its policy on irrigation. Gardeners are now allowed to set timers to water their plants at night for water efficiency. They are still required to come to their plot and garden once per week. PRNS has also provided gardeners with meters that show how wet their soil is so that they do not overwater.

Currently, only Guadalupe Community Garden uses recycled water and mandates that all gardeners and their helpers receive training. Since gardeners pay for their water not by usage, but by the square footage of their plot, there is no direct incentive for water conservation.

2.3.9 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Rules that are relevant to the program's administrative, development, and operations approaches are described below.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

New participants would likely find out about the Community Garden Program through word of mouth, through council office web sites, newsletter, large banners placed on garden fences and through the City of San José website, which includes a link to the rules and regulations, a copy of the waitlist for each garden, and a list of gardens with their locations (intersections rather than addresses), acreage, and districts.

There are also signs for the Community Garden Program posted at each garden, which include rules and regulations for garden usage. Some gardens have information kiosks with information about the program, updates, and events, training classes, and important contacts.

PARTICIPATION

Community Garden plots are distributed to San José residents who request plots according to the Council District they live in. One exception is if there are plots available at a particular garden and there are no people on the waiting list, a person living in any other council district may rent one at that community

² City of San José, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), 2015. *Community Gardens Program 2015 Rules and Regulations*.

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garden. Martial Cottle will also be a unique case; as a partnership between the State, County, and City, 10 percent of plots are reserved for residents who live anywhere in Santa Clara County.

Anyone age 18 or older who lives in the City of San José may participate in the San José Community Garden Program; however, only one garden plot is allowed per residence. The Community Garden Registration/Agreement Form requires the designation of a primary gardener, which is defined as an individual, husband and wife, domestic partners, or an entity having sole interest in the plot. The primary gardener is responsible for plot maintenance and payment of all fees and charges. The primary gardener may also choose to designate a garden helper on the registration form in order to maintain the plot in the gardener's absence due to family emergency, illness or injury, vacation, or any other unforeseen circumstances.

WAITING LIST

If there are no vacant community garden plots, prospective gardeners may add their name to the waiting list for the garden in their Council District by contacting the Community Garden Coordinator. The Coordinator will contact prospective gardeners in the order of the waiting list when a garden plot becomes available. Once contacted, persons on the waiting list have two business days to respond or they will be removed from the waiting list. The number of prospective gardeners on the waiting lists has been as high as 500, but as of July 2016, there were a total of 342 people on the waiting lists. The gardens with the highest demand are Wallenberg (110 gardeners waiting), Guadalupe (94 gardeners waiting), and Calabazas (52 gardeners waiting). Only seven of the gardens have no waiting list.

NEW GARDENER ORIENTATION

New gardener orientation is usually provided by the volunteer management team at the when the new gardener starts using their plot. The orientation covers topics such as water use, plant types, hours of operations, and introduction to other gardeners.

DISMISSAL

Gardeners are required to abide by a set of rules, given to new gardeners and posted in each garden. These rules include regulations on both behavior and plot maintenance. Gardeners are provided two official written warnings for violation of the program rules and regulations. After the second warning, if the garden continues to be out of compliance, the Program Coordinator can officially issue them a letter of termination from the Program. These plots are given to the next household on the waiting list. Gardeners who have been terminated from the Program may participate or have their name placed on the waiting list the following planting season.

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2.3.10 SITE SELECTION

There is not a formal model for selecting new community garden sites. It is estimated that development of a community garden that is at least ½-acre in size will cost between \$450,000 and \$600,000 each.³ Although decisions to develop new gardens are guided by the *Greenprint*, new sites are mostly determined based on sites that become available or partnerships that emerge. Partnerships with school districts and the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) continue to be developed for use of open space on their lands for community gardens. Partnerships with land owners other than the City provide more opportunities for new gardens and new participants; however, the garden leases are sometimes unstable or subject to termination when partners require the land for other purposes.

2.3.11 FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS AND PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

SURVEY

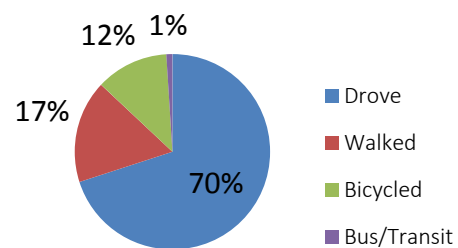
PRNS conducted surveys among Community Garden Program gardeners and residents who were on the Community Garden Program waitlists between January and March of 2014. There were 314 survey respondents, half of whom were gardeners and half of whom were on the waiting list; the two groups were asked a different set of questions. Some respondents did not answer all questions in the survey. The key findings of the survey are summarized below.

Current Gardeners

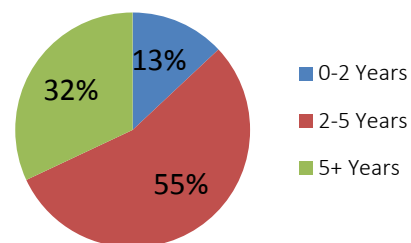
Of the 157 community garden users who responded to the survey:

- 70 percent drove or carpooled to their respective community gardens on the day that they were surveyed.
- 77 percent were, at one point, on a waiting list for their community garden plot. 43 percent were on their respective waiting list for 2 to 5 years.
- 55 percent have been gardening at their garden for 2-5 years, and another 32 percent have been there for over 5 years.
- About 90 percent say that they socialize and share tips and tools with other gardeners.

Transportation to Garden



Gardening Tenure



³ City of San José, *Greenprint 2009 Update*. Chapter 5 – Planning Area Strategies. Adopted by San José City Council on December 8, 2009.

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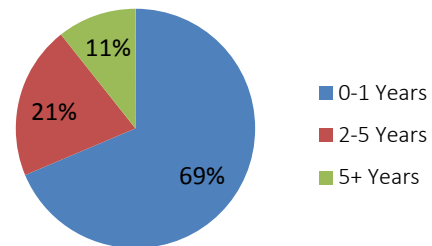
- 79 percent say their plot size is just right; 20 percent say their plot is too small; 99 percent claimed to use their entire plot.

Prospective Gardeners

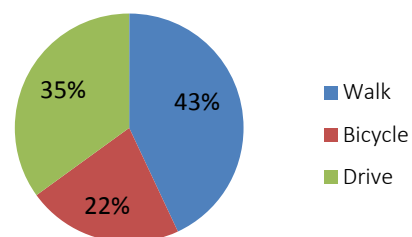
Of the 157 prospective gardeners on the waitlist who responded:

- 69 percent claim they have been on the waiting list for their respective community garden for 2 to 5 years; 21 percent claim they have been on the waiting list for 0 to 1 year; and 11 percent claim they have been on the waiting list for over 5 years.
- 77 percent have not participated in a community garden before.
- 52 percent live less than 1 mile from their community garden.
- 43 percent said they would drive to their community garden; 35 percent said they would walk; and 22 percent said they would ride their bicycle.
- 66 percent said they would garden all year round, and 67 percent said they would garden during winter, which is the least popular season.
- The primary reason prospective gardens wanted to garden was to supplement groceries (47 percent chose this as their primary reason), and the second was for relaxation (33 percent chose this as their primary reason). Less than 20 percent identified saving money, socializing, or spending time with family as their primary motivation for gardening.
- In the free-form questions, Prospective gardeners expressed frustration with the waiting list, lack of communication, and seeing neglected plots, gardeners with multiple plots, or gardeners from other districts gardening in the garden they are waiting for.

Time On Waiting List



Planned Transportation



STAKEHOLDER MEETING

In addition to the 2014 survey, PRNS conducted a meeting of community garden stakeholders in June 2015 to solicit feedback about the Community Garden Program. The meeting, held on a Wednesday evening at Alma Community Center, was primarily attended by current gardeners and garden managers. The participants had many comments and ideas, and the key points about the current community garden program are summarized below. A full summary of this meeting is available in Appendix B.

- Gardens that have a sense of permanence are successful, and do not have trouble recruiting volunteers. Gardens on land not owned by the city and subject to termination have a morale problem.

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- Not enough information, in not enough languages, is available about garden addresses, signing up for a plot, which council districts have gardens, what the fees pay for, the City's role and services, changes in annual updates to rules, or generally for new or existing gardeners to learn about the program.
- Vandalism, illegal dumping, and intimidation of gardeners is a problem at some garden locations, but not at others.
- It is challenging to find volunteers to manage the gardens at some garden locations.
- Current gardeners like the existing lack of term limits, which creates stability, community, and better upkeep.
- Gardeners have different opinions about the advisability of locating gardens adjacent to other recreational facilities.
- Gardeners are concerned about environmental issues in their gardens; particularly in gardens where they experience fumes from nearby industry.
- Rules are generally reasonable and helpful.
- Current gardeners like that income is not currently involved in participant selection, because community gardening is a social and neighborhood activity that people of all income levels should be allowed to participate in.
- There is no training for new gardeners, which contributes to people who have never gardened before giving up and abandoning their plots.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Significant demand for garden plots suggests that increasing access to community garden plots in San José would better serve residents. In addition to developing new gardens and garden plots, other opportunities to serve this need include improving the program's operations and modifying policies to provide more service and capacity to existing gardens, as well as implementing best practices and innovations that have been successful in similar programs. PRNS has opportunities to improve the program by implementing new models for operations, service levels, gardener selection, and site selection.

The San José Community Garden Program Study will identify these opportunities in more detail and provide recommendations for meeting San José's need for a thriving, innovative community garden program. The study will include an analysis of available funding sources and resources for the development and operation of current and future community gardens. The study will also include guidelines and best practices for community gardens and urban agriculture.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

3. Case Studies of Model Community Garden Program



3.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter reviews best practices and trends from three successful and innovative community garden programs across the United States: Chicago Park District’s Community Gardens in the Park Program, the Seattle’s Department of Neighborhoods, P-Patch Community Gardens Program, and Philadelphia’s Department of Recreation program, Farm Philly. These garden programs were chosen due to the variety of activities offered, as well as the successful management strategies.¹ For an overview of these programs,

¹ Interviews were conducted with the following individuals: senior staff Rich MacDonald, Program Supervisor for P-Patch; Kristin Brock, Senior Program Specialist at the Chicago Park District, Elisa Ruse-Esposito Farm, Philly Program Manager at the

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

refer to Table 3-1. A brief summary of Veggielution, a community farm in San José, is also provided at the end of the chapter.

3.2 CHICAGO

Chicago has taken many steps towards becoming one of the leading green cities in the county. The Chicago Park District helps to promote and expand this greening effort through its Garden in the Parks Program that provides outdoor space for communities in Chicago to garden. Started in 1940, the Gardens in the Parks program includes 70 gardens including ornamental gardens that are shared, and edible gardens that are individual plots or communal. Ornamental gardens include annuals, perennials, and small shrubs, with no plants intended for consumption. Edible gardens include plants for use as food, grown only in raised beds. The Park District intends to start a demonstration garden to provide education and training.

All of the program's gardens are the result of grassroots efforts, with land selected by the community. The Chicago Park District is the owner of the community garden land; however all but one garden is fully operated by volunteer garden managers.

Key factors in selecting Chicago's Garden in the Parks Program as a case study include its reputation as a successful program; the diversity of garden types selected; and similarity to San José's Community Garden Program in that parks are located on parkland and managed by volunteers.

3.2.1 OPERATIONS

CITY ROLE

The Chicago program's success is due to its member support as well as helpful guidance from one full-time Senior Program Specialist. The management and care of all but one garden relies upon the members of each garden's advisory council. The Senior Program Specialist helps to manage one garden. Managing this one garden helps to keep her aware of programmatic tasks, such as wait list management, and plot assignments. The Program Specialist also produces reference materials, and helps with community outreach and garden education. The annual supply budget of \$4,500 from the General Fund is used mostly for workshops and classes, and also to help establish new community gardens.

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department; and Roberta Camp, a co-coordinator of South Street Garden in Philadelphia. For all three programs, operations, service provisions, site selection, and participant selection were explored.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

TABLE 3-1 CASE STUDY COMPARISON

	City of Chicago	Seattle	Philadelphia	San José
<i>Program Name</i>	Gardens in the Park	P-Patch	Farm Philly	Community Garden Program
<i>Lead Organization</i>	City of Chicago Park and Recreation Department	City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods	City of Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation	Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS)
<i>Staff Oversight</i>	1 FTE	6 FTE	1 FTE; 6 Seasonal	1.25 FTE
<i>Services Provided</i>	City manages one garden and provides support to others	Centralized Program	City Provides support to gardens, but does not manage	City provides support and some management
Operations				
<i>Partners</i>		Grow (P-Patch Trust)	Multiple; Non-Profit, and Public	
<i>Budget¹</i>	\$4,500 (supplies only)	\$2,427,000	\$200,000 (staffing only)	\$202,161
<i>Application Fees</i>	None	None	\$20 (South St) ²	None
<i>Participant Fees</i>	\$25 ²	\$27 plus \$13 for each additional 100 square feet (assistance available)	\$30 (South St) ²	\$0.05 per square foot of garden plot, plus water fees
<i>Funding Sources</i>		Parks and Green Space Levy (2008)		
<i>Garden Types</i>				
<i>Individual Plot-Based</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Communal Plots</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Youth Gardens/Program</i>	None	Yes	Yes	None
Inventory and Level of Service				
<i>Other</i>	Yes; ornamental	Yes; market gardens	Yes; donation program	
<i>Number of Gardens</i>	20 edible; 70 total	88 active	60 active including orchards, vegetable, and fruit production, community gardens and market farms	17 community gardens
<i>Number of Plots</i>	150 to 200	Approximately 2,850	Unknown	1,014
<i>Plot Sizes</i>	32 to 100 SF	60 to 200 SF	Up to 100 SF (South St) ²	144 to 781 SF
<i>Number of</i>	500 ³	6,875	Unknown	1,041

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

TABLE 3-1 CASE STUDY COMPARISON

	City of Chicago	Seattle	Philadelphia	San José
<i>Participants (Plot-holder)</i>				
<i>Programs that Increase LOS</i>	Fee discounts	Market gardens, youth programs, food bank donations	Youth programs, food bank donations	
Site Selection	<i>Landowner</i> Parkland	Parks Department, Grow, Seattle Housing Authority and others	Parks Department	Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, as well as land use agreements with other land-owning agencies
<i>Other Criteria</i>	Water source	Other private and public		
<i>Defined Process</i>	Yes	Yes	No	None
<i>Proximity to Garden</i>	Encouraged ²	limited to Seattle residents	Yes (South St.) ²	limited to council district ⁴
<i>Underserved</i>	Elderly, disabled, or low income groups are not charged plot fees	Assistance for plot fees (low-income, immigrants, refugees, seniors, others)	None	None
<i>Other Criteria</i>	None	None	None	None
Participant Selection	<i>Waitlist Length</i> 3- 5 years ⁵	1 to 5 years (centralized list) ⁵	2 to 2.5 years (South St) ⁵	342 people on waitlist, with wait time ranging from no wait to 5.5 years
<i>Term Limits</i>	None	None	None	None
<i>Information Sharing</i>	Website, bulletin boards, word of mouth	Website, flyer, word of mouth	Neighborhood association website, signs at each garden	Through Volunteer Garden Management Teams, council office web sites, newsletter, large banner placed on garden fences through the City of San José website, signs at each Garden Program

Notes: FTE = full-time equivalent; SF = square feet

¹ = Budget presented on available information, and therefore should not be used for direct comparison

² = Varies by garden; typical condition identified in table.

³ = Only for edible gardens

⁴ = If there are plots available at a particular garden and there are no people on the waiting list, a person living in any other council district may rent one at that community garden.

⁵ = This information was unavailable

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

With the exception of the one garden run by the Program Specialist, day-to-day garden management is run by community members, who form advisory councils. These councils manage the waitlist and plot assignments, as well as create bylaws and best practices.

A training or orientation is offered by advisory councils for new participants in most gardens. The Parks and Recreation Department hopes to organize more workshops on fundraising and fiscal management. Groups, individual garden members, or non-profit partners who want to teach a class, offer demonstration gardens, or provide hands-on learning are encouraged to do so.

Each garden has its own culture and history of volunteerism, upkeep, activities, and sense of community involvement. Some gardens have garden managers, assistant managers, treasurers, and secretaries, while others are run primarily by one or two people. Each garden is responsible for collecting funds and paying the administrative and water fees for collective garden use. Plot fees vary in different gardens. Because of the nature of the program, and the differences between each garden, many of the standards of operation are not consistent between gardens. The fees for the gardens managed by the City are \$25 which stays at that garden. The \$25 dollar fee is used primarily for administration, as well as an incentive for gardens to actively use and maintain their plots.

GARDEN RULES

The Chicago Park District has developed rules and regulations that apply to all gardens to ensure that gardens are safe and pleasant places. These rules include bans on littering, dumping, grilling, alcohol consumption, or any unlawful activities. All gardens must be organic, and no chemical pest control measures may be used. Products cannot be sold commercially as gardens are intended for education or personal consumption only.

3.2.2 LEVEL OF SERVICE

There are currently between 150 and 200 plots within the edible gardens, and approximately 500 people participate in the program. Less than a third of gardens are edible gardens (20 gardens). The gardens are located throughout the city, and some neighborhoods have more gardens than other neighborhoods. Plot sizes vary from 32 to 100 square feet. While the plot number is low for Chicago's size, shared gardens (community plots) and ornamental gardens increase level of service.

3.2.3 SITE SELECTION

Gardens sites are selected within existing Chicago parkland by community members who are interested in initiating the garden. Community members are urged to look for any underutilized sections of existing Chicago parks that will not interfere with park aesthetics or existing uses.

When community members have identified a location that looks suitable for a garden, they must first check with the Park Department Supervisor to ensure that:

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- The land is on park property and does not interfere with other park activities.
- There is a functioning water source within the park, which must be located within 100 feet of a working water source.
- Other considerations include sun exposure, and shade from buildings and trees, proximity to restrooms and in a location where a fence is not necessary.

The next step of the process is for community members to submit an initial application which includes a photo or drawing of the proposed garden space. After the application is received by the Park Department, the group leader will receive an approval letter or request more information. In some cases the request may be denied.

Once a location has been approved, participants must conduct a site and usage survey, which includes detailed pictures of the site. Members must also identify funding. Each group must cover the cost of building raised beds and filling them with soil. Other tasks include meeting with the Park Advisory Council to share the plan and obtain a letter of support, holding a public meeting, completing a new community garden petition form (including a list of 15 signatures), and finally submitting the final proposal. The proposal must have the petition, site usage surveys, and letter of support, group membership roster, funding plan, garden design, plant list, installation, and maintenance plan.

If community residents have questions about the site selection process, they are urged to contact staff.

3.2.4 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

WAITLIST

Gardens have different approaches to participant selection. However, all gardens have waitlists: some last a year and some last 3-5 years or longer. Participants within the garden managed by the Program Specialist, have to re-apply each year at the same time. Everyone on the waitlist is contacted by email every year in order of the date they applied. The first pick of garden plots within a particular garden will go to returning members. Anyone who does not re-apply is removed from the waitlist.

PARTICIPANT CRITERIA

Some gardens require participants to live in an area close to a garden. The garden managed by the Parks Department does not require participants to live close to the garden. While there is not a particular rule that prioritizes participation, elderly, disabled, or low income groups are not charged plot fees in the Parks Department garden.

INFORMATION AND OUTREACH

New participants typically find out about the garden program through word of mouth, bulletin boards in parks, or on the Park District website. The Chicago Parks and Recreation Department provides each community garden is provided with an informational sign by the Park District upon request.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

3.2.5 CONCLUSION

Chicago's Garden in the Park Program is notable due to:

1. Diversity of garden types.
2. De-centralized program and management.
3. Clear site selection, criteria, and process.
4. Fee system discounts.

Having both ornamental and community gardens helps to encourage many different types of participants. The dynamic structure of each garden, which is independently run and managed, is one of the strengths of the Chicago Community Gardens in the Park program but also creates challenges, as further discussed below. Gardens have some autonomy, which contributes to their success because they can independently decide how to manage waitlists, process new members, allocate plots, and receive funding. Given the small budget of the program, Chicago's Garden in the Park program is unique compared to other programs that rely heavily on support from Parks Staff for management and organization.

Although the autonomy of the gardens in the program cuts down on staff time and costs, there are challenges with having a minimal centralized system. A centralized system is defined by large Park staff oversight. Challenges include keeping track of how many plots are available and how many gardeners there are and existing equity in gardens. Furthermore, some gardens may run efficiently with a large volunteer base and involvement, while others are not as organized and lack continued engagement and leadership. Without a strong centralized system, it is also harder to secure funding from non-profit partners program-wide. Some gardens have support from friend groups, or partners, but many do not, which can lead to inequality in gardens.

In addition to a de-centralized program and management system, Chicago provides a clear criteria and process for site selection, which ensures that communities understand how to form a community garden. Specific, step by step information on how to form a garden would benefit San José. One of the steps that qualify the approval of a community garden is to ensure that they have a funding plan.

Discounts for individuals who are unable to pay the full amount for garden fees and inclusion of communal and shared gardens increase the number of people who participate.

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3.3 SEATTLE

Seattle's P-Patch Program, run by the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, is named for its first community garden, a small plot within the Picardo Farm. The garden land was acquired from the Picardo family, in 1973, and was named P-Patch to commemorate the family. Seattle's P-Patch Community Gardening Program was chosen as a case study due to the number of programs and activities that it supports, and because of its strong relationships to the non-profit, GROW, resulting in a very different management structure than San José's program. In addition, Seattle's program is focused on inclusion of low income and marginalized communities, and is a leader in many best practices.

A majority of the gardens, approximately 66 percent, are located on property owned by public entities, including the Department of Neighborhoods, the Public Utilities Commission, the Water Department, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle City Light, Finance and Administrative Services, and King County Metro. The other 33 percent of community gardens are owned by private landowners such as churches and non-profits, including GROW.

The P-Patch program is 41 years old and contains approximately 31 acres of land; approximately 15 acres of land are for food production. The P-Patch program has 90 active gardens. There are three market gardens, where food is grown to sell on-site or off-site at a store, stand, farmers' market or restaurant.

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Two of the community gardens are closing at the end of October 2014, but there is one permanent and one temporary garden (a garden with a temporary lease), opening early 2016.

The Program areas include:

- **Community gardens:** plot based gardens including communal plots.
- **Youth gardening** for young people, and managed by neighborhood groups, gardeners, schools, daycares, and afterschool programs.
- **Food security** focusing on low income and immigrant communities.
- **Market gardening** with two farm stands that offer low-income people supplemental income and opportunities to connect with the larger community.

The focus of this discussion will be on the community gardens, rather than the other program areas.

3.3.1 OPERATIONS

CITY ROLE

P-Patch is a centrally managed program run by the Department of Neighborhoods, which is responsible for facilitating and providing the infrastructure for all types of gardens participating in the program. With an annual budget of \$2,427,000, the city provides six full-time staff employees to support the program, and funds new garden development, expanded garden development, acquisition, outreach and engagement, and garden tools and signs. More than half of the budget is allocated for new garden development. The breakdown of the budget by expenditure category is provided in Table 3-2.

TABLE 3-2 SEATTLE P-PATCH BUDGET 2013^a

Expenditures	
New Garden Development	\$1,305,000
Expanded Garden Development	\$246,000
Acquisition	\$255,00
Outreach and Engagement	\$74,000
Garden Tools and Signs	\$19,000
Administration	\$508,000
Arts	\$20,000
Total	\$2,427,000

a. Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, 2013, P-Patch Community Garden Program Parks and Green Spaces Levy Community Update.

The Department of Neighborhood's responsibilities include:

- Plot assignment, registration, and collection of plot fees.
- Waitlist management.

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- Outreach to underserved communities.
- Conflict resolution.
- Property leasing and interdepartmental facilitation.
- Leadership development.
- New gardener education, including workshops with local nonprofit groups.
- Program materials development.

Many of the existing gardens were funded by the \$2,000,000 from the 2008 Parks and Green Space Levy.

ROLE OF NON-PROFIT PARTNER

Seattle's program is municipally managed but relies on garden management groups and the non-profit GROW, formally the P-Patch Trust. GROW advocates for and funds many of the community gardens in the program, and acquires and holds land for community gardens and urban farms. GROW has been providing advocacy for community gardens for more than 40 years. GROW is a volunteer-driven organization, and spends 87 percent of its funds on projects and services.

GROW's work includes:

- Advocacy for community gardeners.
- Co-ownership of six community gardens.
- Free training and consultation to help develop leadership teams.
- Payment of plot fees for low income gardens in P-Patch.
- Tool purchasing, and supplying the P-Patch post.
- Providing liability insurance.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Participants are responsible for maintaining the site and handling responsibilities of managing the site, including outreach, irrigation, and small repairs.

There is a \$26 plot fee, plus \$13 for each additional 100 square feet for all gardens. This fee is a general administration fee to manage the waitlist, and provide other administrative support. There is plot assistance for people who cannot pay for gardens; typically these are immigrants or low income individuals. P-Patch provides plot assistance of \$20,500 to 336 families in 68 community gardens.

GARDEN RULES

There are many codes of conduct that help keep gardens safe and comfortable. These rules are consistent with other park rules, such as bans on destruction of property; unleashed and or unlicensed dogs; theft of plants or property; sexual misconduct; possession, sale, or use of illegal drugs; disposing of unwanted items and possession of firearms. With the exception of the market gardens and the urban agricultural program, which have separate tax policies, products cannot be sold commercially. Failure to comply with the rules may result in disqualification from further participation in the P-Patch Program.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

GARDEN ORIENTATION

New gardeners are given an orientation on recommendations of what to grow as well as restrictions, on what they cannot grow. There are also gardener gatherings and work parties that support community partnerships and shared learning, organized by the P-Patch Program. Local non-profits teach garden classes.

GARDEN CLOSURE

When gardens are closed, gardeners who are in a garden that gets closed are typically relocated. Gardeners in the closed garden will be given first priority to move into vacant plots in the nearest gardens. In some situations a garden might be established until a permanent one is built. For example, one privately owned site will close soon and there is no funding or land for replacement. Gardeners are transferring into three nearby P-Patches. Another two sites on Seattle Housing Authority property are closing due to redevelopment. The housing authority is building a replacement garden until permanent sites are located.

3.3.2 LEVEL OF SERVICE

The P-Patch Program has 3,125 people registered with the community garden plots. Several years ago a survey of gardeners showed that each registrant represented an average of 2.2 people. The actual amount of people the program serves is therefore closer to 6,875 (3,125 x 2.2 people). Plots are mostly occupied, but there are some gardens that have lower interest due to their location in lower density areas. Plot sizes range from 40 to 800 square feet, but the majority of plots are between 60 and 200 square feet.

The P-Patch program encourages the dedication of at least one area in each community garden to grow food for donation to food banks. Community gardens assist underserved populations including immigrants, and refugees. Community gardens also provide opportunities for seniors, or other people who may need more accessible raised beds. To address the growing interest in urban agriculture, the P-Patch program is experimenting with different models of community gardens which include large tracts for food growth, collective gardens that do not have individual garden plots, and giving gardens where produce is donated to those in need.

3.3.3 SITE SELECTION

For land privately held, the P-Patch Program worked with private landowners and entered into lease agreements. The garden community raised funds to support garden programs through grassroots support. The money would go towards purchasing the land, as well as some maintenance.

Since the 2008 Parks and Green Acres Levy, which raised \$146 million (including \$2 million for community gardens), Seattle created a five-year plan, the Seattle Parks and Recreation Conclusive Report, 2009-2013 Strategic Action Plan², to enhance citywide planning for parks and open space, analyze system-wide

² Seattle Parks and Recreation, 2013, *2009-2013 Strategic Action Plan Conclusive Report*

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

needs, and develop criteria for land acquisition of new land, facilities, and fixed assets. The plan identifies 21 priority areas and the following considerations for the selection new garden sites.

Considerations include:

- Alignment with Parks vision, mission and values.
- Equitable geographic distribution.
- Current and future costs associated with new park lands, levels of staffing, and other resources required for operation and maintenance.
- Current and future benefits associated with acquiring facilities, such as increased number of programing and revenue opportunities, open space, wildlife habitat, and watershed protection.
- A key focus of the Plan is to develop gardens in communities that are underserved by gardens as well as in other community services. The Strategic Action Plan identifies 21 priority areas.

3.3.4 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

WAITLIST

Due to the growing interest in gardening and urban agriculture, there is typically a three to five year wait for gardens. The P-Patch Program maintains wait lists for 76 community gardens. The other 14 gardens are new, market gardened, or focused on low income and immigrant populations, and do not have waitlists. There were a total of 1,309 people on waitlists at the end of 2013. Some gardens in less dense areas have shorter waitlists. There are other programs not run by the City that may have shorter wait times, including Urban Garden Share, City Fruit, and Urban Farm Hub. Residents are not limited to a garden within their district.

In order to sign up for the waitlist, participants can call, email program staff, or sign up online. Individuals are placed on the waitlist by date of first request. Individuals may request to be placed on up to two P-Patch lists, in order of their preference. Individuals on the wait list are contacted each year during the fall, usually October, to gauge further interest. If an individual does not reply, they are removed from any waitlist. There is no term limit for gardeners.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Individuals signing up for the waitlist are generally required to be City of Seattle residents. Some exceptions are made for non-Seattle residents who live near gardens on the edge of the city limits, though Seattle residents have priority. Residents are not limited to a garden within their district.

P-Patch tries to retain experienced gardeners while creating open opportunities for new ones. P-Patch Community Gardening also encourages inclusivity. The 2009-2013 Seattle Parks and Recreation Strategic Action, includes goals to establish public outreach policies for inclusionary, racially, and cultural appropriate engagement with the public; and to identify people who do not currently use Parks and Recreation's programs and facilities. In 2010, 23 percent of gardeners were people of color, 71 percent were low income, 48 percent lived in multifamily dwellings, and 77 percent had no gardening space where they live. P-Patch also provides assistance for plot fees for low-income, immigrants, refugees, and seniors.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

INFORMATION AND OUTREACH

Interested participants are most likely to find out about the program either through word of mouth, a flyer, or the City of Seattle's website, where there is information on rules and regulations, a waitlist, an option to sign up, and a description of the program. There are also signs for the programs posted at each garden. Much of the information about how to sign up for the gardens, as well as rules and regulations, is available in multiple languages including six of the most commonly used languages in the gardens. Furthermore, many gardens have access to an interpreter. There is no formal evaluation process to measure success, or field complaints, but members have access to a mailing list and staff email addresses.

3.3.5 CONCLUSION

Seattle's P-Patch Program is notable due to:

- Funding program.
- Emphasis on underserved populations.
- Centralized management through Department of Neighborhoods and non-profit partners.
- Availability of information.

One reason for the program's success is residents' interest in parks and open space, and gardens in particular which ultimately lead to support for the \$2 million dollar grant from the Parks and Green Space Levy. The P-Patch Program embodies the message that all public land should be used by all people through the language in the Strategic Action Plan. The Program Department's focus is to empower communities and their residents to live better lives, and this mission supports active staff involvement in improving the P-Patch Program and catalyzing resident participation. While the P-Patch program often has long waitlists, there are gardens that don't require a waitlist, including gardens for low income and immigrant populations. In addition, the program's emphasis on inclusivity may be worth replicating in San José.

Another contributing factor to the program's success is that it is housed in the Department of Neighborhoods. With the non-profit partner GROW, the P-Patch program is able to have an expansive gardening program. While this kind of support is integral to the success of the program, P-Patch is then reliant on the fundraising success of GROW. Nonprofit's funds can fluctuate during economic change. Grants like the \$2 million Parks and Open Space Levy also help to support the program, but are not always a reliable source of income.

P-Patch provides a large amount of information to the public on their program, including an information sheet with basic program statistics, national context, garden management, community benefit, and property ownership. In addition, P-Patch also provides information on how their wait list works, how to sign up, and plot assignment guidelines. Easily accessible information is helpful to someone who might be interested, but wants to understand the details of the program before reaching out to P-Patch staff. Having specific program statistics, as well as gardener demographics is something that San José should consider showing on their website.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM



3.4 PHILADELPHIA

Farm Philly is Philadelphia Parks and Recreation’s urban agricultural program and was started in 2012 to maintain and support urban agricultural projects on public land. The Parks and Recreation Department has formed partnerships with non-profits and other city departments such as the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and the Department of Public Property. The Farm Philly program is well known for its innovations in urban agriculture and for providing fresh food to underserved communities.

There are approximately 60 gardens in Farm Philly including:

- Orchards.
- Market farms.
- Youth education gardens.
- Community gardens (20 plot-based gardens).

Each garden within this large network is individually managed. There is not a strong centralized system or standards. Given this diversity, South Street Garden is highlighted throughout this case study as one example of a well-organized garden within the program.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

3.4.1 OPERATIONS

STAFF ROLES

Farm Philly operates with a staff budget of approximately \$200,000, which supports one full time program manager and seven seasonal workers.

Staff responsibilities include:

- Programming, education, and outreach to community gardens.
- Managing and running the successful and innovative youth urban agricultural program called Junior Farmers.
- Providing basic resources such as access to clean soil to gardeners.
- Coordinating with the mayor's office, and food policy office to ensure health policies are being met.
- Working with the water department to ensure that there is water at the gardens.

The Junior Farmers Program was established in spring 2012. Junior Farmers 2 to 12 years old learn the benefits of gardening from growing their own food, and working in their natural environment. Youth gardens are used for growing vegetables, small orchards, and pollinator gardens. Seasonal staff works in the growing season from about March-October. The program manager position started in 2014. The Farm Philly Program would benefit from a full time coordinator for the Junior Farmers Program, according to Program Staff. With a full time staff member dedicated to this program, they would be able to expand the program, and focus more on outreach

Many people have said that the Parks and Recreation Department has been neglecting gardens. While Program Staff feel that this is incorrect, it speaks to need for more communication between gardens and the Program Manager for the Farm Philly Program. More full-time staff would help to alleviate some of the problems with lack of communications with gardens. The Program Manager also stressed the need for contact numbers and names of all garden coordinators so that she can communicate citywide policies and encourages attendance in annual meetings. Much like Chicago's program, Philadelphia's program differs in policies and procedures depending on the garden. Many gardens are well-organized, such as the South Street Garden, yet many others may not have the same amount of support.

PARTNERSHIPS

Farm Philly has formed partnerships with numerous groups to create and protect long-term community gardens. Partner roles range from providing programming, to managing gardens.

These partnerships include:

- Neighborhoods Gardens Trust
- Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
- Department of Public Property
- Office of Housing and Community Development
- Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation
- Penn State Master Gardens
- Philadelphia Orchard Project

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- Teens for Good
- Urban Nutrition Initiative
- Earth's Keepers
- Temple Community Garden
- The Mayor's Food Policy Council,
- The Food Trust
- Nationalities Service Center
- Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
- Public Interest Law Center for Philadelphia
- Greener Partners
- Fairmount Park Conservancy
- East Park Revitalization Alliance
- Philadelphia City Council

The Recreation and Parks Department also has a stewardship unit that helps with fundraising and cleanups, and provides support and volunteers for maintaining Recreation and Parks property including gardens. Although Farm Philly has many partnerships, none of the partnerships help support funding the program. The program manager applies for grants to obtain other supplies.

GARDEN RULES

Rules and regulations depend on the garden; and there are no design standards (fencing, sheds, etc.), or polices around hours of operation. However, if gardens want to sell produce, they must go through concessions, unless profits go towards the community garden overhead. Most gardens do have fees with \$60 being the highest fee. The majority of gardens have garden meetings every year, and have a garden coordinator.

INFO AND OUTREACH

Due to the small staff budget and therefore lower staff oversight, communication between the Program Manager and gardens is not always possible. However, there is a meeting scheduled with many garden coordinators in the winter of 2016, which will hopefully increase communication.

HIGHLIGHT: SOUTH STREET GARDEN

The South Street Garden is one garden within the larger Farm Philly system. The Washington Square West Civic Association (WSWCA) administers this garden and two others in the community. Coordinators are chosen by the garden's membership each October, and are members of the Washington Square West Civic Association Greening Committee. WSWCA act as the treasurer to the Community garden, and each garden within the neighborhood association may establish its own rules with respect to water use, trash, and maintenance of common areas. South Street is managed by two co-coordinators who manage the waitlist, help with plot assignment, registration, and collection of plot fees, schedule new gardener education including workshops with local nonprofit groups, and develop program materials. To join a garden you do not have to be a member, although WSWCA members receive priority placement for Community Garden vacancies.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

The garden charges a \$20 application fee that is non-refundable and goes to the Washington Square West Association. The annual plot fee is \$30 per year, although senior members only pay \$24. Gardeners have to participate in at least 4 out of 8 cleanups per year. Gardeners must also keep the area around their plots clean.

There is a toolshed, with shared tools and organic pest deterrents which can be used by everyone. There are shared chairs, picnic areas, and tables. Individual plots do not exceed 100 square feet in size, and plots must be weed free by May 1 and planted by May 15. Members who fail to meet this deadline forfeit gardening privileges. Organic methods of control shall be used whenever possible.

A training program for new gardens was initiated four years ago at South Street Garden. New participants receive a map of the gardens plots and gardeners indicating who the experienced gardeners are. Interested gardeners who live in Washington Square are most likely to find out about the gardens through the neighborhood association website. There are also signs at each of the three gardens with a telephone number.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Currently, there is no system for accurate tracking of gardens, or number of gardeners within the program. There are approximately 20 plot-based community gardens in the Farm Philly Program. The Recreation and Parks Department is trying to collect inventory on gardens with an interactive online map online that lists the names and locations of various gardens that people can add garden info to. Plot sizes vary from very small (4x4) to large (15x265 feet). Factors such as the Junior Farmer programmer, communal plots, and the giving and donation program extend benefits of the program beyond plot holders.

HIGHLIGHT: SOUTH STREET GARDEN

South Street Garden has 40 plots plus a communal compost plot, which serves 50 people. The South Street Garden participates in a City Harvest Program where a small team from the Horticulture Society works with inmates to grow seedlings. The plants are then given to a residence for formerly homeless and incarcerated people called Ready Willing and Able.

3.4.2 SITE SELECTION

All Farm Philly Gardens are on Philadelphia's Parks and Recreation Land. The community proposes a particular community garden site and Philadelphia's Parks and Recreation Department vets the land to make sure it is a viable piece of property meaning that it is owned by the department. This process ensures that land selected is not used for any previous activity. In many cases, people do not know about other existing uses of the property.

The program manager is conducting a field inventory based on available information. When completed this would help to identify gaps in need in terms of who is being served. One site selection challenge includes soil quality issues. In the creation of new gardens, Philadelphia has come up against the issue of potentially polluted soil, and has questioned their role in terms of liability.

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HIGHLIGHT: SOUTH STREET GARDEN

In the case of the South Street Garden, the land was vacant in 1995 as a result of plans to build a cross town expressway. For many years the lot remained empty, and a group of citizens made it suitable land for a garden. The land is now owned by the Parks and Recreation Department, but previously the land was owned by the City Redevelopment Authority.

3.4.3 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Farm Philly does not have a program-wide standard for how participants are selected; participant selection criteria and process depends on the garden.

HIGHLIGHT: SOUTH STREET GARDEN

The three gardens in Washington Square, including South Street, have a 2- to 2½-year waiting list. There are generally about 12 to 120 people on the waitlist at one time. Residents of the Washington Square West community are defined by the boundaries of the WSWCA (Broad, Walnut, South and 7th Street), and are eligible for gardening privileges at any WSWCA community garden. People who live outside the boundaries of Washington Square West who live close to a WSWCA community garden may also apply for that particular garden, but WSWCA members get priority.

Overall, the South Street Garden is very well managed and full of passionate people who have worked for many years to have the space for a garden.

3.4.4 CONCLUSION

Philadelphia's Farm Philly Program is notable due to:

- Youth programs.
- Community donation programs.
- Garden preservation.
- Efforts to centralize inventory and rules.

The unique Junior Farmers Program is an asset to Philadelphia and it provides the opportunity for young children and adolescents to learn about the importance of gardening and being in an outdoor environment. San José could benefit from a program that focuses exclusively on engaging youth. In addition to the Junior Farmers Program, Farm Philly also participates in programs to help formerly incarcerated, called Ready Willing and Able, both by providing food and by providing the opportunity to garden. Philadelphia's Parks and Recreation Department has formed partnerships with many agencies such as the Department of Public Property, the Office of Housing and Community Development, and the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation to create a process to protect long-term community gardens from the reach of development. These partners have worked with Farm Philly to make garden preservation a large part of their mission and strategy.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

Farm Philly is a new program and faces many challenges; however, the program has made great efforts to try and centralize inventory and rules. The meeting with garden coordinators scheduled in 2016 is an example of such efforts.

3.5 VEGGIELUTION

Veggielution Community Farm was established in 2008 to provide opportunities for healthy food choices and healthy physical activity. The farm and programming is run at Emma Prusch Farm Park, a 6-acre farm in San José. As a community farm there are no individual plots but individuals can volunteer during open hours or special workdays. The land is owned by the City of San José, and the program is funded by the Emma Prusch Foundation, whose mission is to ensure that the master plan of the park is followed, and the park maintains San José's rich agricultural heritage and a rural country feel. Veggielution is funded through a mix of foundation and corporate grants, individual donations and farm revenue. There are currently six full time staff members. In 2013, Veggielution grew 56,000 pounds of vegetables and supplied more than 80 households with weekly farm boxes. Over 50 percent of their harvest was distributed for free or at low cost. Low cost or free crops are distributed through Farm Stand, and Farm Box, and the remaining portion is sold for revenue at market price.

CASE STUDIES OF MODEL COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

4. Recommendations



The Community Garden Program Study is being conducted to examine opportunities to promote urban agriculture, health, community interaction, and neighborhood identity through expansion and improvement of the existing Community Garden Program. When compared to well-recognized programs in the cities of Philadelphia, Chicago, and Seattle, San Jose’s Community Garden Program is confirmed to be a strong, well-organized program that provides a good inventory of gardens. However, the Program does not yet share the diversity of programs that are central to these other programs, nor does the Program have adequate staffing and budget to support strategic program expansion, development, and proper monitoring and administration. The underlying recommendation that surfaces through the Community Garden Program Study is that emphasis and investment, should be placed on the building of program capacity. This includes improving programming and participation within garden sites, strategically expanding the program to new sites, and building program support to ensure adequate funding and long-term sustainability.

The Study includes recommendations for growing the program, as well as for identifying new sites, increasing number of gardeners, and for updating operations. Each of these topic areas are discussed in a separate section which includes recommendations addressing the specific topic as well as the overall success of the program in terms of equity, participation, and quality of experience. Table 4-1 consolidates all recommendations identified in the topic-based sections and identifies specific action items for

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implementing each recommendation. Given the Program's existing success, there is great potential for the program to become a model program for other communities.

4.1 GROWING THE PROGRAM

Level of Service (LOS) for community gardens is defined for the purposes of this Study as an assessment of the quantity and quality of gardens provided, as well as the quantity of individuals and communities that either participate in or benefit from the garden program. This section provides an overview of the current LOS, highlights approaches used by other garden programs for assessing and increasing LOS, and lastly provides preliminary recommendations to improve the LOS achieved by San José's Community Garden Program.

4.1.1 CURRENT PROGRAM

The Community Gardens Program's current quantity and quality is described below based on the existing standards, garden inventory and distribution, and programming. The City does not currently have an official standard for assessing LOS for the Community Garden Program, yet the *Greenprint's* "Ideal Planning Area Model" calls for a community garden in each of its 15 Urban Planning Areas. The Community Gardens Program inventory currently includes 17 community gardens, distributed across 15 Urban Planning Areas, as shown in Figure 8-1. Nine Urban Planning Areas do not currently have a garden. The *Greenprint* ranks level of parkland need in the Urban Planning Areas with consideration to acres of existing parkland, walkability to existing parkland, and population density. The Urban Planning Areas with the highest need for additional parkland are West Valley, Willow Glen, Central/Downtown, and Edenvale.

Walkability to parkland is one factor utilized by the *Greenprint* for determining level of need, yet walkability to community gardens is not currently a standard for evaluating community garden distribution. As shown in Figure 2-4, there are large portions of San José that are not within walking distance of a City-run garden.

While there is no existing standard for number of gardens per Council District, participants must currently select plots based on their Council District (when available). Therefore, the distribution amongst Council Districts is currently a consideration when considering LOS and garden distribution. Three of the Council Districts, including Districts 1 and 6, have three gardens each; while Council Districts 8 and 9 have 10 have none. In addition to gardens included with the Community Garden Program, there are at least two community gardens located within the city but operated by private entities that may be serving otherwise underserved areas.

Programming is similar at all community gardens. The community gardens are divided into plots that range from 144 to 781 square feet, each of which has one participant assigned to it. There are a total of 1,014 plots available at the community garden, and 1,014 total gardeners. There are not any communal plots or other programming to extend garden access or benefits to other city residents. Less than

TABLE 4-1 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Discussion	Desired Outcome	Action Items
Growing the Program			
1. Develop Measurable Goals for Level of Service	<p>Recommended metrics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribution in high need areas ▪ Waitlist length ▪ Rate of new garden development ▪ Gardener satisfaction ▪ Ratio of garden managers to gardeners ▪ Development of gardens in planning areas that currently lack them 	<p>Increasing number of gardens and participants in the garden program Replacing current standard for one garden per Urban Planning Area with metrics that respond to unique program and site context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize metrics for measuring LOS. ▪ Conduct bi-annual assessment
2. Increase Level of Service provided by Existing City Gardens through Changes in Programming	<p>Strategies to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Workdays ▪ Open Garden Days and Tours ▪ Reduction and variation in plot sizes ▪ Community plots ▪ Giving Gardens ▪ Donation Programs 	<p>Increased participation opportunities within existing and future gardens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage gardens to take part in donation program either through programmed plot or other means ▪ Develop Design Standards for gardens that address plot size, communal plots, garden features and placemaking ▪ Initiate a program-wide Open Garden Day (see Participant Selection #4) ▪ Set long-term goals for specialized programs for youth, seniors and other groups
3. Consider Collaboration and Information Sharing with Community Gardens that are provided by Private or Nonprofit Organizations	<p>Consider establishing a partner-garden program to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share informational resources ▪ Track community garden activity citywide ▪ Inform LOS assessment and selection of new garden sites ▪ Support development of non-PRNS community gardens 	<p>Greater understanding of citywide gardens and programs; improved information distribution; and informed site selection process for new gardens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop contact list for all existing garden operators/landowners ▪ Hold bi-annual meetings with garden operators to discuss shared resources and other issues ▪ Include citywide garden map with contact information on program webpage ▪ Encourage private developments to incorporate community gardens for their residents. Gardens could include ground level, rooftop and vertical gardens.
Identifying New Sites			
1. Formalize Site Selection Process	<p>Clear process and criteria for site selection help to ensure garden equity, clear communication, and decision making.</p>	<p>Clear communication amongst Program staff, partners, and residents; increased community engagement and demonstration of community support for site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop process and checklist for site selection ▪ Provide checklist for residents interested in starting a garden; require community petition to start a new garden
2. Identify Criteria for Identifying New Sites (HIGH PRIORITY)	<p>Criteria that should be considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Site conditions* ▪ Site ownership* ▪ Geographic location* ▪ Community support* ▪ Walkability ▪ Density ▪ Income ▪ Size <p>*= Highest Priority Criteria</p>	<p>Garden sites well distributed to serve need and offer successful programs.</p>	<p>Develop checklist for evaluating opportunity sites (Draft Site Checklist provided in Appendix C).</p>
3. Inventory Opportunity Sites	<p>Begin with a list of existing parkland, and then consider other public land or vacant sites.</p>	<p>Provide more options for new garden locations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inventory opportunity sites within existing parks, and assess using site selection criteria ▪ Inventory opportunity sites on other public or vacant land and assess using site selection criteria
Increasing Number of Gardeners			
1. Use Information Distribution as a Tool for Creating Equal Access to Gardens	<p>Equal access to gardens requires that information is well distributed and communicated.</p>	<p>Residents have easy access to garden information at garden sites, through the website, as well as at outreach events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide outreach materials in multiple languages ▪ Improve program webpage, including allowing waitlist signup and providing access to garden maps and information on starting gardens ▪ Hold one (1) program-wide outreach event per year

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TABLE 4-1 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Discussion	Desired Outcome	Action Items
2. Manage Waiting Period (HIGH PRIORITY)	A long waitlist can be an indication of low turnover, participant satisfaction, as well as an indication of higher demand.	Average wait does not exceed two years. Where a plot cannot be immediately provided, other participation opportunities are available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversify programming at gardens with long waitlists to allow greater participation ▪ Expand garden sites with long waitlist to include more plots, including Guadalupe, Green Thumb and Wallenberg, which are ideal for expansion, or explore nearby sites for new gardens ▪ Reduce plot sizes in order to accommodate more plot within existing garden boundaries. ▪ Eliminate the requirement that people sign up for a garden plot in their Council District. ▪ Provide training and informational resources that encourage residents to establish gardens in their private yards while on the waitlist
3. Reduce Economic Barriers to Participation	Reduce fees for low-income participants.	Diversified participation and improved access to underserved communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove annual plot fees for low-income participants ▪ Highlight fee assistance program in outreach materials ▪ Reserve five percent of plots at new gardens for low income individuals. If this program proves successful, extend this program to all other gardens ▪ Encourage gardens to designate plots for producing food to donate to foodbanks (see Growing the Program Recommendation #2)
4. Provide a Range of Opportunities for Participation	Explore inclusion of community volunteer days, produce donation programs, variation/reduction of plot size; and allow greater plot-sharing.	Increased program participation and greater level of service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiate a program-wide Open Garden Day (see Increasing Number of Gardeners Recommendation #1) ▪ Hold volunteer days at gardens with low participation to raise awareness and improve sites (see Increasing Number of Gardeners Recommendation #1)
5. Reconsider Criteria for Garden Assignments	Reconsider Council District as key factor for assigning garden. Instead, assign gardens based on proximity to participants' residence or workplace.	Program consistency; improved garden access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise plot assignment and waitlist process to assign gardens based on proximity to residence or workplace
6. Continue to Require Active Participation	Ensure consistent enforcement of rules, including active maintenance of plot.	Active participation; avoidance of term limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide staff support to facilitate enforcement
Operations			
1. Increase Capacity for Centralized Management (HIGH PRIORITY)	Provide two full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for current program; continue to maintain at least one staff per 700 participants as program grows.	Improve on-site staff support and invest in program development (see below).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase staffing from 1.25 FTE to 2.0 FTE
2. Invest in Program Development	Raise citywide program support to increase participation as well as funding.	Greater awareness and advocacy for the program; broader participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an outreach and engagement plan, including dedicated funding of at least \$20,000 per year ▪ Invest in outreach and engagement ▪ Develop long-term strategic plan for program growth
3. Develop framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts	Define specific roles that various partners can play in supporting the program, and build relationships with potential partners.	Greater program support in terms of land-base, funding, programming, and outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hold a forum with potential partners, including City of Jose Environmental Services Department, Santa Clara Valley Water District, The Health Trust, Catholic Charities, Whiz Kids, City of San Jose Housing Department, and surrounding municipalities with a community gardens program. ▪ Define roles and responsibilities and develop strategic approach for building and prioritizing sustainable, effective partnerships ▪ Continue to coordinate with school districts to further joint use of lands with community gardens

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1 percent of the San José's population of 1,000,536 is participating in the community gardens program.¹ The waitlist length, which was 342 residents long as of January 2016, indicates that the existing garden inventory and programming is not meeting the current demand.

The current inventory, programming, and standards for assessing LOS suggest that the Community Garden Program is providing a meaningful service to many residents, but that there are underserved areas and the potential to extend benefits to a greater portion of residents. Furthermore, standards for LOS could be refined to more provide a clearer indication of program success.



4.1.2 CASE STUDIES

Key findings related to LOS for the case studies of model community garden programs are provided below. These may be helpful in improving LOS of San José's Community Garden Program.

The case study programs ranged in size from 20 to 88 gardens, with the number of plots and plot holders generally increasing along with the number of gardens and plots. Chicago has 70 gardens that include both ornamental and edible gardens, Seattle's program has 90 active gardens that include three market gardens, and although there is no system for accurate tracking of the number of gardens in Philadelphia, it is estimated to include 60 active gardens. However, waitlists ranged from one to five years regardless of

¹ The total amount of people participating in the community garden program is 1,051 divided by the current population of San José 1,000,536 is approximately 1 percent.

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program size, which is comparable to San José's program and indicates that demand is likely to grow along as new gardens are included in a program. Furthermore, the percent of population that holds plots is between 0.5 to 1 percent for the programs studied.² Key differences in the case study programs that affect LOS include plot size, with San José's Community Garden Program having significantly larger plots than the case study programs. Gardens included in inventory, such as the Farm Philly program and P-Patch program, include gardens operated by other entities, thus increasing the overall number of gardens; and programming of gardens. Chicago, Seattle, and Philadelphia have increased their LOS by including changes in their programming, such as increasing number of communal plots, community workdays, donation programs, or training or orientation programs that are open to the greater community. For instance:

- *Many of Chicago's gardens offer a training orientation for new participants, and groups. Individual garden members or non-profit partners are also encouraged to teach classes, offer demonstration gardens, or provide hands on learning.*
- *To address the growing interest in urban agriculture, the P-Patch program in Seattle is experimenting with different models of community gardens, which include collective gardens that have individual garden plots, and donation gardens. The P-Patch program encourages the dedication of at least one area in each P-Patch to grow food for donation to food banks. P-Patch also assists underserved populations, including immigrants and refugees. P-Patch also provides opportunities for seniors or other people who may need more accessible raised beds.*
- *The South Street Garden, one garden within the larger Farm Philly system, has training for new gardeners, as well as mandatory participation in community workdays. The South Street Garden also participates in a City Harvest Program. A small team from the Horticulture Society works with inmates to grow seedlings. The plants are given to a residence for formerly homeless and incarcerated people called Ready Willing and Able. South Street Garden also has a communal compost plot.*

Of the case study programs, P-Patch is the only program to have specific targets regarding garden quantity and LOS. These targets include providing a garden in all of the 21 priority areas identified in the Strategic Action Plan as underserved by gardens and other services, and to provide an area within each garden to grow food to be donated to food banks.

4.1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Parks and Neighborhood Services consider the following:

DEVELOP MEASURABLE GOALS FOR GROWING THE PROGRAM

The primary measure for assessing LOS provided by the Community Garden Program is currently the number of gardens per Urban Planning Area, which provides a measure for both distribution and quantity. However, achieving this goal would not necessarily mean that gardens are optimally distributed or that an

² Chicago's Program currently serves approximately 500 people. With a population of 2,722,389 in 2014, the current program serves less than 0.5 percent of the total population. P-Patch's program has 3,125 people registered with the program; however, the actual amount of people the program serves is closer to 6,875.2 Seattle's population estimate in 2015 is 662,4002, which means that about 1 percent of the population is participating in a community garden program.

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adequate amount of gardens are provided to meet level of need. It is recommended that the City explore new metrics for assessing and setting goals for garden distribution and quantity.

The Site Selection section provides specific recommendations for improving garden distribution and increasing LOS in high need areas. Another measure for assessing LOS that should be considered is waitlist length. While the Community Garden Program has a comparable waitlist to other programs overall, waitlist length tends to vary from garden to garden. As discussed above, demand appears to increase as the number and quality of gardens increases, and is the sign of a healthy program. A long waitlist can be an indication of low turnover and therefore participant satisfaction, as well as an indicator of high demand. However, a long waiting period can deter participation and also indicates unmet need. Waitlist length can be used as a metric for determining LOS, with a specific goal set for maximum waiting period. If the maximum waiting period is exceeded, PRNS should build more community gardens, expand existing garden sites, and decrease plot sizes. Refer to recommendation number two for examples of programming that can increase opportunities for participation. While the case study programs do not use these metrics to set goals, there is opportunity for innovation in this area. It is recommended that the following metrics be used to assess LOS: distribution of gardens in high need areas, rate of new garden development, gardener satisfaction, and ratio of garden managers to gardeners.

INCREASE LEVEL OF SERVICE PROVIDED BY EXISTING CITY GARDENS THROUGH CHANGES IN PROGRAMMING

All of the case study programs used garden programming and design as a tool for extending the benefits of gardens to a greater number of people, including non-participants. Strategies that could be considered by San José include:

- *Community Workdays, Open Garden Days, and Tours:* Community workdays encourage a shared sense of responsibility amongst participants, and can also provide opportunities for those that do not hold plots to experience the garden and learn gardening strategies. Participants in community workdays would ideally be offered garden produce or other refreshments in appreciation of their assistance. Open Garden Days or garden tours are an additional strategy for allowing the greater community to explore and enjoy the gardens without being plot-holders. Scheduling specific days allows plot-holders to maintain control of gardens while allowing the gardens to serve an asset to the greater community. Training and orientation programs could also be opened to non-participants as a method for providing skills and education for community members to use in their home gardens, while building greater interest in program participation.
- *Plot Sizes:* Several gardens within the Community Gardens Program have divided large plots to create more plots, thus increasing total plots and participants. Given that plots within the Community Garden Program are generally larger than plots within the case study program, plot sizes could be reduced substantially and still be of adequate size. The recommended plot size should be at least 20 square feet but no larger than 200 square feet. Providing a range of plot sizes, such as smaller plots, called “starter plots,” can also encourage different users to participate in community garden programs. Small plots may appeal to novice gardeners or those that do not aim to produce high volumes of food, while larger plots could appeal to joint households or community groups as described below. Starter plots would help get people off the waitlist and introduce them to gardening and proper techniques.

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- *Giving Gardens and Donation Programs:* Donation programs such as the City Harvest Program in Philadelphia encourage a shared sense of community responsibility. A donation program is typically run out of a community plot and increases LOS by allowing a greater number of participants and providing produce to underserved populations. However, donation programs could also be established within plot-based gardens. Many of the strategies discussed above could be implemented through partnerships with non-profit groups such as Health Trust. Health Trust focuses on healthy living, healthy eating and healthy aging. The Health Trust has a program called the FOODBasket which provides health food for people living with HIV/AIDS, seniors or adults with disabilities, or with children under five years of age. It is recommended that gardens work with established organizations with the mission of promoting community gardening, or increasing healthy food access.
- *Ornamental Gardens.* There are already existing ornamental gardens, but an increase in the number of ornamental gardens could help grow the program. In some existing parks, PRNS has “color corners” where a local neighborhood group has adopted a corner and is responsible for planting and maintaining it with vegetation and flowers. This idea could be expanded throughout the city.

CONSIDER COLLABORATION AND INFORMATION SHARING WITH COMMUNITY GARDENS THAT ARE PROVIDED BY PRIVATE OR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Other community gardens are provided by private and nonprofit organizations to the community, which may be meeting some of the need in areas that are otherwise underserved by the San José Community Garden Program. Several of the case study programs include a variety of garden types in their inventory, with the range of services provided by the City varying based on the specific garden and the City’s program. The City of San José should consider establishing a partner-garden program that allows for the sharing of informational resources, tracks community garden activity citywide, and allows all gardens to be considered when assessing LOS and determining new garden sites. This topic would affect program operations, and is further discussed under the Operations section. The City should also encourage private developments to incorporate community gardens for their residents.

4.2 IDENTIFYING NEW SITES

Identifying new sites, site selection, is the process by which new garden sites are identified, and therefore important to determining the location of individual gardens and overall distribution of gardens within the city. This section provides an overview of the current process for selecting garden sites, highlights approaches and criteria used by other garden programs site selection, and provides preliminary recommendations for refining the current site selection process.

4.2.1 CURRENT PROCESS

The City of San José Community Garden Program does not have a formal model for selecting community garden sites, although *The City of San José Greenprint 2009 Update for Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Trails (Greenprint)* provides general guidance for garden provision. The *Greenprint* is designed to assist the City in identifying future needs for parks, recreation facilities, and trails, and to reflect the goal of both the

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community and City Council. Its guiding principles, goals, and strategies for the City's parks and recreation facilities also inform decisions about future community gardens.

The *Greenprint's* "Ideal Planning Area Model" calls for a community garden in each of its Urban Planning Districts. There are 15 Urban Planning Areas within the City's service area, nine of which do not currently have a garden. The other site selection criteria identified by the *Greenprint* are that gardens should be located on Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Land (PRNS), or other agency land. The guiding principles overarching the *Greenprint* are accessibility, inclusivity, affordability, equity, diversity, sustainability, and flexibility. One *Greenprint* strategy that is particularly relevant to site selection is inclusion for all, which specifies offering accessible recreational facilities and programs to encourage including persons with disabilities, and therefore enhancing the quality of life for all. While decisions to develop new gardens are guided by the *Greenprint*, new sites are typically determined based on sites that become available or partnerships that emerge.

The existing model for site selection, based on Urban Planning Areas, does not necessarily maximize equity, answer questions of displacement, or provide a clear framework for selection.

4.2.2 CASE STUDIES

COMMUNITY-BASED PROCESS

While the process for selecting locations varies between cities, community support is integral to identifying new sites and to the success of individual community gardens. In Chicago, information on how

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to start a garden is available on the program website, and residents can request a garden through a formal application process. Philadelphia also has a process by which community residents propose a particular community garden site, following that the Philadelphia's Park and Recreation Department vets the land to make sure it is a viable property meaning that it is owned by the department. Before the 2008 Parks and Green Acres Levy in Seattle, communities raised funds to purchase, and maintain the land. Since the 2008 Parks and Green Acres Levy, there has been a more strategic framework to better serve priority need areas.

FORMAL PROCESS

Seattle Parks and Recreation's 2009-2013 Strategic Action Plan provides a strategic framework to better serve priority need areas for parks and open space.³ A key focus of the Plan is to develop gardens in communities that are underserved by gardens as well as other community services. The plan identifies 21 priority areas and the following criteria for acquisition of new land, facilities, and fixed assets:

- Equitable geographic distribution.
- Current and future costs associated with new park lands.
- Levels of staffing and other resources required for operation and maintenance.
- Current and future benefits associated with acquiring facilities.

Chicago Park District site selection for Chicago Gardens is an organic, community-driven process, with minimal city involvement. However, Chicago's program does have a formal process to form a community garden.

OWNERSHIP

In the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, P-Patch Program gardens are both on public land and private land. P-Patch worked with private landowners and entered into lease agreements. The garden community raised funds to support garden programs through grassroots support. The money goes towards purchasing the land, as well as some maintenance. Partnerships with private landowners have been invaluable for the P-Patch program. With land on both private and public properties, the P-Patch program is able to have more gardens throughout the city. While private land allows more gardens to be built, land is not as secure as it would be on public land due to lease agreements and private interests. All Farm Philly Gardens are on Philadelphia's Parks and Recreation Land. All Chicago gardens are located on existing Chicago parkland.

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Seattle's Strategic Action Plan calls for equitable distribution of gardens. Philadelphia and Chicago do not have such calls for equitable distribution of gardens. Because gardens in Philadelphia and Chicago are located on park land, equitable distribution is harder to accomplish, and not currently part of their plan or vision.

³ Seattle Parks and Recreation, 2013, *2009-2013 Strategic Action Plan Conclusive Report*.

4.2.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Parks and Neighborhood Services consider the following:

FORMALIZE IDENTIFYING NEW SITES

It is recommended that a more formal process of selecting sites be established and shared with the public. See Appendix C for a site selection checklist. Ornamental gardens are more flexible, and have fewer site constraints. For instance, ornamental gardens would not need at least 50 percent of the site with sunlight, or have the same size restrictions as traditional community gardens. Formalizing a process for site selection could also encourage greater community participation. In order to encourage community support, information on how to start a garden should be available. Several of the case study programs required a community petition. San José should consider a similar method of ensuring support.

IDENTIFY CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING NEW SITES

The *Greenprint* provides some guidance for the location of garden sites, specifically that they should be located within each Urban Planning District. The *Greenprint* already considers density, walkability, and underserved households as part of their criteria for determining relative need within Planning Areas. From our research of other case studies in Chicago, Seattle, and Philadelphia, and our analysis of existing conditions, it is recommended that the program identify specific criteria for evaluating potential sites. The most important criteria that should be considered include site conditions, site ownership, geographic location, and community support. Walkability, density, income, and size are still important, but are secondary considerations.

Site Conditions

Conditions of the individual site should also be considered. These include but are not limited to:

- Sunlight (at least 50 percent of the site should receive 6 hours of sunlight a day).
- Soil health/contamination (soil health can be built overtime, but it can be difficult to treat soils that contain lead and other contaminants)
- Visual and physical access considerations (safe pedestrian, vehicular, and equipment access; visibility of garden to ensure safety; and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility).
- Utilities considerations (access to water and electricity and avoidance of conflicts with infrastructure maintenance needs).
- Neighborhood context (site should be visually and functionally appropriate for garden development with consideration to existing neighborhood).

Site Ownership

San José should consider other land for gardens in addition to Parks and Recreation and Neighborhood Service Land. Seattle's garden program, P-Patch, has gardens that are located on both public and private land. A majority (66 percent) of the 90 Seattle gardens are located on property owned by public entities

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and the other 33 percent of community gardens are owned by private landowners such as churches and non-profits, including the non-profit funding partner, GROW, and the Seattle Center.

While gardens on City land are highly stable, gardens on partner land should continue to be explored when the location helps address a need that parkland could not. Long-term agreements are important to have in place prior to siting a garden on partner land, unless it is intended as a temporary site. Where parkland or other City land can satisfy garden need, effort should be made to utilize parkland. Where gardens are provided by other entities, consideration should be given to including them as partner gardens of the City's Program.

Geographic Location

San José aims to provide at least one garden in each Urban Planning Area. While residents and the current participant selection model are based on Council Districts, the Urban Planning Areas are smaller areas and therefore provide a better system for ensuring garden distribution. However, as some Urban Planning Areas have greater need due to density or other demographics, Urban Planning Area should be a consideration to help guide distribution but should not limit the number of gardens in any area. Another consideration for distribution of gardens is proximity to existing garden sites; new garden sites should generally be located at least one mile from existing garden sites.

Community Support

Community support has been critical to the establishment of many gardens, and is key to long-term success. Without community support, even a well-managed garden in a dense neighborhood can remain underutilized.

Walkability to Gardens

Establishing gardens in which participants will be able to walk to the garden site is beneficial in that participants do not need access to vehicles to participate, that dedicated parking space is in lower demand, that vehicle trips are reduced, and that community building is encouraged. Commonly, a ½-mile radius is used to indicate walking distance. Given the limited number of existing gardens and the need to distribute gardens throughout the city, it is recommended that new garden sites be located at least one mile from existing gardens. In terms of walkability, gardens that are one mile apart provide walkable garden access for different populations. important metric to consider especially given that 27 percent of the population does not have access to a car and that 11 percent of San José residents are age 65 years or older. When evaluating a garden site, the population within walkable access to the site should be considered in addition to distribution of gardens amongst Urban Planning Areas.

Density

Density is currently considered by the *Greenprint* in assessing the level of park need. Planning areas that have the highest density points are West Valley, Central/Downtown, Alum Rock, and South San José. Denser neighborhoods and dense multi-family housing are less likely to have gardening space than lower density areas. Projections from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimate that by 2040,

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San José will have 1.3 million residents. With an additional 300,000 people in the next 25 years, San José will become denser. People in dense areas are less likely to have access to garden space, and therefore need for gardens may be higher in dense areas. As the population grows, it can be expected that there will be more high-density areas in need of gardens. Areas of existing density and areas anticipated to become high density areas should be prioritized when evaluating areas of need.

Income

Another important criterion for prioritization is income. According to the 2010, Census in 2009-2013 the median household income was \$81,829 compared with a median of \$61,094; however, San José's median income is lower than Santa Clara County as a whole. Overall, 12 percent of San José's citizens live below the poverty level.

Income is just one metric in understanding underserved populations, as it is less likely that lower-income areas have access to healthy, affordable food. Garden need in lower-income areas may therefore be greater, and thus income should be considered during the site evaluation and selection process.

Size

When identifying park sites with a potential to install new community gardens, it is recommended that parks with over 4 acres in size be given priority. Similarly, due to a need for efficiency in designing and developing infrastructure, it is recommended that the garden site itself should be at least 0.3 acres. In some cases, smaller parks may be able to support gardens depending on existing park uses, neighborhood context, garden need, and community support.

INVENTORY OPPORTUNITY SITES

San José should conduct an inventory of garden opportunity sites, beginning with existing parkland. San José should then consider other public land or vacant sites where existing parkland does not meet needs. Criteria for site selection identified in Recommendation #2 should be used to evaluate identified opportunity sites. A preliminary evaluation of opportunity sites, focusing on existing City park facilities, is included as Chapter 5 of this Study.

4.3 INCREASING NUMBER OF GARDENERS

Participant selection for community gardens is defined for the purposes of this study as the approach by which participants become involved in the program, with consideration to distribution of information to prospective participants, requirements that participants must meet, and the management of waitlists. This section provides an overview of the current participant selection process; highlights approaches used by other garden programs for encouraging participation and equality; and lastly provides preliminary recommendations for an appropriate approach to participant selection within San José's Community Garden Program.

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4.3.1 CURRENT APPROACH TO INCREASING NUMBER OF GARDENERS

The current approaches and procedures employed by the City of San José to identify and select garden participants are described in detail in the Existing Conditions Report and briefly summarized below.

Information about the Community Garden Program is provided on signage posted at each garden and also on the City of San José website which includes a link to the rules and regulations; a copy of the waitlist for each garden; and a list of gardens with their locations (intersections rather than addresses), acreage, and districts. However, participants at the stakeholder meeting on June 17, 2015, stated that there is not enough information available on the City website for potential and new gardeners who want to find a plot, sign up for a waiting list, find out whether their Council District has a garden, or understand the rules. New participants also learn about the Community Garden Program through word of mouth.

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Criteria for participation and garden plot distribution include the following:

- Participants must be at least 18 years old.
- Participants must live in the City of San José (Martial Cottle may be an exception as 10 percent of plots may be reserved for residents who live anywhere in Santa Clara County).
- Only one garden plot allowed per residence.
- Each plot can have a primary gardener and one garden helper. A primary gardener may be defined as an individual, husband/wife, domestic partners or an entity having sole interest in the plot. A primary gardener may choose to have a garden helper to help maintain the plot in the gardener's absence due to a family emergency, illness or injury, vacation or other unforeseen circumstance.
- Participants are limited to plots within their Council District. There are two exceptions: (1) residents of Council Districts that do not have gardens can choose any garden, and (2) any prospective gardeners can rent a plot from a garden that has vacant plots and no waitlist.
- Prospective participants must respond to the Community Gardens Coordinator within two days of being offered a plot in order to confirm the assignment or they are removed from the waitlist.
- Participants must complete the Community Garden Registration/Agreement form.
- Participants can continue to hold a plot in perpetuity, but plots cannot be passed on to others. Moreover, if a participant receives three verified complaints (VIRs) they are required to give up their garden plots.

Waitlists for all gardens are managed by the Community Garden Coordinator. The number of prospective gardeners on the waitlists has been as high as 500, but as of July 2015, there were a total of 343 people on the combined waitlists. The gardens with the highest demand include Wallenberg, Guadalupe, and Calabazas Gardens. Seven of the gardens have no waitlist.

4.3.2 CASE STUDIES

INFORMATION AND OUTREACH

Staff in the case study gardens use a number of strategies to inform existing and potential participants about the garden program, including informational signage at the gardens, flyers, program website, and word of mouth. However, the functionality and consistency of these strategies varies between the programs. For instance, signage is not a requirement for gardens in Chicago, although signage is provided upon request.

Seattle provides information in multiple languages, including six of the most commonly used languages in the gardens, and many gardens have access to an interpreter.

CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

The case study programs generally require that participants be residents of the city. In addition, some programs limit prospective gardeners to the garden(s) located closest to their residences. For instance, in

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South Street Garden, one of the gardens in Philadelphia, participants are limited to specific neighborhood boundaries. The benefits of this limitation include reducing driving and building community relationships within the garden neighborhood. The challenge with this criterion is that the garden users are not necessarily representative of the demographics of the city and individuals may be excluded based on geography.

Chicago and Seattle both have programs to encourage participation by underserved communities. In Chicago, elderly, disabled, or low-income groups are not charged plot fees in the garden managed by the Parks Department. In Seattle, assistance for plot fees is provided for low-income individuals, immigrants, refugees, seniors, and others. Returning members must re-apply each year in order to continue participating in both the Chicago and Seattle programs. None of the programs have term limits.

WAITLIST MANAGEMENT

The waiting time for prospective participants to be assigned a plot once on the waitlist is typically under five years for all of the case study programs. However, the approach to managing the programs varies.

Waitlists for each garden are separately managed in both the Chicago and Philadelphia programs, while Seattle's P-Patch program maintains one waitlist for all 76 gardens. Maintaining one centralized waitlist allows managers to understand program-wide demand and identify opportunities to distribute prospective gardeners to sites with less demand. For instance, prospective participants in Seattle can identify two garden sites to wait for and be added to these lists simultaneously. Managing waitlists on a garden-to-garden basis; however, gives greater responsibility to garden participants at each site and decreases the level of City staff support necessary to operate the gardens.

4.3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Parks and Neighborhood Services consider the following:

USE INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION AS A TOOL FOR CREATING EQUAL ACCESS TO GARDENS

Information distribution is important for participant selection as well as for operations and level of service. As discussed in the operations section, program development in the form of signage, and information on the website is important for creating equal access to gardens. Focused strategies towards engaging participants who currently do not participate in the program would help to create more equal information sharing by including information in multiple languages as appropriate, easy access to waitlist sign-ups, information on how to start a new garden, and outreach at community events. This would only be possible with more staffing and/or by establishing new partnerships.

MANAGING WAITING PERIOD

As discussed in the Growing the Program section, a long wait list can be an indication of low turnover, and therefore high participant satisfaction, as well as an indicator of high demand. However, a long waiting period can also deter participation and indicate an unmet need. It is important to manage the waiting

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period, so that residents do not get so discouraged that they discount joining a community garden. It is recommended that the number of gardens or plots be increased by reducing the size of existing plots if the waitlist exceeds 3 years on average. In addition, it is recommended that the requirement that participants sign up for a garden plot in their Council District should be removed. Lastly, the city should consider providing training and informational resources that encourage residents to establish gardens within their private property while on the waitlist.

REDUCE ECONOMIC BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

In order to ensure that all potential users who desire to participate in the Garden Program are given the opportunity to do so, discounted programs for low-income residents, immigrants, refugees, or seniors should be considered. Seattle's program and Chicago's program both provide fee assistance for elderly, disabled, and low-income groups. Other considerations for discounts could include those who have mental or physical disorders, as gardening or working outdoors may be beneficial to such individuals. In addition, reserving five-percent of plots at each garden for low income individuals will also help to reduce economic barriers to participation.

PROVIDE A RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION

Many community garden programs offer a range of opportunities for participation, as outlined in the level of service section. Other options include:

- Open garden days that include working with schools, community centers, the Council Offices, the managers and the gardeners to ensure strong outreach and participation.
- Increase garden types by varying plot sizes.
- Donation programs.
- Increase programming for youth, and seniors.

While traditional plots may appeal to many participants, having more options may appeal to other participants and increase the total overall number of participants. Open garden days could be an opportunity for gardens to sell flowers or seeds, and the proceeds could benefit the garden, or donated to a local food pantry.

In addition to providing a range of opportunities for participation, the City of San José could reconsider what constitutes a primary gardener. Currently, a primary gardener does not include children or relatives, except for a husband/wife or domestic partner. The primary gardener could include family or extended family. Extending the opportunity for a friend of a gardener or neighbor could also help increase the number of participants in a garden, and create opportunities for information-sharing and community building.

RECONSIDER CRITERIA FOR GARDEN ASSIGNMENTS

In the current participant selection process, residents are required to use a garden within the Council District where they reside, or they can join a garden in another Council District if there is no waitlist for that garden. The City of San José should consider that restricting by Council District may seem like an

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artificial cut-off for those who are closer in distance to a garden not within that Council District. Chicago and Seattle's program do not make it mandatory for residents to select a garden close to where they live. This type of flexibility affords residents of these cities their choice of garden. It is recommended that San José have gardeners sign up for gardens in proximity to their residence or place of work.

Gardeners could choose up to two different garden waitlists, based on the proximity of their residence to the gardens.

CONTINUE TO REQUIRE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

As discussed at the stakeholder meeting, term limits would not be favorable for gardens, especially ones that are well-kempt and successful because of their strong history, identity and pride. Rather than including term limits, there could be stricter enforcement of garden rules regarding use, activity, and upkeep. This additional enforcement would require more staff. Another possibility would be for violators of rules to be asked to leave after two violations rather than the current practice of asking violators to leave after three violations. Finally, yearly sign ups allow the City to gain an understanding of current and continued interest and should continue.

4.4 OPERATIONS

Operations of the Community Gardens Program include administration of the citywide program as well as the day-to-day management of each garden. This section provides an overview of the current process for managing and facilitating gardens, highlights approaches and criteria used by other garden programs for operations, and provides preliminary recommendations for refining the current approach to operation.

4.4.1 CURRENT OPERATIONS

The City of San José Community Garden Program is a program of the City Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) Department. PRNS is responsible for program administration of the gardens as well as providing limited infrastructure and support to the individual gardens. PRNS provides a 1.25 FTE position to support the program. The program operates with a budget of \$202,161 per year. Each garden site is individually managed by a Volunteer Garden Management Unit, consisting of a Garden Manager, Assistant Manager, Treasurer and Secretary. PRNS staff roles include:

- Providing administrative support.
- Coordinating volunteers.
- Coordinating educational workshops and running meetings.
- Coordinating with local and government agencies including other City departments.
- Managing each garden's waitlist.
- Coordinating development of program materials such as policies and procedures and marketing materials.

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- Maintaining City facilities and fixing major issues such as water lines.
- Acting as a temporary garden manager when necessary.
- Adjudicating conflicts between gardeners.
- Providing compost pick-up and free wood chips.

The volunteer management unit holds garden-wide annual registration meetings and at least two other meetings per year, supports the collection of gardener fees, and supports paying the City administrative and water fees annually. Gardeners are required to pay an administrative fee to the program of \$0.05 per square foot of garden plot. These fees go towards funding the 1.25 FTE Community Garden Program Coordinator. The administrative fee was instituted in 2012. Each plot-holder with a plot is also required to pay a water fee based on the water charges for the garden site in the previous year, which are divided among gardeners. Because the cost of water has increased, the fees have often increased from year-to-year. Due to the current drought, gardeners are allowed to set timers to water their plants at night. PRNS has provided gardeners with meters that indicate soil moisture so that they do not overwater. Any funds collected in excess of the cost of administration and water is managed by the Volunteer Garden Management Unit.

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Each garden has its own culture and history of volunteerism, upkeep, activities, and community involvement. Because of the complexity of each garden, some operations may differ between gardens; however, PRNS has developed a standard set of rules and regulations by which each garden must abide. These rules ensure that community gardens are safe, pleasant places to be and to look at; establish fairness and equity among gardeners; help to prevent damage to land and groundwater; and protect the future of community gardens in San José.⁴ Other requirements include participation in garden work days and attendance at an annual meeting.

4.4.2 CASE STUDIES

Key findings related to operations for the case studies of model community garden programs are provided below. These may be helpful in improving operations of San José's Community Garden Program.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The case study programs differ in the level of staff support provided as well as overall budget. Programs with higher budgets are able to provide greater support and increased programming. Chicago's Garden in the Park program has one full time staff member and a supply budget of \$4,500. Seattle's P-Patch program has six full time staff members and a program-wide budget of \$2,427,000. Philadelphia's Farm Philly program has one full time staff member, six seasonal staff members, and a staffing budget of \$200,000.

Seattle's program is the most centrally-managed. Staff responsibilities include plot assignment, registration and collection of plot fees, waitlist management, outreach to underserved communities, conflict resolution, property leasing and interdepartmental facilitation, leadership development, and new gardener education (including workshops with local nonprofit groups and program materials development). In contrast, both Chicago and Philadelphia provide limited support and gardens are generally individually managed by volunteers.

Garden fees vary for each program, but each case study had a participation fee of at least \$25.00. Seattle's program has a flat fee of \$27, plus an additional \$13 for each additional 100 square feet. Chicago and Philadelphia's participant fees vary depending on the garden. The South Street Garden in Philadelphia charges an application fee of \$20 in addition to a participant fee. In addition to fees collected in Seattle, a 2008 Parks and Green Space Levy of \$2,000,000 helped to fund many existing gardens.

Garden rules and regulations across all case studies were designed to protect the safety of members, and to ensure a pleasant gardening experience. While rules and regulations in Seattle and Chicago's gardens are consistent program wide, Philadelphia's rules and regulations are dependent on the garden.

⁴ City of San José, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), 2015. *Community Gardens Program 2015 Rules and Regulations*.

RECOMMENDATIONS**PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Participant responsibilities vary depending on the level of staff oversight. Given the amount of staff oversight in Seattle’s P-Patch program, participant responsibilities are less intensive than in Chicago’s and Philadelphia’s programs. In Seattle’s program, participants are solely responsible for maintaining their site, including irrigating plots, and small repairs. Due to smaller staff oversight, garden participants in Chicago and Philadelphia run the day-to-day management of gardens. Advisory councils within gardens in Chicago manage the waitlists, plot assignments as well as bylaws and best practices. In Chicago, each garden is run differently; some are run primarily by one or two people, while others have up to five different management roles. While participants can be empowered by having management roles, this approach can create challenges for ensuring equality.

PARTNERS

Farm Philly has formed partnerships with numerous groups (e.g., non-profit, private, public) to create and protect long-term community gardens. Partner roles range from providing programming to managing gardens. Although Farm Philly has many partnerships, none of the partnerships support funding the program.

Seattle’s program is municipally managed but relies on garden management groups and the non-profit GROW for help with funding and management. Some of GROW’s work includes advocacy for community gardeners, co-ownership of six community gardens, payment of plot fees for low income gardens in P-Patch, tool purchasing, and publishing a newsletter; the P-Patch post.

4.4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that PRNS consider the following:

INCREASE CAPACITY FOR CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT

The success of Seattle’s P-Patch program is largely attributed to its strong centralized management system, which is supported by a team of six full-time staff. In Seattle, this is equivalent to one staff member for every 520 registered participants. In addition to allowing for on-site presence, Seattle’s management structure allows for program development, strategic growth, and decision making necessary for a successful, equitable program. Chicago has one staff member and approximately 500 participants. The staff to registered participant ratio is unknown for Philadelphia.

The Community Garden Program has been successful at central management of the waitlist and providing program-wide rules and policies despite the relatively high current ratio of one staff to 841 participants. While the current 1.25 FTE staff members are able to provide limited support to the individual garden sites and maintain basic operations, the need for greater programmatic support is recognized by participants and staff. It is recommended that two full-time staff be provided for the program to provide on-site support for existing gardens and to ensure capacity for program development as further described under Recommendation 2, below. In addition to program development, having staff that is skilled at grant writing would be beneficial in order to assist the Community garden program with grant applications. This

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would represent a current staff to participant ratio of 1:700. As the program grows, the City should strive to maintain or decrease this ratio.

The recommended staffing ratio would allow for greater on-site support as well as program development, but would not replace the existing volunteer garden management units or prevent a healthy level of garden autonomy. Garden sites that are struggling would receive the outreach and on-site support needed to create successful garden sites.

INVEST IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Expansion of San José Community Garden Program's would require additional programming and partner support. One reason for Seattle's P-Patch success was residents' interest in parks and open space; and gardens in particular. This led to support for the \$2 million grant from the Parks and Green Space Levy. An increase in program development works hand in hand with an increase in budget, since additional staff is needed to increase programming.

It is recommended that San José focus on engaging diversified communities who are not currently participating in the Community Gardens Program using targeted outreach strategies. Seattle currently spends \$74,000 on outreach and engagement annually, which allows the program to reach a wide range of participants. San José should focus effort on building interest in and support for community gardens. Building broader support for San José's Community Garden Program is important for achieving program goals and also to increasing funding. Potential programming improvements are identified in the recommendations provided in the Level of Service section.

DEVELOP FRAMEWORK FOR PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

San José should consider working with additional partners to help with the community gardens program. Seattle's non-profit partner GROW is an example of a successful partner that helps with funding, as well as day-to-day operations. While San José should aim to partner with one major non-profit or for-profit organization, this may not be feasible. Additionally, San José should continue to coordinate with schools to further joint use of lands with community gardens.

Another option is to partner with different types of agencies, (e.g., public, private, non-profit), for different types of relationships. Farm Philly has partnered with many types of organizations that help with different facets of their program, and San José could explore a similar model. This would include ensuring that each partner has a specific role or function and parameters within the larger scope of the program. For example, partnerships may include:

- **Partnerships with public agencies.** Partnerships could include long-term leases of partner land, programmatic support, or funding support. Potential partners include but are not limited to the San Jose Unified School District, Santa Clara County Parks, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District.
- **Non-profit partners.** The role of non-profit partners depends on the mission and capacity of the organization, but may include staffing support, fundraising, outreach, or other roles. Potential partners include landowning non-profits such as the Peninsula Open Space Trust, (POST); organizations such as the UC Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County that

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have potential to provide education and outreach; and organizations such as the Health Trust Food Basket through which existing programs and level of service could be expanded.

- **Focused non-profit partner** (such as a “Friends of” Group). Having a key non-profit partner whose mission is focused on supporting a community gardens program has been successful in other cities, and is recommended for the long-term health of the City of San José’s program. While the City can support the establishment of such an organization and define its role, community effort would be necessary. Should such an organization be established, it is anticipated that the ideal role would be outreach, education, and advocacy, including assistance with fundraising efforts.

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5. Opportunity Sites



Expanding the Community Garden Program to include additional sites is an important step towards improving garden distribution and equity, and to increasing the number of participants in the program.

As discussed in Level of Service, there are currently no gardens in Council Districts 4, 8, 9, and 10 or in nine of the fifteen Urban Planning Areas. Neighborhood agriculture is permitted in all residential, commercial, and industrial zoning districts throughout the city, a variety of locations to be considered for establishing new community gardens. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, the ideal sites are those located on parkland or open space owned by the City. This Chapter identifies opportunity sites that should be further assessed using the Site Selection Checklist provided as Appendix C, and provides a discussion of other potential opportunity sites that should be explored. This Chapter sets the stage for the inventory recommended in Chapter 4 for Identifying New Sites.

5.1 OPPORTUNITY SITES WITHIN EXISTING PARKLAND AND OPEN SPACE

Assessment of existing parkland for community garden is an important first step in identifying opportunity sites. As discussed in Chapter 4, parks should be assessed for potential based on consideration of multiple

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criteria. Figure 5-1 identifies opportunity sites within existing parks owned by PRNS that meet the criteria listed below, based on analysis of City GIS data.

- Owned by PRNS.
- Classified as either Neighborhood, Regional, Open Space, or Park Chain.
- Not located within a 1-mile walking distance of an existing community garden (PRNS program only).
- At least 4 acres in size.

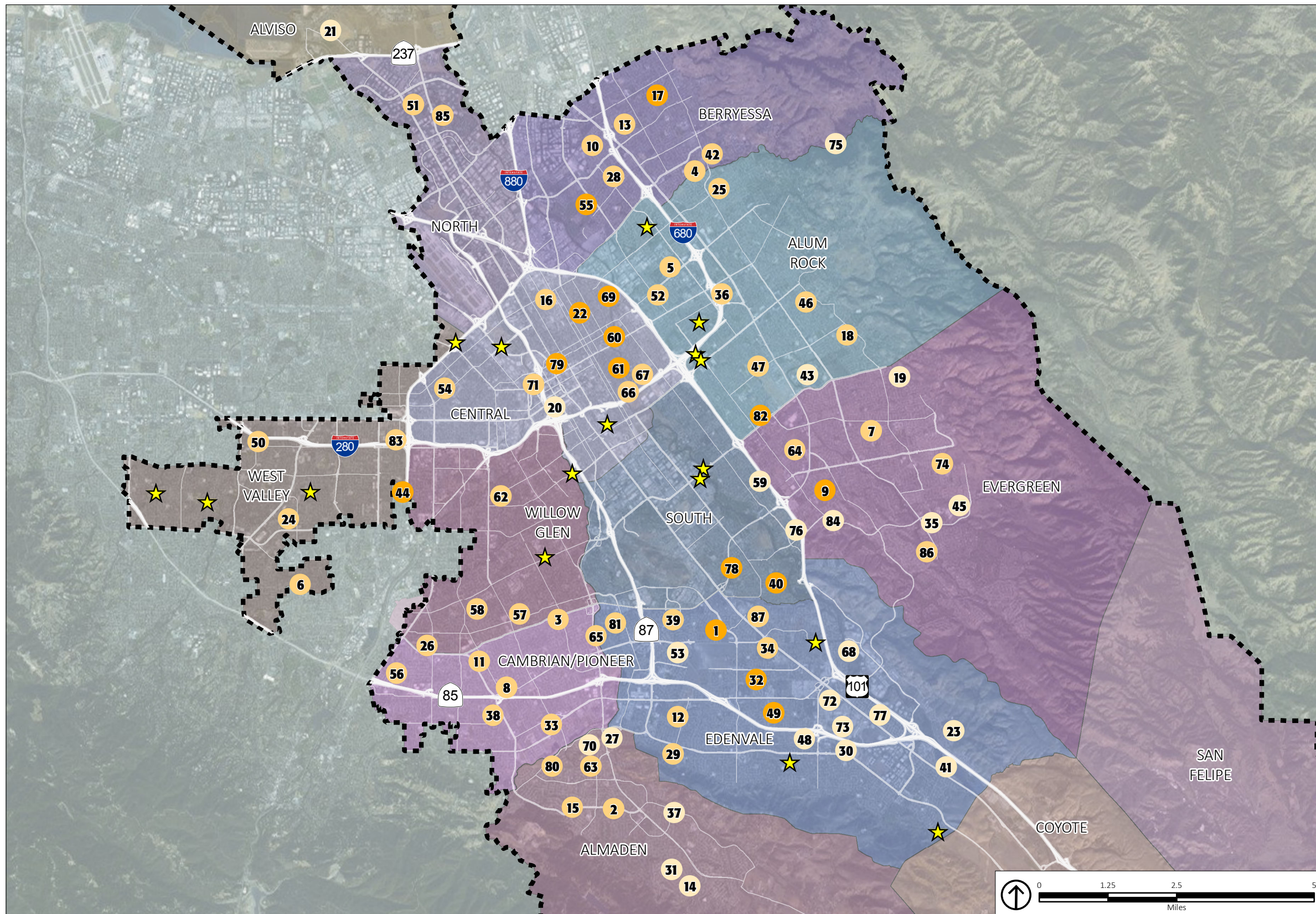
In addition, Figure 5-1 shows the distribution of these sites within Urban Planning Areas and identifies the density of the area within a 1-mile radius of the park site. Table 5-1 provides additional information for each site, including the percentage of low-income residents within a 1-mile radius of the park. Within Table 5-1, opportunity sites are listed from highest to lowest density for each Urban Planning Area. A priority site for further assessment is identified for each Urban Planning Area. These priority sites are sites located in high density areas with high percentages of low income residents compared to other opportunity sites in the Urban Planning Area, and appear to have good street access and available land based on preliminary review of aerial imagery.

The selection of priority sites was also informed by the 2013 survey conducted by PRNS to identify potential sites for new community gardens. Sites identified at existing parks included Shady Oaks Park, Bellevue Park, and Almaden Meadows Park. Of these sites, both Almaden Meadows Park and Shady Oaks Park are over four acres in size and further than 1 mile from an existing garden, and therefore are included in Figure 5-1 and Table 5-1. Bellevue Park is not included as it does not meet the minimum size requirements. Almaden Meadows was identified as the priority site for further evaluation with Almaden Urban Planning Area given consideration to findings of the GIS analysis and the 2013 Survey. However, Shady Oaks Park was not identified as the priority site as it is located in a lower density area with a lower percent of low income residents when compared with the other opportunity sites in the Edenvale Urban Planning Area.

Further assessment of parkland opportunity sites should emphasize the priority sites and other sites identified as having high potential within each Urban Planning Area. However, as some Urban Planning Areas have more opportunity sites within high density, low income areas than others, Urban Planning Area should be a consideration to help guide distribution but should not limit the number of gardens in any area.

5.2 OTHER OPPORTUNITY SITES

Other opportunity sites include future parkland, vacant land that PRNS could acquire, and land owned by partners. All opportunity sites should be assessed as a potential garden site using the Site Selection Checklist provided in Appendix C. When land is not under PRNS or City ownership, lease terms and/or potential for long-term garden development must also be considered.



- ★ Existing Community Gardens
- Opportunity Sites as Existing Parks**
(Organized based on population density within one mile of the garden)*
- Sites in Low Density Area (0-6,716)
- Sites in Moderate Density (6,717-13,484)
- Sites in High Density (13,485-30,017)

*Garden opportunity sites include existing parks owned by PRNS that are 4-acres or larger and located more than 1-mile from an existing garden site. Density of sites is based on residents within one mile of the site as noted for each category.

Source: City of San Jose, 2015; PlaceWorks, 2016.

Figure 5-1
Garden Opportunity Sites

Table 5-1. Opportunity Sites on Existing Parkland*

Map #	Park Name	Park Type	Council District	Size (Acres)	Population within One Square Mile	Population Density Category	Percent Low Income**	Priority for Further Assessment***
Urban Planning Area 1: Almaden (No Existing Gardens)								
2	Parma Park	Neighborhood	10	4.5	8955	Medium	9	
80	T.J. Martin Park	Neighborhood	10	13.6	7955	Medium	0	
15	Almaden Meadows Park	Neighborhood	10	15.5	7387	Medium	6	UPA
63	Jeffery Fontana Park	Neighborhood	10	10.0	7112	Medium	10	
31	Glenview Park	Neighborhood	10	4.2	5807	Low	8	
37	Greystone Park	Neighborhood	10	4.7	5774	Low	9	
70	Guadalupe Oak Grove Park	Neighborhood	10	62.7	5050	Low	7	
27	Almaden Lake Park	Regional	10	64.9	4774	Low	5	
14	Cathedral Oaks Park	Neighborhood	10	16.8	4357	Low	3	
Urban Planning Area 2: Alum Rock (4 Existing Gardens)								
82	Welch Park	Neighborhood	8	11.0	17440	High	0	
25	Cimarron Park	Neighborhood	5	7.2	13368	High	11	High, UPA
46	Mt. Pleasant Park	Neighborhood	5	5.4	12440	Medium	8	
52	Plata Arroyo Park	Neighborhood	5	10.6	11829	Medium	25	
47	Hillview Park	Neighborhood	5	14.7	11276	Medium	9	
5	Overfelt Gardens	Regional	5	30.6	11255	Medium	21	
18	Fernish Park	Neighborhood	8	6.0	10708	Medium	10	
36	LoBue Park	Neighborhood	5	6.1	10692	Medium	27	
43	Lake Cunningham Park	Regional	8	198.0	2799	Low	11	
Urban Planning Area 3: Alviso (No Existing Gardens)								
21	Alviso Park	Neighborhood	4	4.5	1781	Low	0	
Urban Planning Area 4: Berryessa (No Existing Gardens)								
17	Berryessa Creek Park	Neighborhood	4	13.5	18093	High	14	High, UPA
55	Townsend Park	Neighborhood	4	8.0	14625	High	8	
4	Penitencia Creek Park	Neighborhood	4	36.0	10934	Medium	18	
42	Noble Park	Neighborhood	4	8.4	9176	Medium	17	
13	Cataldi Park	Neighborhood	4	39.3	8647	Medium	10	
10	Brooktree Park	Neighborhood	4	7.7	8513	Medium	6	
28	Flickinger Park	Neighborhood	4	14.4	6983	Medium	7	
75	Alum Rock Park	Regional	5	708.9	0	Low	0	
Urban Planning Area 6: Cambrian/Pioneer (No Existing Parks)								
11	Butcher Park	Neighborhood	9	10.0	12660	Medium	16	
8	Branham Park	Neighborhood	9	7.0	11913	Medium	20	UPA
33	De Anza Park	Neighborhood	9	9.6	10790	Medium	13	
38	Lone Hill Park	Neighborhood	9	7.9	10153	Medium	21	
3	Paul Moore Park	Neighborhood	9	8.4	9953	Medium	20	
56	Houge Park	Neighborhood	9	12.4	8642	Medium	12	
Urban Planning Area 7: Central (2 Existing Gardens; 2009 Greenprint identified as High Need)								
79	St. James Park	Regional	3	7.0	30017	High	0	
22	Backesto Park	Neighborhood	3	10.5	20286	High	17	High, UPA
60	Roosevelt Park	Neighborhood	3	11.0	15388	High	26	High
61	William Street Park	Neighborhood	3	14.9	14835	High	20	High
69	Watson Park	Neighborhood	3	41.2	14381	High	18	High
16	Raymond Bernal Jr. Memorial Park	Neighborhood	3	5.8	11282	Medium	15	
67	Martin Park	Neighborhood	3	9.3	10911	Medium	21	
66	Selma Olinder Park	Neighborhood	3	13.0	10061	Medium	25	
71	Guadalupe River Park - Arena Green	Regional	3	10.0	8385	Medium	25	
54	Municipal Rose Garden	Neighborhood	6	4.9	8351	Medium	31	
20	Guadalupe River Park - Discovery Meadow	Regional	3	6.0	6625	Medium	41	

*Opportunity sites on parkland include existing parks owned by PRNS that are four acres or larger and further than one-mile from an existing garden site. Opportunity sites within each Urban Planning Area are listed from high to low density.

** Percent of Low-Income Population based on 2010 Census data.

*** Opportunity sites with the highest potential within each Urban Planning Area are listed in **bold, italic** font and listed as "UPA" under the Priority for Further Assessment. Other opportunity sites located in high density areas with at least ten percent low-income residents are identified as having "High" priority.

****High Density = 10,912-30,017 people within a mile of garden

*****Medium Density = 7,453-10,911 people within a mile of garden

*****Low Density = 0-7,452 people within a mile of garden

Table 5-1. Opportunity Sites on Existing Parkland* (continued)

Map #	Park Name	Park Type	Council District	Size (Acres)	Population within One Square Mile	Population Density Category	Percent Low Income**	Priority for Further Assessment***
Urban Planning Area 8: Edenvale (3 Existing Gardens; 2009 Greenprint identified as High Need)								
32	Coy Park	Neighborhood	2	4.5	16365	High	21	High, UPA
49	Miner Park	Neighborhood	2	5.2	15308	High	18	High
1	Parkview III Park	Neighborhood	10	5.4	15061	High	18	High
12	Cahalan Park	Neighborhood	10	9.5	11826	Medium	18	
34	Edenvale Garden Park	Neighborhood	2	14.5	11061	Medium	13	
81	Terrell Park	Neighborhood	9	5.4	9887	Medium	0	
39	Meadows Park	Neighborhood	10	5.2	9658	Medium	20	
87	Danna Rock Park	Neighborhood	2	11.0	8887	Medium	0	
29	Foothill Park	Neighborhood	10	6.9	7649	Medium	14	
65	Thousand Oaks Park	Neighborhood	9	10.0	7187	Medium	15	
72	Ramac Park	Neighborhood	2	10.6	6716	Medium	23	
53	Vista Park	Neighborhood	10	9.8	6321	Medium	15	
30	George Page Park	Neighborhood	2	4.0	5198	Low	3	
77	Silver Leaf Park	Neighborhood	2	5.8	4487	Low	0	
48	Palma Park	Neighborhood	2	4.1	3934	Low	7	
41	Metcalf Park	Neighborhood	2	6.2	2535	Low	27	
73	Raleigh Park	Neighborhood	2	5.4	2047	Low	26	
68	Shady Oaks Park	Neighborhood	2	10.3	1726	Low	10	
23	Basking Ridge Park	Neighborhood	2	8.0	1531	Low	0	
Urban Planning Area 7: Evergreen (No Existing Gardens)								
9	Brigadoon Park	Neighborhood	8	5.5	15216	High	14	High, UPA
7	Boggini Park	Neighborhood	8	10.0	13484	High	8	
74	Fowler Creek Park	Neighborhood	8	13.0	10082	Medium	0	
64	Meadowfair Park	Neighborhood	8	8.4	9415	Medium	13	
86	Canyon Creek Park	Neighborhood	8	36.6	7579	Medium	0	
84	Silver Creek Linear Park	Neighborhood	8	53.8	6075	Medium	0	
19	Groesbeck Hill Park	Neighborhood	8	26.6	5713	Low	9	
45	Montgomery Hill Park	Neighborhood	8	59.6	3718	Low	0	
35	Evergreen Park	Neighborhood	8	13.6	2481	Low	3	
Urban Planning Area 11: North (No Existing Gardens)								
85	River Oaks Park	Neighborhood	4	5.0	9060	Medium	0	
51	Moitozo Park	Neighborhood	4	5.0	8603	Medium	14	UPA
Urban Planning Area 13: South San Jose (2 Existing Gardens)								
78	Solari Park	Neighborhood	7	7.8	16271	High	0	
40	Melody Park	Neighborhood	2	4.0	14643	High	17	High, UPA
76	Ramblewood Park	Neighborhood	7	9.3	4975	Low	0	
59	Windmill Springs Park	Neighborhood	7	8.3	3672	Low	8	
Urban Planning Area 14: West Valley (3 Existing Gardens; 2009 Greenprint identified as High Need)								
44	Marijane Hamann Park	Neighborhood	1	10.5	15748	High	28	High, UPA
6	San Tomas Park	Neighborhood	1	4.7	12250	Medium	19	
24	Hathaway Park	Neighborhood	1	7.7	10284	Medium	18	
83	Frank M. Santana Park	Neighborhood	6	5.3	9515	Medium	0	
50	John Mise Park	Neighborhood	1	11.7	7452	Medium	22	
Urban Planning Area 15: Willow Glen (2 Existing Gardens; 2009 Greenprint identified as High Need)								
62	Willow Street Frank Bramhall Park	Neighborhood	6	17.9	12170	Medium	24	UPA
58	Doerr Park	Neighborhood	9	11.7	10335	Medium	17	
26	Camden Park	Neighborhood	9	10.0	10259	Medium	20	
57	Kirk Park	Neighborhood	9	4.5	10255	Medium	16	

*Opportunity sites on parkland include existing parks owned by PRNS that are four acres or larger and further than one-mile from an existing garden site. Opportunity sites within each Urban Planning Area are listed from high to low density.

** Percent of Low-Income Population based on 2010 Census data.

*** Opportunity sites with the highest potential within each Urban Planning Area are listed in **bold, italic** font and listed as "UPA" under the Priority for Further Assessment. Other opportunity sites located in high density areas with at least ten percent low-income residents are identified as having "High" priority.

****High Density = 10,912-30,017 people within a mile of garden

*****Medium Density = 7,453-10,911 people within a mile of garden

*****Low Density = 0-7,452 people within a mile of garden

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Vacant land acquired for parkland and/or community garden sites has the potential to provide many benefits to underserved areas. A 2013 survey conducted by PRNS identified three sites located on vacant land:

- Vacant land located in proximity to the Singleton Landfill.
- Vacant land at the intersection of Oak Forest Way and Golf Creek Bridge. This location is in proximity to single-family housing.
- Vacant land at the intersection of Bernal Road and Monterey Road. This location is in proximity to single-family and multi-family housing, as well as commercial uses.

These opportunity sites should be considered as they become available, or if the park opportunity sites are not able to support adequate gardens to accommodate the growing demand.

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A P P E N D I X A

2015 RULES AND REGULATIONS



Community Gardens Program 2015 Rules and Regulations

I. Overview

San José Community Gardens are intended to be beautiful, safe, and peaceful oases amidst the fast-paced life of Silicon Valley. The following set of rules and regulations have been designed for the following reasons:

- To ensure that community gardens are safe
- To ensure that community gardens are pleasant places to be and to look at: for gardeners, neighbors and the general public
- To establish fairness and equity among community gardeners
- To prevent damage to the land and groundwater
- To protect the future of community gardens in San José

As in any group endeavor, individuals must give up some of their individuality to accommodate the function of the group. Community gardening is no exception.

The Rules and Regulations are reviewed and revised annually in an ongoing effort to improve and keep them relevant to changing conditions. If you have suggestions or concerns, please call the Community Gardens Program office at 793-4165. However, unless official changes are made, you must abide by these rules and regulations as they are currently written. Failure to do so may result in the termination of gardening privileges.

II. Who can participate in the San José Community Gardens Program?

Anyone age 18 or older who lives in the City of San Jose may participate in the San Jose Community Gardens Program.

III. Plot Allocation, Registration and Fees

1. One garden plot per residence. The Community Gardens Program uses the following guidelines to ensure that this rule is applied uniformly:
 - A primary gardener and/or gardener helper may not garden more than one garden plot
 - A primary gardener may be defined as an individual, Husband/Wife, domestic partners or an entity having sole interest in the plot
 - A primary gardener may choose to have a garden helper noted on the registration form to help maintain the plot in the gardener's absence due to a family emergency, illness or injury, vacation or other unforeseen circumstance
 - The Primary gardener and their helper, who have entered into a current and valid agreement with the City, shall be referred to as a "plothead" in these rules
2. The person whose signature appears as the Primary Gardener on the Registration Form is ultimately responsible for the maintenance of the entire garden plot and for payment of all fees and charges.

3. The Primary Gardener is required to inform the Program Coordinator of any changes to his/her contact information, including home address and telephone number, including the primary gardener's helper's contact information. Failure to provide current contact information for both the primary gardener and helper may result in termination from the Community Gardens Program.
4. Garden plots are issued on a year-to-year basis from February 1 – January 31.
5. The City may, in its discretion, enter into a new agreement with a Primary Gardener in good standing provided that the annual registration form is completely filled out and signed, and all appropriate fees are paid by the due date of January 31.
6. Primary Gardeners desiring to continue using the plot are required to complete the Community Garden Registration/Agreement Form and pay their annual registration fee by the registration deadline of January 31. Those who do not meet the registration/agreement deadline will automatically lose the assigned plot and the assigned plot will be reassigned to a new gardener.
7. During registration, current and new gardeners may be required to provide proof of residency in the form of a photo I.D. and a copy of a utility bill. Other forms of proof are subject to approval by the City or the Volunteer Management Team.
8. If there are no vacant garden plots, prospective gardeners may add their name to the community garden waiting list by contacting the Community Gardens Coordinator (See section IX, page 8 of these Rules & Regulations for contact information) and they will be contacted—in the order on the waiting list—when garden plots become available. Once contacted, persons on the waiting list have two business days to respond or they will be removed from the waiting list.
9. Community garden plots are distributed to San Jose residents according to the council district they live in. Exception; if there are garden plots available at a particular garden and there are no people on the waiting list, a person living in any other council district may rent one at that garden.
10. Plotholders who do not intend to continue gardening the plot for any reason should promptly notify someone on the Volunteer Garden Management Team either verbally or in writing so that the plot may be reassigned to the next person on the waiting list.
11. Plotholders do not have any ownership interest in the plots and may not transfer a plot to anyone else, including a family member. The transfer of a plot will only be allowed between a husband and wife or domestic partners. Garden plots that become available will be re-assigned to new gardeners by the City's Community Gardens Program Coordinator.
12. New plotholders are required to complete the Community Garden Registration/Agreement Form and pay the total annual registration fee before they can begin gardening.
13. Full Payment of the annual registration fee is to be made by check or money order, payable to the garden. **Cash is not accepted.**
14. The annual registration fee is non-refundable unless proof of a family or medical emergency is provided to the City and reasonable notification is given. Refunds will be pro-rated with respect to the Period of Approval in the Registration/Agreement form.
15. Gardeners who sign-up after the registration period may have their water fee prorated. The prorated water fee is determined by calculating the individual monthly water cost and multiplying it by the number of months left in the current registration period. Administrative and operational fees are not prorated.
16. The annual registration fee includes a water, administrative and operational fee. The operational fee, which may include a key deposit, pest control and/or tools, is determined by the Volunteer Garden Management Team.
17. The water fee is determined by the Program Coordinator. The fee is calculated by using this formula; cost per square foot multiplied by the size of the garden plot (square feet) equals the water fee. The cost per square foot is determined by monitoring the gardens total annual water usage and the local water company's current rates.

18. Four (4) ADA accessible garden plots are available at Guadalupe Community Garden. Individuals with a disability will have priority in renting any of the four ADA accessible garden plots. If any of these four ADA garden plots are not occupied, those plots may be assigned by the City on a temporary basis to the general public. Please note: Any ADA plot temporarily assigned to the general public must be relinquished at the end of the current growing season or at the end of the registration year once a qualified ADA person is interested in the plot.

The definition of disability will be in accordance with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** of 1990, Title 42, Chapter 126 or under California law.

IV. Gardening Guidelines

A. ORGANIC GARDENING

The Community Gardens Program adheres strictly to the gardening principles, concepts, and practices popularly called “organic.” Products simply labeled “organic” or “natural” are not allowed unless they meet USDA or ORMI approval. The use of pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers, or other such substances or practices inconsistent with organic gardening are prohibited. The use of fertilizer material or tillage methods harmful to the soil’s structure, fertility or microorganisms is prohibited. The use of materials or products harmful to humans is prohibited. (Please refer to the “Garden Product Policy Guidelines” Section VIII, page 8 of these Rules and Regulations for more information.)

B. PLANTING SCHEDULE

1. Garden plots must be planted and maintained year-round.
2. Summer gardens must be planted by May 31st.
3. Remains of summer gardens must be removed by December 1st.
4. To prevent the spread of rust, garlic is to be planted in November and harvested by May. When garlic is left in the ground for too long, it is possible for rust to form on the garlic and then spread to other gardeners’ plots.
5. Plot holders who do not actively garden during the winter either have to plant a cover crop, cover their plot with plastic or maintain their plot free of weeds.

C. PLANTING GUIDELINES

1. Plot holders may grow vegetables, herbs and flowers in their plot.
2. Plot holders must utilize at least 75% of the plot for planting vegetables, herbs or flowers. Plots are not to be used to store materials/tools not associated with gardening.
3. Plot holders may grow woody perennials, such as grapes and berries, trees, including fruit trees or any plants considered invasive, such as bamboo or mint, as long as it is in an above ground mobile container, planter, etc... Woody perennials such as grapes and berries, invasive plants, such as bamboo or mint and trees already existing in the garden plot must be removed by the gardener. Existing fruit trees planted in the garden plot may be left in place so long as the harvest is shared amongst all the current gardeners.
4. Crops should be rotated.
5. Crops must be harvested and not left on the ground to rot and go to waste.
6. Plot holders should grow a variety of plants and should never grow less than two types of plants at any one time.
7. The Volunteer Management Team must approve planting of water-intensive crops such as taro and sugar cane. Growing of rice is prohibited.

8. Respect the need of your neighbors' plants for sunlight. Do not plant tall crops, including those plants in above ground containers, in a way that will cause excessive shading to nearby plots.
9. All plants, planters, planter boxes and trellises must be placed inside plot perimeter. Plants may not over hang into the walk way. The City or the Volunteer Management Team has the right to trim excess plants over hanging into the walkway without prior notification.
10. All tires, including but not limited to car and truck tires, are prohibited for use in any capacity in an individual garden plot. However, Volunteer Management Teams may use them in the common areas for gardening purposes.
11. Trellises or arbors may not be more than 6 feet high, may not shade neighbors plot and may not be installed permanently.
12. Fencing around the perimeter of garden plots must be installed inside of the plot border, may not shade neighbor's plots and/or be more than 6 feet high, and may not be installed permanently.
13. Garden plots, with fencing around the perimeter, must be accessible at all times. If there is a lock on the fence, a copy of the key or the access code must be provided to the volunteer garden manager and the Program Coordinator.
14. Community Gardens are publicly, maintained City Property and there is no presumption of privacy.

V. Plotholder Responsibilities

1. Plotholders are responsible for the year-round maintenance of their garden plots and the surrounding pathways. Plots and pathways must be kept free of weeds, trash and other debris at all times.
2. Common areas are maintained as a shared responsibility by all plotholders. Such maintenance will occur at garden cleanups scheduled by the Volunteer Garden Management Team and/or on an ongoing basis.
3. Plotholders are required to attend scheduled garden cleanups or make alternative arrangements with the Volunteer Garden Management Team to assist in the maintenance of the garden.
4. Plotholders are required to attend at least two garden meetings per year. If you are unable to attend a meeting, you are required to contact the Volunteer Management Team.
5. Plotholders must be involved in the hands-on cultivation of their plots.
6. Plotholders may not pay for someone else to garden their plot.
7. In the event of a family emergency, illness or injury, vacation, or other unforeseen circumstance, and if the plotholder's gardener helper is unavailable, the plotholder may arrange for another gardener to tend the garden plot but must notify the Volunteer Garden Management Team and provide the name of the other gardener, who already has a signed current and valid Community Gardens Registration/Agreement on file.
8. In the event of a serious illness, and if the plotholder's gardener helper is unavailable, a plotholder may be provided 4 weeks for recovery. At the end of 4 weeks, and if the plot has not been maintained, the Program Coordinator will determine whether or not the plotholder will have to give up the plot.
9. Plotholders are required to notify the Volunteer Garden Management Team of the following: irrigation problems such as water leaks, graffiti, theft, vandalism, rule violations, pest or disease problems.
10. Primary Gardeners and/or Gardener Helpers who have signed a current and valid Community Gardens Registration/Agreement may bring no more than 2 guests (collectively) to work on the garden plot with them at any one time, provided that the Primary Gardener and/or Gardener Helper shall be responsible for supervision of such guests at all times.
11. Plotholders and their guests must comply with all rules and regulations.
12. Plotholders will be held accountable for the behavior of their guests.

VI. Violations of Community Gardens Program Rules & Regulations

The City may enforce these Rules and Regulations, and in doing so will take action, including termination of the agreement with any gardener who is in violation of these Rules and Regulations. When a gardener violates the Program Rules and Regulations, the violation may be reported to the City using the Violation Incident Report (see pg. 7 for an example of VIR) which will be issued to the gardener by the Community Garden Coordinator or a member of the Volunteer Garden Management Team either in person, by mail or emailed.

Plotholders shall follow all reasonable instructions from the Volunteer Garden Management Team. City may issue a written warning or termination, as reasonably determined by City based upon the facts and circumstances. If a Plotholder believes that a warning or termination notice was issued in error, the Plotholder should contact the City's Community Garden's Coordinator in writing by letter or email (for contact information, see section IX, page 8 of these Rules & Regulations) identifying the relevant facts and circumstances that the termination or warning should be rescinded, within 14 consecutive calendar days of the date of the written notice of warning or termination. When a plotholder is terminated, he/she may reapply for the Community Gardens Program the following planting season. The decision of the City's Community Garden Coordinator is final.

VIOLATIONS WARRANTING IMMEDIATE TERMINATION BY THE CITY

1. Theft of tools and equipment
2. Theft of produce and plants
3. Vandalism of tools, equipment and City Property, including but not limited to animals.
4. The use of foul language and offensive behavior including but not limited to threats, intimidation, violence, racial/ethnic slurs and sexual harassment.
5. The use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs of any kind, in any area of the City's Community Gardens
6. Receiving more than two combined written warnings from the City or Volunteer Management Team in a calendar year
7. Failure to pay registration fee by the deadline

VII. At the Community Garden

1. **Hours of Operation:** Community gardens are open from sunrise to sunset. (Cornucopia and El Jardín open at 8:30 a.m.)
2. **Behavior:** Foul language or offensive behavior is prohibited.
3. **Gates:** In general, garden gates are to be kept closed and locked at all times.
4. **Cars:** Vehicles are not allowed in the garden, except in designated parking areas.
5. **Smoking:** Smoking in the community garden is prohibited.
6. **Controlled Substances:** No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs of any kind allowed. It is prohibited to enter the garden under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
7. **Bathroom:** Proper bathroom facilities must be used. Urinating or defecating in the community garden is prohibited.
8. **Garbage:** Unless your garden has arranged for garbage removal, you must take any garbage you generate with you to discard elsewhere. Discarding of garbage on the ground or in compost or green waste piles is prohibited.

9. **Green Waste:** Weeds and plant material should be composted on-site or placed in the green waste collection area(s). Green waste should not be thrown away or left in the pathways.
10. **No selling:** Produce from community gardens is primarily for family consumption. Excess food can be preserved for future use, shared with friends or neighbors, or donated to local food banks. **You may not sell your produce.**
11. **Harvesting:** Harvest only from your own plot. The unauthorized taking of produce from another gardener's plot will result in the immediate revocation of your garden plot.
12. **Water:** The amount of water used determines future water fees. No unattended and/or uncontrolled watering allowed. All gardeners are authorized to turn water off if it has been left unattended. Leaky water hoses must be replaced or repaired.
13. **Water timers:** Timers are allowed only if you do not share a water spigot with the neighboring plot.
14. **Excessive Watering/Watering Schedules:** Excessive water use may result in a fine, and/or a specific watering schedule may be implemented for an individual or the entire community garden, as determined by the garden manager and/or Program Coordinator. Excessive water use may be defined as the following; water allowed to leave the defined vegetable plot/bed; water allowed to run off into the pathway or adjacent plot; unattended water hoses left running in one spot for extended periods of time – minimum of 20 minutes. Those gardeners not adhering to a watering schedule or who continue to use water in excess may be terminated from the Program.
15. **Standing Water:** To reduce the breeding of mosquitoes and the spreading of West Nile Virus, no stagnant/standing water allowed, including but not limited to water in containers and buckets.
16. **Irrigation system:** The Volunteer Management Team must be notified of any alterations to the irrigation system and the City will have final approval of any changes. No alterations can be made to the irrigation system on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays because of the risk of an accident and the limited availability of City staff during these times. In the event of an irrigation emergency, you should contact your garden manager and/or the Community Gardens Program at (408) 793-4165. On weekends, please call the City of San José Call Center at (408) 535-3500. Any alterations to the MAIN irrigation line are prohibited.
17. **Tools:** Garden-owned tools are for garden use only and should be cleaned and returned to the toolshed after use. Tools must be kept locked in the tool shed overnight and should never be taken off the garden premises.
18. **Personal storage cabinets/containers:** Storage cabinets and/or containers must be kept clean and organized and within the plot. They may not be installed permanently and may not shade neighbors plot. City Staff has the authority to conduct an inspection of the inside of the cabinet/container at any given time with out prior notification.
19. **Personal BBQ's:** Personal bbq's are allowed only in designated areas and not near garden plots and/or in pathways. Ashes must be disposed of in a safe manner. Food preparation is allowed only in designated areas.
20. **Pests/Rodents:** Gardeners may trap and dispose of gophers, moles and ground squirrels. The use of chemicals, including over the counter smoke bombs, is PROHIBITED. All dead animals must be wrapped in plastic or placed in a container and disposed of in the garbage. If anything in a gardener's plot provides a habitat for rodents, including but not limited to rats, mice, and ground squirrels, the gardener must remove the habitat.
21. **Animals:** Pets are not allowed in community gardens. Feral cats can be kept at a garden for rodent control if the following guidelines are strictly followed:
 - If agreed upon by a majority of the gardeners at the garden
 - No more than 3 cats per garden
 - All cats must be neutered and immunized

- When cat caretakers leave the garden, they must take the cats with them or make appropriate arrangements for their future care
- Cats must be fed in an area far way from garden plots

22. **Bee Keeping:** Community gardens interested in Bee Keeping must apply for a Beekeepers Permit by submitting an application to the office of San Jose Animal Care and Services. Please contact the Community Gardens Program Coordinator for an application.

Violation Incident Report (VIR)
(SAMPLE)

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Garden Name: _____

Name of Gardener (first/last): _____ **Plot#:** _____

Description of Violation: (Brief description)

Reference: Current Community Gardens Program Rules & Regulations
 Page (s): _____ Section (s): _____ Paragraph (s): _____ Line (s): _____

Witnesses (if applicable):

Name (first/last): _____ Plot #: _____

Name (first/last): _____ Plot #: _____

Plan of Action (if applicable):

Expected Date of Correction (if applicable):

Action Taken:

First Warning: _____ Second/Final Warning: _____

VIR: mailed emailed handed to gardener

Garden Management Signature: _____ Date: _____
 (Or- Program Coordinator)

*** The white copy of this form must be submitted to the Program Coordinator.**

VIII. Garden Product Policy Guidelines

Any organic substance for use in any of the City of San Jose’s Community Gardens must be approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Organic Program or by the Organics Materials Review Institute (OMRI). To see if a substance is allowed in a community garden check the USDA National Organic Program National List, Subpart G, 205.601 and 205.602 or the OMRI Web site, www.omri.org

Organic Gardening: The form of agriculture that relies on techniques such as crop rotation, green manure, compost and biological pest control. Organic Gardening uses fertilizers and pesticides but excludes the use of manufactured (synthetic) fertilizers, pesticides (including herbicides, insecticides and fungicides), plant growth regulators, sludge and nanomaterials.

The following table includes, but not limited too, some substances that are allowed and prohibited:

	Allowed	Prohibited
PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bacillus thuringiensis(Bt) - soap spray - Horticulture pepper/onion spray - sulfur - wood ashes - sour milk solution - lace wings - dormant oils - micro-cop or equivalent (orchard use only) - diatomaceous earth (DE) <p>* Pyrethrin: It is a naturally occurring insect-killing chemical taken from chrysanthemum flowers. In the flowers, these bug-killers exist as a mixture of six separate chemicals that together are called pyrethrum or pyrethrins. Pyrethrins (without piperonyl butoxide or other enhancers) are permitted for use on organically grown crops.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - baking soda - borax, boric acid - sluggo - lady bugs - tanglefoot - marigolds - beneficial nematodes - netting - Pyrethrum* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rotenone - pyrethrate, pyrethroids - nicotine sulfate - malathion - diazinon - sevin - organophosphates - Roundup - Finale - Dursban - organ chlorides - chlorpyrifos
FERTILIZERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cotton Seed - kelp - compost - manure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - blood, bone, horn, and hoof meals - liquid fish or seaweed - fertilizers classed as “organic” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ammonium sulfate - ammonium nitrate - muriate of potash - superphosphates - highly soluble chemical fertilizer - Ozmicote - Non organic Miracle Grow

IX. Gardens Program Contact Information

City of San Jose
 Community Gardens Program
 200 E. Santa Clara Street, 9th Floor Tower
 San Jose, CA 95113-1905
 Phone: (408) 793-4165
 Fax: (408) 292-6416
 Email: community.gardens@sanjoseca.gov
 Web Site: www.sjcommunitygardens.org

A P P E N D I X B

STAKEHOLDER MEETING
SUMMARY



COMMUNITY GARDENS PLAN

For the City of San José

Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

STAKEHOLDER MEETING SUMMARY

On Wednesday, June 17 at 6:00pm, the City of San José Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) Department convened a meeting of Community Garden Program stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the Community Garden Plan project to stakeholders and solicit feedback from stakeholders, including the people who work with, manage, garden in, or are interested in gardening in one of the City's community gardens.

In addition to PRNS staff and staff from the Community Garden Plan consultant, PlaceWorks, there were approximately 17 attendees. Meeting attendees included representatives of the Mayor's Office, garden managers, and 13 gardeners from approximately 10 of the City's 18 community gardens. There were no residents currently on the waitlist in attendance.

An overview of the background information related to the garden program and the current planning process is provided below, followed by a more detailed summary of input received during the group discussion.

Introduction to Community Garden Program and Planning Process

Sarah Fleming of PRNS welcomed participants and introduced members of the Community Gardens Plan Working Group. Isabelle Minn of PlaceWorks provided an overview of the planning process, emphasizing that the purpose of the study is to recommend improvements and promote the Community Garden Program, as well as to better align it with the San José General Plan and Greenprint. The study will review the existing program; analyze the operations, site selection, participant selection, and level of service provided to the community; and provide case studies of successful programs in comparable communities. Draft recommendations are anticipated to be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission in September 2015, and the Final Report is scheduled for completion in October 2015.

Isabelle Minn and Joanna Winter of PlaceWorks described existing policies and codes that support community gardens in San José, and provided an overview of the Garden Program, including the existing operation models.

Stakeholder Discussion

Participants then took part in a facilitated discussion regarding successes and opportunities for improvement in the Garden Program's operations, level of service and ability to meet community needs, selection of new sites, and selection of garden participants. The level of service discussion was informed by initial maps analyzing walking distances to and population density near existing parks. The majority of

the participants were current gardeners, and the discussion focused on operational issues. Input received from the large group discussion is summarized below.

Operations

- **Land Partnerships.** Land not owned by the City (such as Jesse Frey, a volunteer-built founding garden) leads to a morale problem. The potential for the land to be taken away at any moment scares gardeners off. Relatedly, Jesse Frey Garden needs to be relocated, not simply closed, when the Santa Clara Valley Water District takes the land back for flood control purposes (the park at Keyes and Third Streets was recommended as a potential site). Gardens that have a sense of permanence, such as Wallenberg, are successful and do not have trouble getting volunteers.
- **Information.** There is not enough information available on the City website for potential and new gardeners who want to find a plot, sign up for a waiting list, find out whether their Council District has a garden, or understand the rules. This information needs to be available in multiple languages.
- **Tool Rental/Storage.** Because community gardens experience theft and vandalism, there was a suggestion that the City provide either tool rental or a central place to store garden equipment.
- **Public Access.** There was a discussion about leaving gardens unlocked to foster a sense of ownership of the gardens in the neighboring community. However, many gardeners were not in favor, both due to fears of vandalism, homeless intruders and fear for the safety of gardeners working alone at their garden plots, based on harassment that gardeners have experienced in the past. Some participants clarified that these issues are not a problem at all gardens. One alternative suggested was to host open house events in order to include the public in the gardens.
- **Funding Structure.** Several options were raised for possible alternative structures for the program, including a nonprofit that could receive grants and donations, a hybrid nonprofit with City support or contracts, a continued City program that uses a foundation as an intermediary to access grants, the Veggielution model of a community farm with responsibilities shared between the entire group, or turning the whole program over via contracts to each individual garden. Catholic Charities was mentioned as an example of a nonprofit to which the City could issue an RFP.
- **Fees.** Some gardeners are not clear on what the \$0.05 per square foot administrative fees pay for, and wanted more transparency. Garden managers seemed to be clear about the services offered by the City through Manny Perez, Community Garden Program Manager, but not all gardeners seem to have this information. Some participants were concerned that it is hard to afford this fee in low-income areas where there is already high turnover. Mike Will, Parks Manager, explained that fee contributes to the annual budget for the program (approximately \$130,000 for all 18 gardens), and that the City would not be able to provide current level of support without the administrative fees. He also noted that the overall fees have gone up as water rates have risen.
- **City Role Clarified.** Mike Will explained that PRNS provides compost, boards for garden plot borders, maintenance of City-built shared facilities, management of the waiting list, garbage pick-up, port-a-potties, tools, and green waste pick-up. In addition to administrative and maintenance support, the Community Garden Program Coordinator coordinates educational workshops on

topics such as leadership and Integrated Pest Management, coordinates development of program materials such as policies and procedures and marketing materials, coordinates with local and government agencies including other City departments, and promotes cohesiveness through group interactions and mediation.

- **Participation.** It's often hard to find volunteers (although not at Wallenberg Garden). Language barriers sometimes make it challenging for people to participate in the required annual meetings or to volunteer. Attendees suggested providing more training for garden managers, and discourage actions or models that would make it harder to recruit volunteers.
- **Plot Size.** At least one garden has divided plots , creating smaller plots that allow more individuals to participate.

Site Selection

- **Public Parks.** Participants were divided about the advisability of gardens in parks used for other recreation. Some gardeners think that there should be community gardens in all new parks. Others think that parks and recreation facilities such as basketball courts are incompatible uses, as exposure to the public has led to gardener discomfort, trespassers, and vandalism of garden facilities. Mike Will added that building new gardens in existing parks would require a public process.
- **Environmental Issues.** Placing gardens in industrial areas is a potential problem because fumes from nearby industry are not healthy for gardeners (this is a problem in at least one existing garden). Additionally, due to historic problems at Watson Community Garden, San José has unusually stringent environmental testing requirements; both Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessment is required to determine soil suitability for garden use.
- **Current Approach.** The current site selection process is mostly opportunistic, depending on what sites or partnerships become available, but is also guided to some degree by the Greenprint.
- **Council Districts.** Several participants noted that Council District 8 does not currently have a garden, and therefore a garden is needed within this District.

Level of Service

- **Measures.** Attendees identified a number of measures to consider for determining level of service, including:
 - Income
 - Number of plots per garden
 - Nearby non-City gardens
 - Food deserts (review The Food Trust's existing food desert maps)
 - Gardens per council district
- **New Development.** Participants also discussed the feasibility of providing or requiring private gardens in new housing projects

Participant Selection

- **Rules.** The rules are reasonable and include helpful advice and guidelines. However, they are updated annually in consultation with a small group of garden managers, then presented to all the garden managers, and gardeners would prefer that any changes are highlighted in the new rules. They also suggested two clear sets of rules; one managing how to obtain a garden plot, and one covering how to behave and maintain a plot once you have one.
- **Term Limits/Turnover.** Term limits would be horrible for gardens, like Wallenberg, that are successful and well-kept because they have strong history, identity, and pride. Interest was expressed in increasing turnover through stricter enforcement of garden rules regarding use, activity, and upkeep.
- **Income.** Some participants were uncomfortable with using income as a factor for participant selection; the feeling was that if someone wants to garden in community, they should be allowed to, whether or not they can afford to or have land to garden on their own property. Gardening is social, and the community gardens allow gardeners to interact with other gardeners and Master Gardeners. Some were concerned that income information would be too personal, while others pointed out that in some gardens, almost everyone is low-income already.

Other Issues

- **Street addresses.** Gardeners would like the City to provide street addresses for gardens so that people can find them.
- **Training.** Longtime community gardeners notice that people who haven't gardened before often leave quickly, and suggested some sort of training program for these people.
- **Dumping.** Attendees noted that there are often problems with illegal dumping outside the community gardens.

Case Studies/Benchmarking Suggestions

- **Identified Cities/Programs.** Programs identified at the first Working Group meeting as examples suitable for case studies and benchmarking were noted, including programs in Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, Campbell (which recently implemented term limits), Seattle, and Portland.
- **New Suggestions.** Attendees suggested reviewing programs in Davis and at Valley Verde, a low-income garden program in Santa Clara County. No other suggestions were made.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The meeting concluded with a review of next steps and the project schedule, and meeting attendees and those unable to make the meeting were encouraged to return comment cards to PRNS or send ideas and feedback to community.gardens@sanjoseca.gov. For questions or further feedback on the Community Garden Program Study, please contact one of the following PRNS staff:

Mike Will

Parks Manager
mike.will@sanjoseca.gov
(408) 535-3582

Yves Zsutty

Trail Network Manager
yves.zsutty@sanjoseca.gov
(408) 793-5561

Manny Perez

Community Garden Program
Coordinator
manuel.perez@sanjoseca.gov
(408) 793-5533

A P P E N D I X C

SAMPLE GARDEN SITE SELECTION
CHECKLIST



APPENDIX A

SAMPLE COMMUNITY GARDEN SITE SELECTION CHECKLIST

Site Ownership:

Site Location/ Address:

Urban Planning Area/ Council District:

Existing Use and Acreage: Acres

Surrounding Land Uses:

Neighborhood Context (PRNS staff to describe the following):

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Y | N | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the site more than one mile from an existing community garden site? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the surrounding land uses compatible? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the site within a medium or high density area? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the site within an area that has high density of low-income units? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there community support for a garden at this location? | | |

Site Conditions (Describe following site conditions):

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Y | N | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sunlight: Does the site receive at least 50 percent of the site receives at least 6 hours of sunlight a day? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Soil: Are there any known soil health/contamination issues? (soil must be tested prior to site selection) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Access: Can the site be safely accessed by pedestrians? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Access: Is parking available? (circle one: on-street/ off-street) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Visibility: Is the site visible from adjacent streets or use areas? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Access: Does the site comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA accessibility) or have the potential to comply? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Utilities: Does the site have access to water? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Utilities: Does the site have access to electricity? | | |

If necessary, please describe other considerations that may make the site suitable:

