

Community Gardens in the City of Dublin



Agenda

- Overview
- Rewards
- Raised Beds
- What's Needed
- Examples of Community Gardens
- Next Steps



Overview

- The Parks and Recreation Commission sub-committee on Community Gardens has been gathering information on this topic for several months through research and discussions with residents.
- There are many benefits that will be outlined in this presentation. These benefits make a compelling argument for the City of Dublin to actively support community gardening.
- A potential garden season would be from April 15th thru Nov 15th

“Out of gardens grow fleeting flowers but lasting friendships.”

- Beverly Rose Hopper



Overview (cont.)

Community gardens are becoming very popular across the United States. Many communities have created structure around these and used them to bring a sense of togetherness to neighborhoods.

Dublin has a lot of unused park land near neighborhoods that could be used for this purpose.

Options:

- Provide information on these to the homeowners and civic associations
- Run the project and provide structure
- Host classes on the topic to help people understand gardening



Rewards

- **Food Production** – Community gardens allow people to grow high quality fruits and vegetables for themselves, their families and their community.
- **Nutrition** – Some research indicates that community gardeners eat more fruits and vegetables than non-gardening families.
- **Exercise** – Gardening requires physical activity and helps improve the overall physical health of gardeners.
- **Mental Health** – Interacting with plants and nature helps reduce stress and increases a gardener's sense of wellness and belonging.
- **Community** – Community gardens foster a sense of community identity, ownership and stewardship among gardeners. They provide a place for people of diverse backgrounds to interact and share culture traditions.



Rewards (cont.)

- **Environment** – Gardens help reduce the heat island effect in cities, increase biodiversity, reduce run-off from rain, recycle local organic materials and reduce fossil fuel use from long distance food transportation.
- **Learning** – People of all ages can acquire and share skills and knowledge related to gardening, cooking, nutrition, health, culture, etc.
- **Youth** – Community gardens provide a place for youth to explore gardening, nature and community.
- **Property Values** – Some research indicates the property values around community gardens increase faster than property values in similar areas without gardens.
- Above all, community gardens can provide a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment for all.



Raised Beds

Why raised beds

- Heavy clay soils do not warm up or dry out easily in the spring
- The use of raised beds is a way to improve drainage, allow the soils to dry out sooner in the year and allow for earlier plantings.
- Raised beds are generally associated with a more intensive style of growing plants, and can provide more usable growing space
- They eliminate the problems of soil compaction and hard-pan



What's Needed

- Communication and coordination with the interested residents
 - A communication plan should be put in place that will educate the neighborhoods in the area.
 - Coordination with the neighborhood civic / homeowners associations
- Physical Items:
 - Rain barrels
 - A shelter house (not necessary but nice to have to save rain water)
 - Water source
 - Compost bins



Examples

- **Washington Township Community Gardens** (with some representative rules)
 - Each gardener will be allocated a 12'x14' plot in the Washington Township Community Garden at Amlin Crossing Park, 5468 Cosgray Road, Dublin. Plots will be assigned first come first serve. Gardeners will be given the option of retaining the same plot from year to year.
 - Annual fee is \$30 plus a \$20 cleanup deposit
 - Each gardener is responsible for maintenance and upkeep
 - All plots are tilled each fall by Washington Township
 - Children working on the gardens should be accompanied by an adult at all times.
 - The application of non-organic pesticides (insecticides, herbicides, fungicides) is prohibited. Organic practices are preferred
 - The Garden Committee is responsible for ensuring that the rules are followed at all times.
 - Gardeners are encouraged to plant extra. There will be periodic delivery of extra produce to the Dublin Food Pantry



Examples (cont.)

- **St. John Lutheran Church of Dublin**

- Located at 6135 Rings Rd.
- They have 60 plots – all full
- The garden was started in 2009 using 5 acres of unused land adjacent to the church
- The plots are 15x20 feet
- The cost is \$10 per year which covers the land and water
- Example crops are corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, onions, cabbage and eggplant
- 700 to 800 lbs of extra produce was donated to the Dublin Food Panty and Faith Mission in 2009
- A feast is also planned for the end of the season



Next Steps

Recommendations

- Assign a staff member to oversee the project and create structure (possibly the Horticulture Department or Volunteer Resources)
- Work with the neighborhood homeowners and civic associations to help identify target areas and solicit volunteers
- Roll out a test garden to work out the kinks
- Look for volunteers to give gardening classes



Discussion

