

Community Gardens Factsheet
Community Planners Committee (CPC)
February 22, 2011

Overview

Community gardens improve access to healthy foods, provide opportunities for physical activity, encourage community building, and enhance safety and economic vitality.

- Recently, there has been increasing momentum from San Diego gardeners and community groups interested in developing community gardens.
- In 2010 the Center for Disease Control awarded San Diego County a sixteen million dollar “Healthy Works” grant to develop projects and policies that encourage healthy lifestyles including farmer’s markets, community, school, and demonstration gardens.
- Many organizations that have received funding to create community gardens are being held up by outdated City policy.

Community Gardens Flourishing Across the Country

Most large cities proactively create community gardens

- **Seattle** has the P-Patch Program to assist in locating and securing garden sites and coordinating with public agencies for public lands. The community gardens are allowed by-right in all zones. The P-Patch Program now has 73 gardens on a total of 23 acres.
- **Los Angeles** and **San Francisco** allow community garden by right in residential zones... and to protect them;
- **Chicago** and **New York City** are estimated to have the most community gardens, approximately 600 each.
- **Portland** has 35 community gardens managed by the Park and Recreation Department with a waiting period of up to 3 years for an available plot. The City’s Community Garden Initiative, is an effort to create 1,000 new gardens by 2012.
- **Philadelphia’s** Greenworks Philadelphia Program has among its many goals a goal to provide a garden, urban farm, and/or farmers market within 10 minutes of 75% of the City’s residents.

Resources for Assisting Community Gardens to Succeed

There are many resources available to assist San Diego residents and community groups start and maintain a healthy, vibrant community garden.

- **Technical gardening resources.** Provide community gardeners free advice on successful and sustainable gardening techniques. There are several local groups such as Victory Gardens San Diego, Master Gardeners (part of the U.C. Cooperative Extension), and American Community Gardening Association (information on a nation scale at www.communitygarden.org).

- **Educational Centers.** Funding from the federal Healthy Works grant will create five community-based educational centers throughout San Diego County that will provide training in gardening, school and afterschool garden integration as well as development and management of community gardens.
- **Organizational resources** are provided by the San Diego Community Garden Network, a 501(c)(3) and the Regional Garden Advisory Council.
 - The San Diego Community Garden Network can provide umbrella insurance
 - The Regional Garden Advisory Council can provide networking opportunities to learn best practices and leverage nuts-and-bolts knowledge on maintaining high-quality community gardens
- **Financial resources.** The USDA alone distributed \$30 million last year to community food security projects, including community gardens. Public and private funding exists to support more gardens.

Support from Residents, Government, and Organizations

The following public officials, neighborhood planning groups, and organizations have made public statements and actions in support of easing existing restrictions on community gardens.

Make San Diego Community Garden-Friendly Petition

To date, 1,184 residents have signed the petition.

City of San Diego

- Mayor Jerry Sanders
- San Diego City Council Members
- Southeast Development Corporation (SEDC)

City Community Planning Groups

- City Heights 11-02-09
- Encanto Neighborhoods 02-01-10
- College Area 04-14-10
- Greater Golden Hill 05-12-10
- Kensington-Talmadge 06-09-10

Organizations

- One in Ten Coalition
- People's Produce Project
- San Diego Community Garden Network
- International Rescue Committee
- Mount Hope/Helix Heights Residents Association
- Victory Gardens San Diego