

**AGENDA #** \_\_\_\_\_  
Copy Mailed to Alderperson \_\_\_\_\_

City of Madison, Wisconsin

**SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION** \_\_\_\_\_

~~Adopting~~ **Approving** the "Growing a Stronger Community with Community Gardens: An Action Plan for Madison" and the Committee's recommendations contained in Plan.

Drafted By: Archie Nicolette, **Planning Unit**

Date: November 1, 1999

Fiscal Note: Implementation of the recommendations contained in the proposed community gardens plan report would have Operating and Capital Budget costs in excess of \$100,000 per year, including the commitment of City staff resources, as well as land acquisition and improvements. Implementation of these recommendations would require separate Common Council approval as part of future Operating and Capital Budgets.

Sponsors: Ald. Barbara Vedder, Ald. Michael Verveer, Ald. Kent Palmer, Ald. Matt Sloan, Ald. Jean MacCubbin, Ald. Jose Manuel Sentmanat, Ald. Judy Olson

Presented July 6, 1999  
Referred Plan Commission, Parks Commission, CDBG Commission, CDA, Board of Estimates, **Advisory Committee on Community Gardens**

Rereferred \_\_\_\_\_

Reported Back \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ POF \_\_\_\_\_

Rules Suspended \_\_\_\_\_

Public Hearing \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVAL OF FISCAL NOTE IS NEEDED

BY THE COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE

Approved By

Comptroller's Office

RESOLUTION NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

ID NUMBER 25840

WHEREAS the Common Council formed the City of Madison Advisory Committee on Community Gardens (Resolution #23429) to research, advise and make recommendations to the Common Council; and

WHEREAS community gardens are a public good and community gardening converts public and private lands into neighborhood civic spaces where people grow vegetables, fruits, flowers and herbs that they otherwise could not grow; and

WHEREAS the City of Madison has lost one-third of its community gardens in the last fifteen years, while some other communities in the country have been proactive in creating and improving community garden spaces; and

WHEREAS some of the existing community gardens in Madison have waiting lists up to four years of potential gardeners who cannot be accommodated in the existing gardens; and

WHEREAS the City of Madison and other cities throughout the nation have recognized the value which community gardens can add to the health, vitality, and civic pride of a neighborhood; and

WHEREAS the Committee's recommendations were prepared through the cooperative effort of neighborhood organizations, land trusts, City agencies, and other public and private and non-profit agencies; and

WHEREAS the Committee's recommendations have been reviewed by the staff to appropriate City boards and commissions and have received acceptance by the public at a city-wide open meeting/public forum; and

WHEREAS City departments/agencies are expected to work with neighborhoods, land trusts, and other public/private organizations to assist in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations over a ten-year time frame.

**WHEREAS nothing in this resolution shall be considered a mandate or a directive for the expenditure of funds or for the creation of positions.**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council does **approve the report** hereby adopts the "Growing a Stronger Community with Community Gardens: An Action Plan for Madison" ~~report as a supplement to~~ **as a special study complementing the City Land Use Plan and a part of the Master Plan for the City of Madison** to guide the development, preservation and creation of a permanent system of long-lasting, well managed community gardens throughout the City of Madison ~~and serve as a model for other communities.~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **entities listed in the Action Plan Recommendation section of the Report are directed to consider implementation of the following** specific recommendations ~~are organized in priority order according to the agency responsible to take the lead for implementation and that appropriate City agencies should assign priority beginning with~~ **and shall, within 90 (ninety) days of adoption of this resolution submit their year 2000** ~~the 2000~~ work plans and budgets to implement Projects, Policies and Activities **contained in the Committee's report to the Mayor and the Common Council for consideration and action.**

Mayor's Office:

~~Will create an ongoing position of Coordinator for community gardening issues. The Coordinator, who could be a City staff member, should serve as liaison between existing community gardening organizations and City departments working on behalf of new or existing community gardens.~~ **Will detail the gardening issues as an ongoing existing position, and take a lead role in determining the appropriate location for this position in the City's administrative structure. In making this determination, due consideration will be given to the Coordinator's principal function, that of liaison between existing community gardening organizations and City departments working on behalf of new or existing community gardens.**

The Garden Coordinator ~~will~~ **should:**

- (a) Organize a Community Gardens Council comprising members of all local groups involved in community gardening, including land trusts and City staff. The Gardens Council will be given primary responsibility for organizing, detailing and advising the acquisition for community gardening sites and obtaining necessary resources; and

- (b) Work with the Council and the City's ~~neighborhood coordinator~~ **agencies** to find opportunities for neighborhood gardening sites.

~~Will take the lead in creating the position of Community Gardens Coordinator, which will be essential to the successful implementation of the Committee's report.~~

**The Mayor's Office is requested to:**

~~Will~~ Advocate for an amendment to the Dane County Park and Open Space Plan so that the Plan sets community gardens as a county priority. Once the plan is amended, money from the county's \$30 million conservation fund could be used for garden acquisition;

~~Will~~ Support local garden groups' efforts to write letters of support or proclamations to help with fundraising, provide educational programs for community gardening, and related needs;

~~The Mayor's Office will~~ **Assist** providing **with** grant opportunities as needed to develop new methods for garden organizations to use public monies to leverage private, nonprofit and foundation grants in support of local community gardening initiative; **and**

~~Will Provide office space and equipment support for the Garden Coordinator to find opportunities for neighborhood gardening sites.~~

**Parks Division & Street Division are requested to:**

~~Will~~ Deliver compost and other commonly available soil amendments (e.g. mulch, topsoil, lake weeds) to the garden sites, when trucks and material are available;

~~Will~~ Pick up refuse from the garden sites on the same schedule as adjacent residential properties; **and**

~~Will~~ Consider the request for the use of city equipment and operators for site clearing and other garden needs.

**Parks Division is requested to:**

~~Will~~ Amend the 1997 Parks and Open Space Plan to include the existing Parks Division practices with neighborhood initiatives and adequate support of assisting development of community garden sites in city area, community, and regional parks (parks of 10 acres or larger) as a cost-effective method of providing additional garden space throughout the City;

**Prepare for submittal by** the City, ~~through the Parks Division, will also support~~ **applications for** land acquisition and revenue development for gardens at the State and County levels with the DNR Stewardship Fund and **Dane County** Open Space Initiative, respectively;

~~Will~~ Consider crediting land or easements dedicated to the public or to a community land trust toward the developer's public parkland dedication requirement. This would allow land designated for community gardens to be privately owned by a land trust with a reversion or easement to the city, and would be subject to conditions and approvals by the Parks Commission, Plan Commission, and Common Council, to ensure the compatibility of the gardens with their neighborhoods;

~~Will consider budgeting for the construction and maintenance of permanent watering systems at each community gardening site in City parks.~~ **Consider budgeting for the construction and maintenance of**

**permanent watering systems at each community gardening site sites in City parks, including funds which are available from the City's antenna and water tower fees, or which may become available from this source from time to time;**

~~Will~~ Amend the 1997 Parks and Open Space Plan to include the provision of the 1991 Parks and Open Space Plan, which recommends that the Parks Division be capital funded to acquire suitable sites for as many as 2,000 City-owned, permanent garden plots of 200-800 square feet in size each. The City should encourage community gardens in City parks, especially in community and area parks, to aid in accomplishing the goal stated above;

~~Will~~ Consider using ~~impact~~ **park** fees to secure land for community gardening; **and**

~~The Community Gardens Advisory Committee also requests that the Parks Division, in cooperation with Olbrich Botanical Society;~~ Consider developing a demonstration community garden in the planned expansion of Olbrich Botanical Gardens **in cooperation with Olbrich Botanical Society.**

Department of Planning and Development, Planning Unit is requested to:

~~Will~~ Include community gardens in ~~a the~~ city-wide land use plan as recommended civic space **as plans are updated and presented for approval by the Plan Commission;**

~~Will establish~~ **Research data for inclusion** in the city-wide land use plan, ~~of an~~ appropriate service standards for community gardens, **and report such standards to the Plan Commission;**

~~Will amend relevant~~ **Consider and propose amendments to the** zoning ordinances to include community gardens as a permitted **or conditional** use in all zoning districts;

~~Will insure that~~ **Evaluate any proposed changes on** the use of adjacent land parcels ~~will be for~~ compatibility with community gardens and their needs; e.g., protecting the gardens' solar access and managing stormwater so that it does not damage the plots;

~~Will Give priority to Planned Unit Developments that incorporate gardens as an accepted use of open/civic space. ;~~

~~Will give standing to the~~ **Give consideration to the use of a matching grant program described under the third recommendation under the CDBG recommendations to finance** community gardening initiatives of neighborhood groups. ~~Grants for this purpose could be applied for through the new City of Madison Community Enhancement Program. This would encourage local garden groups to provide in-kind services and supplies as a match.~~

**Coordinate a review, together with a recognized community garden organization and the Water Utility, of appropriate Madison Water Utility field facilities for community garden sites, taking into consideration any neighborhood concerns or Utility operational concerns and approved by the Board of Water Commissioners. The lease should be for a minimum of five years and a community garden organization would be responsible for management of the site and may be responsible for grounds maintenance, depending on the property involved.**

~~Department of Planning and Development, Community Development Authority, Community Economic Development Unit, and Housing Operations~~ is requested to:

~~City government Will~~ Assist in acquiring land and/or park dedication for a community garden in the Isthmus within the next two years. The Isthmus was identified as an area with high need and little accessible land;

~~The City of Madison Community Development Authority and the Community Economic Development Unit will~~ Adopt a policy in support of existing community gardens on leased land having their leases extended five years or longer;

City departments and agencies that lease land for community gardens ~~will~~ **are asked to** extend those leases to a minimum of five years. Leases should provide for evaluation in the fourth year for renewal after the following year;

Leases for community gardens ~~will~~ **should** be given flexibility for amenities that enhance their use as civic spaces. Lease provisions should allow beautification areas, perennial plantings and other amenities; **and**

~~Will~~ **The Community Development Authority is requested to** support community gardens as a valuable asset at city-owned housing sites **if requested by residents.**

**Request Department of Planning and Development, Community Development Block Grant:**

The City ~~will~~ **is encouraged to** fund nonprofit organizations to acquire and hold lands for community gardens and arrange for the management of gardens and otherwise steward the land. A model for this type of program is the Troy Garden Coalition, in which the Madison Area Community Land Trust owns the land and the Urban Open Space Foundation restricts its use through a conservation easement on a permanent basis. This model, or similar models, should be strongly considered for use in other parts of the City.

City government ~~will~~ **should** continue to review policies to ensure support to organizations like Community Action Coalition (CAC) that are responsible for managing gardens. In addition, the City should provide support for similar nonprofit groups to help develop and sustain community gardens.

Recognizing that the development and management of a community garden is a private and public initiative, the City ~~will~~ **is asked to** establish support/operation **grant** funds that will be made available to community garden groups ~~as a grant program~~ to assist the improvements of their gardens. Grants would be awarded on the assessment of needs of each neighborhood garden group that requests funds.

**Request the Mayor's Office/Parks/Community Development Block Grant:**

City government ~~will~~ **is strongly urged to** institute a gardens acquisition program that will create at least one new site every year for the next ten years or until a balance has been reached between the demand for and supply of community garden plots. City government will establish an annual set-aside fund of \$60,000 **in City Capital Budget** for the purchase of land or acquiring land by park dedication for community gardens that have been identified as needing them. ~~The City will also pursue funds for the purchase of land for community gardens from other sources, such as State Stewardship funds, Federal funds, Dane County Open Space Initiative and private foundations.~~ **To leverage the annual funds it sets aside in the Capital Budget, the City will also pursue funds for the purchase of land for community gardens from other sources, such as State Stewardship Funds, Federal funds, Dane County Open Space Initiative, user fees and private foundations. The City urged provide financial support for the grant writing work needed to pursue such funds.**

Neighborhood centers ~~will~~ **are encouraged to** support the efforts of neighborhood groups to develop community gardens within City-owned subsidized and unsubsidized housing projects.

Assessor's Office is requested to:

~~Will~~ Consider reviewing the assessments of private landholders who lease their land for community gardens on the basis of new use, length of the lease, and possible restrictions on use of the land.