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WEST FRESNO URBAN GARDEN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

West Fresno, California, has been described by the Brookings Institute as the forgotten corner of a sprawling city. It is physically cut off from the city by freeways, and has been hampered by pervasive poverty and a lack of community services and amenities. Also, there are many brownfield sites that contribute to blighting influences.

Despite these challenges, the community has a strong sense of pride and resilience, and a desire to improve its physical and environmental health.

Beginning October 2011, the Fresno Youth Council for Sustainable Communities (FYC), guided by the Center for Multicultural Cooperation (CMC), sought to address two concerns through one project: addressing blight and food security issues through the construction of one community garden on a brownfield. With a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), FYC and CMC identified a site upon which to construct a community garden. After gathering information, interviewing stakeholders, and conducting research, there was a realization that in order to effectively address blight and food security concerns, the construction of a community garden would just be the beginning. The effort culminated in a community workshop which revealed the following key findings:

1. West Fresno community members:
 - Would like to construct a pilot community garden on the corner of Belgravia and Fairview Streets, adjacent to Edison High School and Computech Middle School
 - Are interested in a network of community gardens and food distribution
 - Are interested in participating in a community garden as a volunteer or plot renter
 - Would like to see a garden program associated with their neighborhood school
 - Need to build working relationships with and support from stakeholders involved in food security and awareness, including members of the local government and school district

THE FRESNO YOUTH COUNCIL

The Fresno Youth Council for Sustainable Communities is a partnership between the California Center for Civic Participation, the Center for Multicultural Cooperation, and the Wangari Maathai Center to develop and deploy well-prepared youth advocates in fast-moving regional and statewide decision-making processes in the sustainability realm.



CMC guided a youth-led brownfields urban garden and food project in southwest Fresno. CMC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides quality youth leadership. (www.cmcweb.org). CMC coordinates the Fresno Youth Council.

2. In addition to the production area in a community garden, the community would like ancillary facilities and services such as:
- Facilities – Teaching/learning areas, gathering areas, community art and ornamental fences, and instructional cooking facilities
 - Services – Double voucher program, educational programs, food distribution, such as donation, and a Farmer’s Market or food stand

Project Team

The technical assistance used a collaborative team of EPA partners, their consulting team and local stakeholders, including:

- EPA Region 9 staff
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Fresno Metro Ministry
- Fresno County Economic Opportunities Council
- Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR)
- SRA International

Report Organization

This report is organized into two parts. The first part addresses the steps necessary to identify and construct the pilot community garden and ancillary facilities project. The second part addresses additional efforts necessary to build support for a comprehensive program that incorporates a network of community gardens with food distribution and education.

The report also includes appendices that contain key project information. These appendices provide the steps used in this project and can be used as a model to assist other communities in using a youth group as a catalyst for the creation of a community garden.

PROJECT HISTORY

The project builds upon a previous EPA supported project entitled, “Transforming the Golden Westside” (www.wpa.gov/region9/brownfields/fresnoW/index.html). This community engagement project was successful in large part because of the participation of CMC and FYC at community meetings. Project accomplishments include:

- Presentations by national and local experts to the community
- Gathering community input on brownfields and reuse ideas
- Engaging Fresno Youth Council
- Educating community on brownfields redevelopment
- Understanding brownfields tools
- Creation a Community Action Plan

FOOD DESERTS IN WEST FRESNO

A Food Desert is an area where healthy, affordable food is difficult to obtain. These are associated with a variety of diet-related health problems. According to the USDA, two of the four Food Deserts in Fresno are located in southwest Fresno. (www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-desert-locator.aspx)

Additionally, there is only one full service grocery in this neighborhood, and very limited access to fresh produce and healthy foods.

PART 1: CREATING AND OPERATING THE FIRST COMMUNITY GARDEN

The initial goal of the project was for the project team to provide contract support to FYC and CMC to identify, assess and begin the initial steps in planning and constructing a community garden on a brownfield in West Fresno.

Process and Milestones: The project team assisted FYC and CMC in planning for the community garden. The following tasks were completed on the dates indicated. The results are discussed in the subsequent sections, and the detailed project process is found in Appendix A.

1. Assist FYC and CMC to identify potential brownfield sites for the first community garden in West Fresno:
 - Narrowed target area – November 2011
 - Set site selection criteria – December 2011
 - Created an evaluation criteria and matrix – December 2011
 - Trained in the use of the matrix and collection of data from various data sources; performed site survey evaluation – the Candidate Site Form used to evaluate sites is found in Appendix B – December 2011
2. Assist FYC in conducting environmental history on the candidate sites:
 - Evaluated data sources – December 2011
 - Collected and monitored data collection – January 2012
 - Assisted in the evaluation of sites – January 2012

OTHER COMMUNITY PLANNING EFFORTS IN FRESNO

The City of Fresno (through the former Fresno Redevelopment Agency) received a fiscal year (FY) 2011 EPA Brownfields Assessment grant, which could be used to assess a site for an urban garden. In 2011, EPA Region 9 completed an inventory of brownfields in downtown and southwest Fresno—identifying 545 potential sites.



Fresno was recently selected as one of six cities by the White House Initiative Smart Cities, Smart Communities (SC2), which aims to leverage resources from several Federal partners for the city's economic development projects.

Fresno is also part of an eight county Regional Planning Grant funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development, Sustainable Communities Partnership.

BROWNFIELDS IN WEST FRESNO

In 2011, the City of Fresno produced a list of potential brownfield sites within a one-mile radius along Highway 99. In workshops later that year, West Fresno residents also identified potential brownfields. Contact the City of Fresno for further information on this list and efforts to create an inventory.

3. Identify potential partners for urban garden support:
 - Identified partner organizations, such as community garden operators, advisors, master gardeners, food distribution organizations, technical assistance providers, and funders – March 2012
 - Defined the role(s) of each partner, such as planning, implementation, funding, and/or regulation – March 2012
4. Host a workshop (charrette) to inform and obtain ideas from the community:
 - Determined the format of the workshop – February 2012
 - Created posters, survey and program; trained presenters in poster station presentations, program and agenda (workshop documents and agenda are in Appendix C, posters in Appendix D, and survey questions and results in Appendix E) – March 2012
 - Evaluated workshop and survey results – April 2012
 - Evaluated capacity of stakeholders to carry out recommendations – May 2012
5. Create an Implementation Plan and Final Report (this report) with both short-term and long-term sustainability elements:
 - Short-term – August 2012
 - Long-term – August 2012

Vicinity: West Fresno is a neighborhood in the City of Fresno with a population of 35,000. The composition of that population is 49.9% Latino, 25.2% African American, and 9.2% Asian, predominately Hmong. The poverty rate is 51% and 53.7% of housing is renter occupied.

West Fresno is bound by S.R. 99, Highway 180, and Highway 41. The land use pattern is a mix of industrial and commercial sites interspersed with residential. Compared to other neighborhoods, West Fresno lacks public services and amenities. Agro-industrial uses, major arterials and topologic and climatological patterns contribute to the worst air quality in the nation along with the rest of the San Joaquin Valley. The area has many suspected brownfields from historical uses as auto-related businesses, landfills and industry.

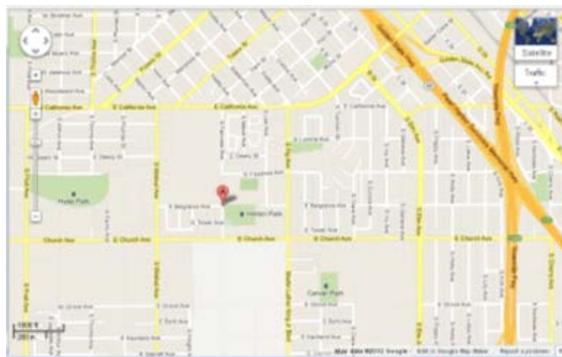


Figure 1: Location Map (above) and Aerial photo of site (below)

Location: The first community garden is on the corner of Belgravia and Fairview Streets, adjacent to Edison High School and Computech Middle School – located just north of the Hinton Community Center. It is composed of portions of parcels owned by the Fresno Unified School District and the City of Fresno. The site area is approximately 1.50 acres, 600 feet wide and 100 feet deep.

Site Analysis: FYC conducted an initial analysis of site history, use, zoning and site features. It is currently an underutilized path and non-native landscaping strip. It is recommended that soil samples be collected to determine if soils were affected from possible past use as a road and from construction debris. Since the site is not fenced, there may also be contamination from dumping. The site analysis will include a brownfields Phase 1 and Phase 2 conducted by EPA contractors through the Targeted Brownfield Assessment (TBA) Program. In addition, USDA will test the soils for analysis as a growing medium. These data will also provide guidance for the use of existing soil; whether there is a necessity for cleanup, import of additional soil, or construction of raised beds.

Building Program and Garden Elements: The garden is initially expected to occupy approximately 0.35 acres (15,000 square feet) of the site, with the balance of the site for future expansion. The elements of the garden in the 0.35 acres are illustrated in the schematic in Figure 2.

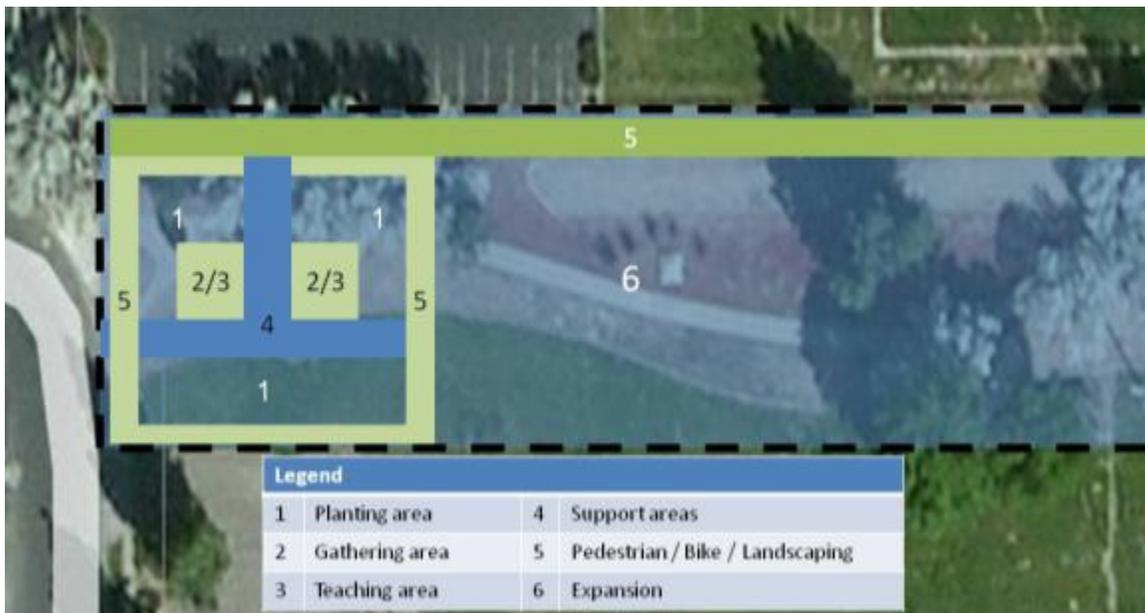


Figure 2: Schematic Layout of the West Fresno Community Garden, Phase I

Phase 1

1. Planting areas – raised beds and/or planting plots, and paths for about 75-100 people. There are several factors considered in determining the type of planting area, such as nature and condition of the soil, user requirements, and disabled access.
2. Gathering areas – areas for gardeners to congregate, such as plazas, sitting areas, and playground.
3. Teaching area – area for instruction such as a small amphitheater with semi-circular seating.
4. Support areas – includes tool and supply storage, and composting.
5. Pedestrian/bicycle path, access areas and landscaping – location and configuration of the site require that a significant portion of the site be dedicated as a pedestrian and bicycle access connecting South Fairview to the west to South Lee Street on the east. Landscaped buffers are also required per the zoning code.
6. Expansion area – portion of the site to be reserved for future expansion, and which may require some clearing and landscaping.
7. Elements and features, to be located in one of the areas above, include:
 - Bulletin board
 - Farm stand to sell produce; can be incorporated into the gathering area
 - Decorative fence and public art – donated or community-provided art
 - Decorative shading covering portions of the teaching and gathering areas
8. Utilities – for the first phase, include water and irrigation.
9. Phase 2 possible future features – may be in expansion areas, or one of the areas above, include:
 - Electric service
 - Teaching kitchen
 - Rest rooms, including waste water service
 - Farmer’s Market space – may be located in the adjacent parking lot

Additional planning and meetings are necessary to refine the building program, construction budget, possible project phasing, fundraising, and stakeholder organizing. The planning will also address the construction program in the expansion areas.

THE BUDGET

The preliminary estimate to design, obtain permits and construct the garden, including start-up operating costs, ranges from \$89,000 to \$570,000. These costs were based recent community garden projects and similar projects in the Fresno area. The low end of the budget considers possible sources of in-kind design and management services, and volunteer construction labor, as well as donation of materials, which could significantly reduce the cost of construction. The high end of the estimate assumes that no donations or in-kind services are obtained. This budget does not include the cost of a lease or purchase of the site.

Garden Features (See Appendix F for definitions)	Quantity	Units	Estimate	
			Low	High
Site Access (Lease or easement)			NA	NA
Soft Costs			\$ 12,000	\$ 75,000
Environmental Site Assessment			Included in other grants	
Site Preparation/Demolition	65,000	square feet	\$ 5,000	\$ 70,000
Planting Areas	8,000	square feet	\$ 12,000	\$ 120,000
Gathering Areas	1,000	square feet	\$ 5,000	\$ 20,000
Teaching Areas	400	square feet	\$ 2,000	\$ 8,000
Support Areas	2,600	square feet	\$ 13,000	\$ 104,000
Path/Landscaping	3,000	square feet	\$ 5,000	\$ 45,000
Elements & Features		Lump	\$ 10,000	\$ 50,000
Project Management			\$ 15,000	\$ 37,000
Start-up Operations			\$ 10,000	\$ 41,000
Total			\$ 89,000	\$ 570,000
Future Features				
Teaching Kitchen	160	square feet		\$ 32,000
Rest Rooms	160	square feet		\$ 24,000
Farmer's Market Space	5,000	square feet		\$ 75,000

Community Building Process and Next Steps: To get to this point, FYC and CMC conducted research and convened a community workshop. In order to realize the objective of constructing a pilot community garden in the selected location, the following activities (in the general order below) are necessary:

1. Secure commitment for the land from the Fresno Unified Schools District (FUSD) and city on the use of the property. Representatives of the city and FUSD have indicated interest in participating in the project. The next step is to obtain an easement or lease to construct and operate a community garden for a few years, or until such time that the city or FUSD have other needs for the site.
2. Conduct ASTM E1527-05 standard site assessment and, if necessary, remediation. It will be necessary to conduct soils analysis and remediation to ensure that the site is free of contaminants. Further, the city or FUSD may want protection from liability stemming from the consumption of produce on properties which they own. EPA is working with the city to do this work.
3. Obtain project management assistance to plan, construct and operate the garden. Neither CMC nor FYC have the internal staff capacity or expertise to carry out the planning, development and

HOW TO KEEP COSTS DOWN

There are several strategies to reduce the need for hard cash. These include:

- Volunteer services and labor – labor costs are the largest line item in the construction of a community garden. Sources of volunteer labor include the California Conservation Corps, community work days for residents and area employees, private companies, and charitable, student and service organizations.
- In-kind donations of materials and equipment rental – Local retail outlets are good sources of construction material. Construction companies and owners of heavy equipment may donate equipment time.
- Staging construction schedule where the primary functions are constructed first and others follow as resources are developed.

ASSESSING POTENTIAL COMMUNITY GARDEN SITES

Before any property is used into a community garden, it is necessary to conduct an environmental site assessment to determine the suitability of the soil and ground water, and to protect current owners and future users from liability and potential environmental hazards. The following resources are available to cities and community groups to make this determination:

- EPA TBA: A service provided through an EPA contract in which EPA directs a contractor to conduct environmental assessment activities.
- EPA Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund and Cleanup (ARC) grants. Competitive grants to states, municipalities or non-profits for assessment and cleanup.
- Kansas State University. Technical assistance for planning and assessing potential garden sites.

- construction of a project. This would need to be obtained through hiring new staff, allocating time from current staff, training, and/or obtaining outside assistance from non-profits such as Fresno Metro Ministry or private project managers.
4. Strengthen the ties with partners and participants identified through this project to help carry out the planning and implementation of the community garden. FYC and CMC identified and corresponded with many local partners who work on development and operating community gardens. The next step is to develop working relationships in order to facilitate the design and development of the pilot community garden.
 5. Conduct additional planning and outreach activities, such as:
 - Convene meetings and workshops
 - To identify and involve additional partners and expand the stakeholder base for coordinating the planning, construction and operations of the community garden, and to foster community ownership of the garden. Additional stakeholders include churches, immigrants, state, county and Federal partners, and community groups. Once the design and operations of the garden are determined, it will be necessary to identify volunteers or to obtain the services of persons to prepare permit and building documents, and to construct and operate the garden.
 - To finalize the size of the garden and the type of garden operations. Stakeholders were interested in participating in a variety of ways – either as collaborative growers, plot lessors or volunteers. The operations of the garden will vary based on the mode of operations, and will influence the building program.
 - After the mode of operation is determined, marketing efforts are necessary to identify and obtain commitments from community gardeners.
 - To identify volunteer and lessee commitments.
 - Refine planning, design, permit, construction and operations budget. The \$89,000 to \$570,000 preliminary budget will be refined based on a final design, and construction documents. In-kind material donations and volunteer labor will be identified, estimates will be developed, and bids procured for remaining items.

THE PLANNING AND ZONING PROCESS

Before a community garden is built, zoning and building permits must be obtained. Depending on the size and location of the community garden, the project may be exempt from obtaining permits, or may require several permits which could take months to process and obtain. Currently, the city treats a stand-alone community garden similar to an agro-industrial operation. This inhibits the construction of community gardens.

The City of Fresno is currently rewriting the Fresno General Plan in order to streamline the permit process and promote the development of community gardens.

6. Obtain funding and in-kind contributions for planning, construction and initial operations. CMC has obtained verbal commitments for financial assistance and some grants for the project. With more concrete plans, CMC can request funding from foundations, benefactors, and local, state and Federal funders.
7. Obtain planning and building permits for the garden. Once funding is secured, land use and construction permits may be obtained from the city and other regulatory agencies.
8. Obtain agreements to:
 - Complete construction documents and build the garden
 - Operate, manage and plan for the pilot garden
 - Develop a plan to distribute produce from the garden
 - Coordinate school garden activities for the pilot garden
 - Coordinate ancillary project elements, such as art, beautification and education
 - Coordinate volunteer participation and in-kind donation programs
9. Evaluate the performance of the pilot community garden and determine the feasibility of future community garden projects, food distribution and education programs.

PART 2: CREATING A NETWORK OF COMMUNITY GARDENS AND FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The goal of the technical assistance to FYC and CMC was to identify a site for a pilot community garden. Over the course of the project, FYC and CMC determined that building one community garden is an initial step. To ensure the continued operation of the first garden and the vision of FYC and CMC for redevelopment and food security in West Fresno, an expanded network of community gardens, food distribution, and community education, the following activities are necessary:

1. Obtain program management assistance, primarily through technical assistance, partnerships, funding and capacity building. FYC and CMC identified and should tap many local partners (see Appendix G) that can provide project development and management assistance, capacity building and technical assistance in development community gardens and creating food distribution strategies. Some of these partners may also be trained for program activities which are not currently available in West Fresno.
2. Strengthen the ties with partners and participants identified through this project to help carry out the planning and implementation of the development; design, site identification, analysis and acquisition; construction of community gardens; type of operations at each garden; food distribution; and education program.
3. Conduct additional planning and outreach activities in order to:
 - Reach stakeholders from underrepresented communities such as migrant workers and immigrants, the Hmong and Latino communities, and current residents of Fresno Housing Authority and senior housing communities
 - Identify partners to coordinate the planning, construction and operations of the community gardens and to coordinate food distribution

FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN COMMUNITY GARDENS

Produce from a community garden can be distributed in a combination of different ways. The produce may be:

- Donated to senior centers, Food Banks, schools and other institutions'
- Sold to volunteers at a discount
- Sold at Farmer's Markets or food stands – in certain instances, persons with food vouchers can double their purchase
- Distributed individually to plot lessees



It may be necessary to obtain permits and approvals from regulatory agencies before food can be distributed in some of the methods above.

- Assess the willingness and obtain the commitment of FUSD and individual school locations to participate in a school garden program (Appendix H describes the components of a school garden program and provides resources for setting up and operating a school garden program)
 - Obtain assistance from the City of Fresno to identify brownfields that are suitable for short- or long-term use as community gardens
4. Obtain funding and in-kind contributions for program management and operations.
 5. Work with the city to modify policy and permit requirements for community gardens.
 6. Obtain agreements for the planning, design and construction of a community garden network to:
 - Plan and build
 - Operate and manage
 - Distribute food
 - Obtain funding and in-kind contributions
 - Coordinate school garden activities with the community garden network
 - Coordinate ancillary programs, such as art, beautification and education, and volunteer participation programs
 7. All coordinating, operating, construction and maintenance activities in the effort to create a community garden network will require a full-time equivalent person during the period of expanding the network. It will also be necessary to obtain assistance, paid or volunteer, in various fields of expertise, such as legal, engineering design, brownfields and other disciplines.

APPENDIX A: DETAILED PROJECT PROCESS

There are many steps involved in identifying a site and constructing a community garden (described in more detail below).

1. Set a project schedule and milestones. Key milestones are:
 - Identify candidate sites
 - Conduct analysis and visit alternative sites
 - Obtain site access to assess the sites
 - Conduct a workshop to provide information to and obtain feedback from the community
 - Based on the results of the workshop, recommend next steps
2. Identify potential brownfields for the first community garden in West Fresno.
 - Determine location criteria. It was important that the site was within a five-minute walk from Edison High School, and preferably immediately adjacent to the school.
 - Interview key community stakeholders for candidate sites, including community leaders and neighbors, as to sites that could be included for consideration.
3. Identify potential partners in the community that can provide assistance:
 - Stakeholders, such as community groups, churches, representatives of underserved and disadvantaged communities
 - Design and engineering for various community garden elements, in the form of in-kind services, volunteer work, donation or fee for service
 - Funding, resources and technical assistance, such a Federal, state, non-profit and private businesses, and foundations.
 - Regulatory agencies, such as the planning and building departments, environmental regulators, and utilities
4. Conduct environmental history and amenity review on the candidate sites:
 - Create candidate site form to guide the collection of data on each candidate site (found in Appendix B)
 - Interview Planning Department and other city staff for information on each site
 - Research history and site characteristics on city records and online databases
 - Interview current and past occupants, operator and owners (where available)

- Visit each site, take photos and evaluate for information in the candidate site form
 - Evaluate each site for suitability as a community garden
 - Evaluate each site for brownfields characteristics
5. The workshop is a key event where information is exchanged among the project team and the community. The event format depends on a number of factors. The planning information for the West Fresno community garden charrette is found in Appendix C. The following should be taken into consideration.
- Information that will be shared by the project team.
 - Presentation materials and methods, production, interactive or passive, visual or verbal, or other method
 - Profile of the expected audience
 - Budget, presenters and/or guest speakers
 - Information that will be collected from the community.
 - Method of collecting information and obtaining feedback
 - Level of participation desired from the community
 - Informing participants of follow up activities
 - Logistics such as location, date and time, marketing, cost.
6. Analyze the data collected during the workshop.
7. Determine the next steps to implementation, including funding, follow up planning, design, construction and operations.

APPENDIX B: CANDIDATE SITE FORM

Candidate Site Name: _____

Address/Location of Candidate Site: _____

Date: _____

<p><i>Use this form to conduct research on each of the candidate sites. Fill out a new form for each site evaluated. Use the local resources in the 'Sources' columns to assist in finding the necessary information. Record results and answers to the questions in the middle column. Include follow up questions or issues at the end.</i></p>		Source							
		City - Police - Fire	City - Planning	City - Building	City - Utility	RDA	Library - Polk Directory/Sanborn Maps	Interviews	Ask Stakeholders
<p>Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct research and answer the following questions Include as much detail as is available 									
Is there immediate access to water?					X				
What was past use of site?				X					
Who owns the site?						X			
Is the area zoned for urban garden?			X						
Would the zoning allow for urban garden business?			X						
Are Sanborn Maps available for review?						X			
How large is the site? Whole or partial site?			X			X			
Are there potential impacts to adjacent sites?		X	X	X		X		X	X
What is the distance to other facilities (kitchen, etc.)?								X	X

Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be sure to bring a camera and take lots of pictures ▪ Observe and describe the following 	
Accessibility: Can you walk to it? How far is site to school?	
<i>Visual Clues:</i> Building: peeling paint	
<i>Visual Clues:</i> Building/site contents: drums, machinery	
<i>Visual Clues:</i> Site: Slab, stains, cracks, pipe/remnants, equipment, drainage, ditches	
<i>Visual Clues:</i> Neighboring properties' use	
Are the safety concerns on the site?	
Are there potential physical hazards (e.g., busy road, dilapidated fence, other) on/near site?	
Is there existing fencing?	
Are there visual clues to utilities?	
<i>Sun:</i> Shade/partial shade/full sun (6-8 hours)	
<i>Sun:</i> Source of shade	
<i>Sun:</i> Orientation (southwest, south, southeast, northwest, north, northeast)	
<i>Soil:</i> Texture (sand/silt/clay/organic)	
<i>Soil:</i> Drainage (wet-moderate-dry)	
<i>Topography:</i> Flat or sloped	
<i>Water Access:</i> Onsite or neighboring site	

Water Access: Type and proximity to garden, future plots																				
Access: Shed or tool box site																				
Access: Composting site																				
Estimate of # of plots																				
Visibility (safety and publicity)																				
Access: Parking																				
Access: Restrooms																				
Access: Power																				
Access: Site history (parking lot/gas station/residential)																				
Access: Vehicle access/curb cut																				
Follow Up																				
Who would pay for water long term?																				X
Would owner grant access to public?																				X
Would owner keep ownership?																				X
If still unknown, past use of the site																				X
Is soil characterization necessary?																				
Soil: Depth of topsoil (where darker soil ends)																				X
Soil: Compact/loose																				X
Soil: ph level (soil test)																				X
Soil: Nutrient levels (soil test): N-P-K																				X
Soil: Lead or other toxins (soil test)																				X
Neighborhood: Interest/involvement level of neighbors																				X
																				X

APPENDIX C: WEST FRESNO COMMUNITY GARDEN CHARRETTE PLANNING AND AGENDA

Community workshops are excellent ways of sharing information with stakeholders. Care must be taken in planning workshops to assure that stakeholders remain engaged in the project. This is done by making clear the objective of the workshop and any feedback that is needed from the community.

For the March 20, 2012 workshop (charrette), the challenge was to provide a substantial amount of information to the community, obtain feedback, and allow time for refreshments and networking in less than three hours.

1. Information shared by the project team: The project team had a wide variety of information to share during the workshop, including:
 - Elements and features of a community garden
 - Types of operations in community gardens
 - Different ways a community member can participate in a community garden
 - Candidate locations for a community garden
 - Farmer's Markets in Fresno
 - School gardens

It was determined that the best way of communicating a substantial amount of information to the community was through a brief presentation and poster station format. Key speakers and poster presenters were recruited. The content of the posters was developed by key resource persons, and poster presenters were trained and briefed on the information to present. The posters presented are found in Appendix D.

2. Information that will be collected from the community: Based on the information presented on the posters, the project team sought community feedback on the following:
 - Interest and type of participation in a community garden
 - Elements desired in the community garden
 - Interest in a school garden
 - General location of a community garden
 - Interest in a Farmer's Market in West Fresno

It was determined that the best way of obtaining feedback from the community was through "dot voting" on survey posters – using stickers to indicate participants' votes on a poster. The survey posters and responses are found in Appendix D.

3. Meeting logistics: Considerations for the location and timing of the workshop included:
 - Low cost venue with the capacity for the number of people expected to attend the workshop
 - Ability to provide refreshments
 - Convenience and accessibility to most stakeholders identified
 - Maximum exposure of the workshop to the community
 - Maximum participation from students and residents

It was determined that the Edison High School auditorium/cafeteria was the facility that met location requirements. The project team identified co-conveners and co-sponsors to generate interest in the meeting. Invitations were delivered by email and in-person in the immediate area. It was also advertised on the radio.

4. Agenda: Based on the requirements above, the following agenda was developed:
 - Registration, introductions and project background provided by representatives from the area Councilmember and project team leaders – *30 minutes*
 - Poster station presentations – *60 minutes*
 - Voting and refreshments – *40 minutes*
 - Reporting back on results and next steps – *20 minutes*
5. Lessons Learned: Overall, the charrette was a success. Lesson learned include:
 - Advertise in as many media outlets and methods as possible
 - Encourage community leaders and groups (i.e., churches, housing development managers, schools) to distribute the information
 - Interactive programs require many volunteers to help manage the program as well as other logistical issues such as registration, refreshment distribution, set up and cleanup
 - A well developed and transparent meeting agenda helps manage participant expectations and facilitates their feedback

APPENDIX D: WORKSHOP POSTERS

ABOUT THE FRESNO YOUTH COUNCIL



Purpose: To ensure that youth are not left out of important decisions that help transform our communities into thriving, healthy places, preserve the environment and provide economic opportunities for all people.

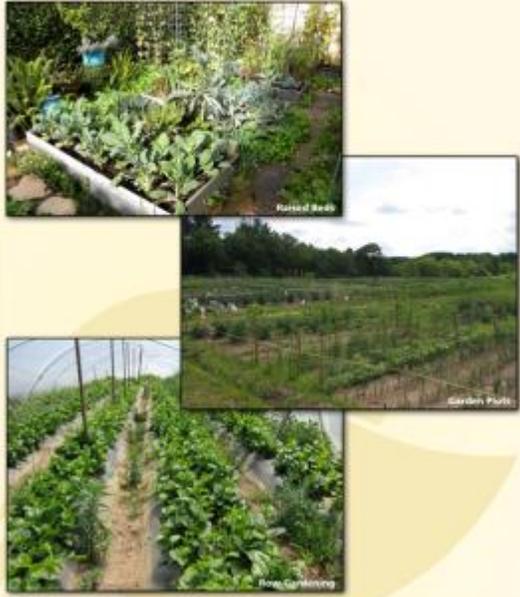
Members: Each Council is composed of 10 youth aged 14-23 affiliated with schools and community organizations committed to change.

Activities: Learn about California government, Action Lab, youth leadership conferences, summer internships, and more!

How you can you join: Contact the Center for Multicultural Cooperation (CMC) at 555.443.8015 or www.cmcweb.org

GROWING SPACES

There are a variety of ways to set up the growing spaces.



Raised Beds

Garden Plots

Row Gardening

TOOLS & IRRIGATION

Community tools in case gardeners forget theirs and water for plants.



Tools

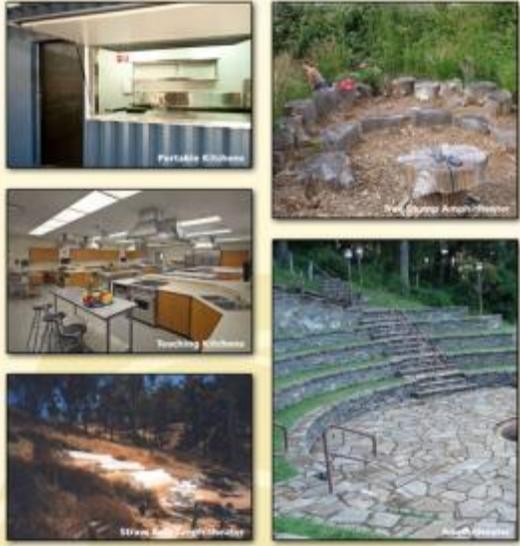
Soil

Drip Irrigation

Garden Hose

TEACHING & GATHERING AREAS

Places to teach about community gardening, nutrition and cooking.



Portable Kitchen

Portable Action Station

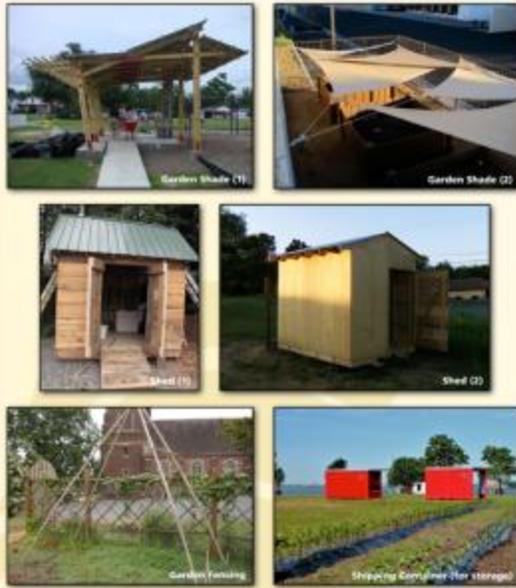
Portable Kitchen

Stone Fire Pit

Stone Fire Pit

SHADE, FENCING & STORAGE

Shade for rest, socializing, and garden meetings. Security and lockable structure for storing tools and other garden needs.

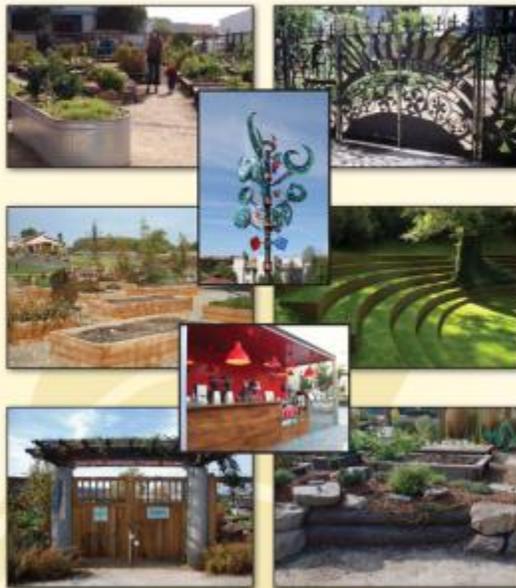


FARM STAND

A space where produce grown on site can be sold to the neighborhood.



GARDEN ELEMENTS WE LIKE



OTHER GARDEN ELEMENTS

These things will need an ongoing budget.



FRESNO'S FARMER'S MARKETS

The Garden Market at Courthouse Park – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesdays through the fall



Starting a Farmers Market

- Budget
- Liability Insurance
- Location
- Vendor Recruitment
- Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program




Ten reasons to shop at Farmer's Markets

1. Freshness
2. Variety
3. Convenient Location
4. Socialize with others
5. Finer
6. Cheaper than supermarkets
7. Outdoor weather
8. Reducing carbon-footprint
9. You can talk to the farmer
10. Support small local farms

FRESNO'S FARMER'S MARKETS

Market on the Mall in Fulton Mall – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays, through the fall










Locally fresh produced foods including ethnic and specialty vegetables, herbs, and fruits

Fresh Topp Program – open to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) clients, Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) recipients and/or recipients of WIC or IFWP sector vouchers

Partners

- Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission
- City of Fresno
- Fresno Metro Ministry
- Central Health Valley Network
- Network for Health California
- Downtown Association of Fresno
- Fresno Convention & Visitor Bureau
- USDA Agriculture Marketing Service

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Collaborative Production Garden

RESEMBLES ROW FARMING

OPERATED BY A DEDICATED GROUP OF GARDENERS

- Division of labor and harvest
- All gardeners are responsible for all aspects of operations

FARM STAND

- Easy model to sell excess produce to community
- Sales fund a portion of the garden operations





COMMUNITY GARDENS

Individual Rented Plots

EACH GARDENER HAS AN INDIVIDUAL GROWING SPACE

- Gardeners are responsible for their plot and surrounding pathways
- Limits are set regarding inactivity in plot

GARDENS OPERATED BY COMMITTEE

- Gardeners must serve on a committee
- Committees cover a variety of garden operations

PLOTS FEES

- Fees are determined according to overall garden annual budget
- Usually paid on a monthly or annual basis
- Plot fees fund garden operations

PLOT DISTRIBUTION

- Total number and size of plots determined by parcel size
- Actual distribution determined by committee




APPENDIX E: CHARRETTE SURVEY POSTERS, RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

WILL YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMUNITY GARDEN?

(If yes, vote for up to three)

- NO**
Put dot here
No
- YES, as a plot renter**
Put dot here
Yes, as a plot renter
- YES, as a collaborative grower**
Put dot here
Yes, as a collaborative grower
- YES, as a volunteer**
Put dot here
YES, as a volunteer

WOULD YOU LIKE A FARMER'S MARKET IN WEST FRESNO?

- YES**
Put dot here
Yes
- NO**
Put dot here
No

IF YES, WHAT DAY & TIME?

(vote for up to three)

- One Weekday 10am-2pm**
Put dot here
One Weekday 10am-2pm
- One Weekday 3-7pm**
Put dot here
One Weekday 3-7pm
- Saturday or Sunday**
Put dot here
Saturday or Sunday

WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR SCHOOL TO HAVE AN EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD PROGRAM?

- YES**
Put dot here
Yes
- NO**
Put dot here
No

WHERE YOU LIVE, WHERE YOU GARDEN

Place a dot where you live and dot where you would like a garden. Choose one only.

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The alternatives offered to and choices made by the community are summarized below.

1. Type of garden participation: The choices for type of participation are:
 - Plot renter: a person leases a plot from the garden management and grows produce for themselves.
 - Volunteer: a person volunteers time. The produce is donated or sold by garden management, and volunteers can purchase produce at a discount.
 - Collaborative grower: the garden produces a few crops for sale and a person participates as a team member and receives a share of the net income

Community members would like to participate most as a volunteer (34 votes), although there was also support in participating both as a plot renter (18) and as a collaborative grower (18). Additional outreach is necessary to determine which mode suits the community.

2. Interest in a school garden program: An overwhelming majority (70 to 11) would like a school garden program associated with the high school. Additional outreach and coordination is needed with FUSD and individual elementary, middle school and high school to determine the interest and next steps in implementing a school garden program.
3. General location of a community garden: Four general locations (north of Edison High, west, and east and southeast) were offered. The community preferred the north (30) and southeast (30) locations the most. The selected site is on the southeast corner of the Edison High campus.
4. Interest in a Farmer's Market in West Fresno. An overwhelming majority (50 to 3) would like a Farmer's Market in West Fresno. The preference for day and time are:
 - One weekday, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM: 9 votes
 - One weekday, 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM: 48 votes
 - Saturday/Sunday 38 votes

APPENDIX F: BUDGET ITEM DEFINITIONS

Site Access: Involves the costs involved to assess the site and to operate a community garden on a site. This includes Rights-of Entry, easements, leases or purchase.

Soft Costs: Includes costs such as design, engineering, permits, inspections and other work conducted prior to construction.

Environmental Site Assessments: May involve soil and/or groundwater sampling, All Appropriate Inquiry Phase I, and if indicated, Phase II, remediation work plans, sampling and analysis plan, and other studies to determine the condition of the soil and groundwater and any measures to mitigate contaminated material that may be present on the site.

Site Preparation/Demolition: Clearing the site of non-toxic, existing improvements that are not needed for the project, including debris, vegetation and structures, in preparation for the installation of community garden improvements.

Planting Areas: Areas to plant vegetables, including raised beds, plots and rows. This is usually dependent on the type of operations of the community garden.

Gathering Areas: Places for gardeners to congregate, including plazas, playgrounds, and sitting areas.

Teaching Areas: Places for community members to receive instruction, such as amphitheaters and seating areas.

Support Areas: Facilities that support production, including tool and seed storage and composting, as well as parking and portable toilets.

Path/Landscaping: Circulation areas for pedestrians and bicyclists, and buffer areas to separate the community garden as determined by the Zoning Ordinance.

Project Management: Activities such as coordinating all technical and planning activities, fundraising, and planning to design and build the community garden.

Start-up Operations: Initial funding to operate the community garden before other funds or revenue can be generated for ongoing operations. These include the cost of seeds, utilities, legal fees, permits, maintenance and sanitation.

Teaching Kitchen: An instructional kitchen to demonstrate how to cook and prepare the produce.

Farmer's Market Space: A dedicated or shared location to set up a Farmer's Market. These could include a plaza or a parking lot.

APPENDIX G: PARTNERS AND LEVERAGING

The Fresno Youth Council and Center for Multicultural Cooperation identified several local and national partners that can assist in planning, constructing and operating a community garden and food distribution system.

1. The California Endowment (CalEndow) is a foundation promotes fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians. CalEndow has been providing financial support to CMC to pursue this project. (www.calendow.org)
2. California State University (CSU) Fresno
 - Central Valley Health Policy Institute (CVHPI) seeks equity in health and healthcare by developing the region's capacity for policy analysis and program development, implementation and evaluation through integrating and leveraging the resources of CSU Fresno and the institutions and communities of the San Joaquin Valley. (fresnostate.edu/chhs/cvhpi/)
 - Department of Food Science and Nutrition engages in mutually beneficial collaborations with industry, professional organizations and public agencies to improve community nutrition. (fsn.jcast.csufresno.edu/)
 - Department of Plant and Science provides education in modern, scientifically based, economically sound, and environmentally wise agriculture. (plantsci.jcast.csufresno.edu/)
3. Fresno Metro Ministry (FMM) provides structural, technical, and network support to for community gardens. FMM participated in planning and hosting the charrette, evaluated the proposed site and provides general technical assistance. FMM coordinates the Fresno Community Garden Coalition and has close relations with many organizations operating community gardens. (fresnetmin.org/)
4. Fresno Economic Opportunities Council (FEOC) bridges the gap to self-sufficiency by providing opportunities and resources, as partners in shared community efforts to improve the quality of life. FEOC participated in planning and hosting the charrette, and provided technical assistance on Farmer's Market operations. (myfresnoeoc.org/)
5. University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) has a variety of programs to support community gardens and nutrition, such as their Master Gardener program, 4H, Health Families and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. (cefresno.ucdavis.edu/)
6. Edison High School is adjacent to the site of the first community garden and the host of the community workshop.
7. The USDA Rural Development and Natural Resources Conservation Service support sustainable, nutritious, abundant food supply and thriving ecosystems that support a diversity of life. NRCS participated in the charrette, and will provide soils analysis for candidate garden sites. (nrcs.usda.gov)
8. The City of Fresno Planning and Building Department is updating the Fresno General Plan to facilitate the development of more community gardens. This necessitates formulating and adapting new policy, zoning and building regulations.
9. Kansas State University provides technical assistance for the development of community gardens. KSU can conduct soil assessments.

APPENDIX H: SCHOOL GARDEN PROGRAMS

At the March 20, 2012 charrette, the community expressed support for the incorporation of a school garden program. The elements of an effective program include:

1. An academic program. Classroom teaching is essential to relate what goes on in the garden, kitchen and dining table. Once students have experiential learning to draw from, they drastically increase retention in their academic learning. An academic program needs dedicated teachers and master gardeners covering a wide curriculum, such as biology, botany, and math. Some programs also provide training in organic gardening.
2. A kitchen/cooking program. Kitchen training exposes students in the preparation of nutritious and delicious dishes by hand using produce they have grown in the garden. Kitchen training is a tool for teaching history, geography, reading, art and writing.
3. A lunchroom program provides students who consume most of their daily calories at school, an opportunity to nourish students' minds as well as their bodies. When locally grown produce supplies a school lunch program, students come to know their community and their farmers understand where their food comes from, and practice making healthy choices for themselves.

Links to selected school programs:

1. **California School Garden Network:** Resource for lessons and curricula, teaching tips, best management practices and training materials. (csgn.org/)
2. **Edible Schoolyard Project:** Teaches essential life skills and supports academic learning through hands-on classes in a one-acre organic garden and kitchen classroom. Curriculum is fully integrated into the school day and teaches students how their choices about food affect their health, the environment and their communities. (edibleschoolyard.org/)
3. **California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom:** Develops scientifically sound classroom materials, programs and training opportunities for K-12 students to explore the sources of food and other agricultural products. (cfaitc.org/)
4. **School Garden Wizard:** Teacher resources to establish a school garden program. (schoolgardenwizard.org)
5. **University of California at Davis:** Selected resources for school garden programs (cemarin.ucdavis.edu/files/30657.pdf)
6. **Checklist for Starting a School Garden** (thesuppersprograms.org/Documents/Garden/SchoolGardenChecklist.pdf)
7. **HealthCorps[®]:** Building a movement to fight childhood obesity by getting to the underbelly of the crisis and discovering what Americans are really hungry for and why and then proposing a remedy. (healthcorps.org)

REFERENCES

Edible Schoolyard, Berkeley, *What is an Edible Education?* 2012.

Fresno Metro Ministry, *Community Gardens Tool Kit*.

SRA, International, *West Fresno Brownfields Action Plan*, 2011.

Trust for Public Land, *Budget and Design for Canal Community Garden, San Rafael, CA*, 2012.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Steps to Create a Community Garden or Expand Urban Agriculture*, (www.epa.gov/brownfields/urbanag/steps.htm).

U.S. EPA, *Brownfields and Urban Agriculture: Interim Guidelines for Safe Gardening Practices*, 2011 (www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/urbanag/pdf/bf_urban_ag.pdf).

Photo Credits: California School Garden Network, Center for Creative Land Recycling, Center for Multicultural Cooperation, City of Fresno, Fresno County Economic Opportunities Council, Fresno Metro Ministry, Google Maps, Treehugger.com, U.S. Department of Agriculture/ Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington (New Jersey) Community Garden Association.

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