

## I Want a Garden.....What Do I Do?!

### **1. Partners, Partners, Partners! Never take on the world alone!**

- a. Contact your neighborhood association, neighbors or friends to see if there are current projects or an expressed need for a garden in your area.
- b. Partner with someone (neighbor, neighborhood association, school etc.) who can help you plan, implement and maintain your garden.
  - i. When you work with someone else, it helps with the workload and it helps to network with area groups and agencies that can help you establish your dream garden!
- c. As a group, organize a team that will meet regularly to work on the proposed garden.
  - i. Define and assign roles and duties of each member.
  - ii. Create contacts (phone tree, email tree etc.)

### **2. Planning and Research.**

- a. Work individually or with your group to determine what type of garden you envision in your community.
  - i. What will you plant?
    1. Flowers, trees, vegetables or a combination of all three?
  - ii. What miscellaneous items will be used onsite?
    1. Compost
      - a. Will your garden purchase or create its own supply?
    2. Ground soil
      - a. Testing for contamination/metals
    3. Purchased soil
    4. Mulch
  - iii. What types of planting/beds will you use at the proposed garden?
    1. Ground planting
    2. Raised bed planting
    3. Raised bed/box planting
- b. As a garden planning group, chose a site for your dream garden.
  - i. Will the site need to be purchased?
    1. If so, who owns the land?
  - ii. Can the site be donated?
  - iii. Estimated upkeep?
- c. Who will fund the garden?
  - i. Gardener funded
    1. Pay for plots?
    2. Garden dues/fees?
  - ii. Grant funded (community garden grants such as Operation Brightside, Metro United Way or Metro Council representative).
  - iii. Sponsorship
    1. Area businesses
    2. Churches
    3. Civic Organizations

### **3. Where Should your Garden Grow?**

- a. Choose a site for the community garden.
- b. Survey the site for sun and shade.
  - i. Most leafy plants require 6-8 hours of sun
  - ii. Most root vegetables require at least 6 hours of sun.
  - iii. Contact your local agricultural extension if you have questions or concerns.
- c. Have your soil tested for lead, metals and contamination.
  - i. Contact your local agricultural extension for testing recommendations and kits.
- d. If the space is owned by an outside agent, research and establish ownership opportunities.
  - i. If you can lease the land, try to get an agreement that can take you through the first three planting seasons.
  - ii. Can the land be donated?
  - iii. Can the land be purchased?

#### **4. Preparation and Planting on the Site**

- a. Clean the site
  - i. If your garden group plans on applying for Brightside funding, be sure to have participated in at least one Operation Brightside community cleanup.
- b. Plot out your garden
  - i. Design the overall look and set up of the garden
  - ii. Decide on plot schemes
    - 1. One large plot
    - 2. Divided plots for each gardener
  - iii. Compile available resources
    - 1. Donations
    - 2. Trucks and cars for hauling materials
    - 3. Building materials
    - 4. Plants
  - iv. Organize volunteer days
    - 1. Cleaning site
    - 2. Construction
      - a. Beds
      - b. Seating
      - c. Storage areas

#### **5. Organization**

- a. Announcements
  - i. Bulletin board for announcements at the garden site
  - ii. Email or newsletter for dissemination of garden activities, miscellaneous news and monthly/weekly events.
- b. Meeting Times
  - i. Location, date and time
    - 1. At garden
    - 2. By phone
    - 3. By email

- c. Season opening and closing
  - i. Dates and times
  - ii. Responsibilities of gardeners
    - 1. Duties at open and close of season
- d. Status of Organization
  - i. Non profit corporation status
  - ii. Tax deductible charitable 501©3 status

**6. Time to Plant and Enjoy!**