

Community Garden Proposal

— Prepared by the Maple Grove
Community Garden Co-Op —

Why does Maple Grove need a community garden?

1. There is only one community garden within city limits right now, [LifeGarden](#) run by the Lord of Life Church, which has an extensive waiting list for plots.
2. Roughly 15.6% of Maple Grove residents are [renters](#) without access to private property.
3. In 2016, there were an estimated 3,115 housing units (including townhomes, condos, and apartments) without [access](#) to a private lawn.
4. Population [density](#) in the city has been on the rise, making Maple Grove the 9th largest city in MN as of 2022.
5. We are in the middle of a pandemic in which [food security](#) has become more of a concern.

Why should city property fulfill this need?

- Last year, when the Maple Grove Community Garden Co-op reached out to the board, it was proposed that the garden be put on private property. No suitable space was offered up by a private land owner.
- To ask for private land to be donated overlooks the fact that community gardens are primarily used by people without access to private land.
- There are more than 50 parks in the vicinity of Maple Grove, many of them with enough open space to easily accommodate a garden.
- As of right now, the following western suburbs all have community gardens on city property: Plymouth, New Hope, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Robbinsdale, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Edina, Minnetonka, and more!

Other examples of city-led community gardens

Plymouth:

<https://www.plymouthmn.gov/departments/parks-recreation-/parks-trails/community-gardens>

Minnetonka: <https://foursquare.com/v/minnetonka-community-garden/4e0774f5b3ad23ff53ffc20c>

Edina: <https://www.edinamn.gov/255/Community-Garden>

Brooklyn Park: <https://www.brooklynpark.org/parks/community-gardens/>

Golden Valley: <https://gvgardenclub.com/>,
<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/308/Native-Landscaping-Rain-Gardens>

Hopkins: <https://www.hopkinsmn.com/398/Family-Gardens>

St. Louis Park:

<https://www.stlouispark.org/government/departments-divisions/natural-resources/lawn-garden>

Benefits of community gardening (page 1)

Community ownership:

- Community gardens increase a sense of stewardship and responsibility toward the community.
- Community gardens bring people together from a variety of backgrounds (age, race, culture, social class).
- Community gardens build community leaders and fosters community identity.

Crime prevention:

- Community gardens provide opportunities to meet neighbors.
- Community gardens increase eyes on the street.
- Community gardens can lead to community-based efforts to deal with other social concerns.
- Community gardening is recognized by many police departments as an effective crime prevention strategy.

Benefits continued (page 2)

Food production:

- Community gardens allow families and individuals without land of their own the opportunity to produce food.
- Community gardens provide access to nutrition-rich foods that may otherwise be unavailable to low-income families and individuals.
- Urban agriculture is 3-5 times more productive per acre than traditional large-scale farming!

Health:

- Studies have shown that community gardeners and their children eat healthier diets than do non-gardening families.
- Eating locally produced food reduces asthma rates, because children are able to consume manageable amounts of local pollen and develop immunities.
- Increasing the consumption of fresh local produce is one of the best ways to address childhood obesity.

Benefits continued (page 3)

Green Space:

- Exposure to green space reduces stress and increases a sense of wellness and belonging.
- Community gardens add beauty to the community.
- Community gardens filter rainwater, helping to keep lakes, streams, and groundwater clean.
- Community gardens have been shown to [increase property values](#) in the immediate vicinity where they are located.

Cultural opportunities:

- Take advantage of the experience of elders to produce a significant amount of food for the household,
- Provide inter-generational exposure to cultural traditions.
- allow people from diverse backgrounds to work side-by side on common goals without speaking the same language.

Sourced from St. Paul Parks website (5/30/06):
<http://www.stpaul.gov/depts/parks/environment/gardens/index.html>

What would a new community garden cost?

Short answer: just the land!

Long answer: It could be modeled after LifeGarden (Lord of Life Church) which charges \$30 per yearly membership.

- Membership fees would initially go toward fencing and equipment rental.
 - Members would initially provide most of their own tools.
 - In the future, a site goal would be to have a communal tool shed.
 - Potential to qualify as a [501c3 organization](#) (similar to Golden Valley and SLP).
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Potential Sites

(in order of access to public parking)

- (1) Central Park of Maple Grove,
- (2) Weaver Lake Park,
- (3) Kerber Park,
- (4) Town Green Park
- (5) Fish Lake Woods Park
- (6) Maple Lakes Park,
- (7) Charest Park,
- (8) Suggestions welcome!