



growing the greenway: programming sustainability

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Mission

To advocate for and create community gardens along the Lafitte Greenway, which will improve health outcomes of local residents, strengthen neighborhood bonds, support environmental stewardship education, and foster economic growth in the Lafitte Corridor.

Vision

To improve community health and vitality:

- **Physically:** by increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables, providing educational classes for all ages on nutrition and sustainable growing practices, and increasing opportunities for physical activity.
- **Socially and Culturally:** by creating a space for families and neighbors to come together to exchange ideas and share traditions while acknowledging the history of gardening on the land, fostering multi-generational relationships, creating opportunities for local residents of all ages and ethnicities, displaying community assets, and reclaiming the native food culture.
- **Environmentally:** by planting native species, utilizing good storm water management practices, growing produce sustainably, recapturing food waste, creating a space for biodiversity to naturally flourish, and creating environmental stewards through education and practice.
- **Economically:** by creating new economic opportunities for Lafitte Corridor residents, supporting the development of a sustainable local food system, improving community resilience, and improving food security for Lafitte Corridor residents.

Background

On May 27-28, Friends of Lafitte Greenway and partners hosted the Local Foods Local Places Workshop. Over 80 residents and stakeholders gave their ideas to develop a Strategic Action Plan to increase access to healthy local foods in the Lafitte Corridor. We are pleased to present Building Our Local Food Economy: A Strategic Action Plan for the Lafitte Corridor, a community-based plan to advocate for and create community gardens along the Lafitte Greenway, available for download below.

The following information came from the LFLP sustainability section of the Local Foods Local Places (LFLP) Report (Kelly Bond Local Food Intern, Pgs. 172-256).



Spark Words

Make sure that each of these are included in your final product

Elements	Considerations	Models	Accessibility
Growth	Protection	Comfortability	History/Culture
Requirements	Resources	Goals	Assets

Models for Community Gardens

What kind of programming does the community need?

- **Teaching Garden:**
 - School-based-Generally located on school property this garden also functions as an educational gathering space. This garden exposes young people to nature and provides opportunities for them to practice gardening skills. Programming classes, and hands-on activities are a crucial part (University of Missouri Extension).
 - Demonstration-This is also a teaching garden, but designed for an adult audience. It is free and open to the public for classes and static displays. Demonstrations might include different types of gardening methods, plant varieties, composting techniques, nutrition education, and cooking demonstrations. It might be managed by the gardeners, local master gardeners, or a local nutritionist (University of Missouri Extension).
- **Communal ("collective"):** Entire garden is planted and maintained by the group, with no individual plots. This model is often difficult to sustain (Denver Urban Gardens, 2012).
- **Traditional ("allotment"):** Garden consists of individual and separate plots, along with shared space cared for by all gardeners (Denver Urban Gardens, 2012).
- **Entrepreneurial/Job Training:** These gardens exist to teach business or job skills to youth or adults. Gardens grow and sell the produce they raise, with proceeds from sales being used to pay participants for their work (University of Missouri Extension).
- **Food Pantry:** Food is grown solely for donation often by a food bank/pantry. A more traditional garden might dedicate a portion of land to growing food for donations, and partner with a food bank (University of Missouri Extension).
- **Therapy:** Lead by a horticultural therapist, this garden model provides therapy to hospital patients and others needing mental health services (University of Missouri Extension).
- **Specialty:** Designed for specific populations (i.e. disabled, those at crisis centers, low income, etc.) this garden model is very open-ended and can be tailored to any group (Denver Urban Gardens, 2012)



Programming Elements

Short term Planning:

- To keep the community engaged, the planning process should focus on the development of a select few realistic programs that can be implemented in the near future. The plan can list all ideal longer term programs, but should focus in on those that are most attainable.
- Short term priorities:
 - are relatively inexpensive,
 - easy to implement, and
 - do not require a lot of resources.
- In general it's good for a garden to develop slowly, allowing capacity building to occur and more people to get involved (Kato, 2015). See the "Health Integration" section below for specific health programming ideas for the Lafitte Greenway.

Ideas for Involvement Of Community/Community Outreach—

- Realistic goals,
- fun,
- use grown food to help celebrate successes,
- allow gardeners to build as much as possible to build ownership and save on build-out costs,
- asset mapping,
- open house garden day,
- movie nights,
- fundraisers,
- artwork opportunities,
- community trainings or workshop days,
- garden mailing list or Monthly Newsletter (Including Garden Updates, What's Growing in The Garden, How to Get Involved, Events, Etc.),
- Monthly Volunteer Days,
- Teaching Garden.

Asset Mapping—This approach should be used to identify what the community already has, its strengths, and what community members think they need. The following should be identified:

- available resources,
- services,
- skills,
- expertise of people and organizations in the area, and
- any available financial or technical support.
- Asset Mapping Process:
 - First: What does the garden need to be successful?
 - Do they have what they need to do these things?



- Where are the existing assets? Create a physical map of the community, (Denver Urban Gardens, 2012).

Health Programming

RATIONALE

Glasgow's Community Gardens note the mounting evidence on the positive link between gardening and a wide range of improved health outcomes:

...'community gardens have been associated with increased physical activity and improved mental health'. Community gardens, they contend, 'represent a behaviour setting that has purpose and coherence, promotes social inclusion and gives rise to positive social and psychological processes that ultimately leads to good health' (ibid). A range of charities and other organisations working with vulnerable groups in Glasgow recognise the value of community gardens as therapeutic environments. (Crossman, Shaw, Cumbers, & McMaster)

In addition to these benefits from gardening, hosting health classes, programs, and incorporating health into the design of community gardens can further improve health outcomes. A garden should be designed to encompass various health components including: diet and nutrition, physical activity, and mental health. This section will provide some ideas for integrating effective health components into the Lafitte Greenway Gardens, and provide potential partnerships with existing NOLA organizations.

Health & Programmatic Components

1. *Signage*

- Calories burned through different gardening activities.
- Labels for what plants are growing and their health benefits
- How to harvest plants and cook them

2. *Tours*

- Walking and biking tours through and past the gardens highlighting what's being grown, native species, habitat restoration, etc.
- Walking club for garden members along the entire Greenway



3. *Classes*

- Cooking demos using traditional New Orleans recipes with a healthy twist
- Nutrition education classes (could have an element of New Orleans food culture built in)
- Fitness classes (boot camps, Zumba, step, etc.)
- Yoga, meditation, and stress reduction classes
- Horticulture therapy classes
- Gardening classes (ranging from basics to more experienced level classes)
- Canning and preserving classes (for gardeners to make the most of their produce and eat healthy year round) (Miranda, Harper, & Pohl-Kosbau, 2009)

4. *Events*

- Cook-offs (i.e. gumbo cook-off, etc)
- Health-focused monthly potlucks with gardeners
- Garden clean-up days (Barone, 2015)

5. *Informational*

- Recipe sharing (through online site or at monthly event)
- Cookbook creation (gardeners contribute their favorite healthy recipe, could be sold as fundraiser)
- Monthly garden newsletter with a health column or section. Might include a healthy recipe using in season ingredients (Barone, 2015).

Other Considerations:

Welcoming new members

Proper introduction to a garden is important for a community garden's success.

- A good way to get new members acquainted with a garden, including rules and policies, is to put together a welcome packet.

- This packet might include:
 - A description of the garden (including the history, ongoing programs, and management layout)
 - Gardening tips
 - A gardener agreement (detailing roles and responsibilities of gardeners)
 - Contact information for garden management board
 - A liability release
 - A photo release (Mickley-Doyle, 2015) (Goodall, 2010)
- After presenting a new member with the welcome packet, complete a proper induction with the following:
 - A tour of the garden
 - An in-person conversation regarding garden rules
 - What facilities/services are available
 - An outline of how they can contribute to decision making and be involved through events (Goodall, 2010).
- Forming gardener mentorship program is a great way to pair up less experienced gardeners with more experienced ones.
- This encourages the formation of new relationships within the garden and allows new gardeners to feel more comfortable and willing to participate.
- They can go to their mentor with questions and issues that may arise in their plot.
- Keep in mind that the majority of interest for community garden plots may come from older women who have interest in gardening and more time to dedicate to it (Kato, 2015).
- Outreach specifically targeting other groups is necessary to recruit a diverse mix of people.

Gardener Mentor Program

Forming gardener mentorship program is a great way to pair up less experienced gardeners with more experienced ones. This encourages the formation of new relationships within the garden and allows new gardeners to feel more comfortable and willing to participate. They can go to their mentor with questions and issues that may arise in their plot. Keep in mind that the majority of interest for community garden plots may come from older women who



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Sustained motivation

One of the biggest issues a garden faces is sustained motivation and interest among its members. Over time people tend to lose interest, especially if they do not feel connected to the garden. Holding regular meetings, programs, and events can help. Again it cannot be stated enough that gardeners must be included in the decision making process and be able to voice their concerns. Create a sense of ownership and get the community invested from the start (Redwood City, 2012). Having the gardens located close to residents is important so they see it every day and want to know what's happening. Proximity is also important to limit travel time for gardeners, especially those with limited mobility (Kato, 2015).

Holding events, class, trainings, and other programs at the garden is key to ensuring sustainability. These offerings should be for people of all ages and experience levels. Classes can target certain groups of people. However, the garden should host a wide variety of programs. A good way to include children (and ultimately reach their families as well) is to hold nutrition education and gardening basics classes.

Example programs include: Composter Training Program, Master Community Gardener Training Program, Free Seeds and Transplants Program, Growing Organically, Helping Kids Get Healthy Educator Workshops, and Public Walking Tours (Denver Urban Gardens, 2012). These events benefit existing gardeners and create buy-in from the public through engagement.

Other events: Movie nights (health documentaries, "green" movies), open mic nights, potlucks, art and craft fairs, food markets, guest speakers, public walking tours, and promotion of the garden through public announcements (i.e. newspapers, TV, radio, local publications)(Barone, 2015)(Denver Urban Gardens, 2012).

See the "Partnering" section for a list of guest speakers to invite to the garden.

Youth in the garden

Getting neighborhood youth involved in and excited about a community garden ensures a next generation of growers.

- Work with local schools to create new, and expand upon existing, programs bringing children into the garden.



- Encourage youth to try new foods from the garden, developing their taste for healthy food. Involved parents can double the impact a garden can have on children.
- When children witness a parent enjoying and spending time doing a certain activity, they are more likely to give it a chance and remain enthused.
- Older youth can be involved through summer internships, allowing them to take part in gardening and provide a healthy activity to occupy their time off.
- Regardless of time of year or formality of a program, any involvement can help develop life and job skills that under-privileged youth often lack.
- These skills prepare them for the workforce and may even inspire some to become growers professionally (Redwood City, 2012).

Partnering

WHAT IS PARTNERING?

Partnering is working with and engaging organizations in communities surrounding and including the one in which you work. Offer partners opportunities to participate in educational classes and programs, and share human services. Once a partnership has been established, recruit volunteers from their organization for construction and maintenance of the gardens. Understand what resources they have that might benefit you, and vice versa (Redwood City, 2012).

It's a good idea to host a yearly meeting or gathering for all partners to come together at the gardens. This will also give attendees a chance to network with each other. Decide what the city's role will be in the process. How involved will they be as a partner? Will they be providing anything (resources, skills, services, etc.)? For all partnerships, lay out exactly what is expected from them, what the partnership means, and why it benefits them. It's also important to have good communication processes in place (Goodall, 2010).

TYPES OF PARTNERS

1. *Service-based* - i.e. Housing Authority
2. *Faith-based* - i.e. ministries, churches, missions
3. *Health-based* - i.e. local public health universities, local Health Department, food access organizations (food banks), food policy councils (FPAC), regional nutritionists, other health authorities



4. *Youth and Education-based* - i.e. libraries, schools, boys and girls clubs, NOLA Youth Corps, Louisiana Green Corps, AmeriCorps, Teach for America, local schools
5. *Environmental & Agriculture-based* - i.e. horticultural organizations, local farms, other community gardens, farmers markets, grocery stores, Ag Center, NOLA Composting Network, other environmental organizations (Sierra Club)
6. *Economy-based* - i.e. local businesses (hardware stores, gardening centers, nurseries), development and job training programs (Goodwill Industries)
7. *Government-based* - i.e. NOLA city government, LFLP federal partners, local Health Department, Parks and Parkways Department
8. *Other* - senior centers, neighborhood revitalization programs, crime prevention (NOPD), hospitals, rotary clubs (Redwood City, 2012)

PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

New Orleans is home to an incredible number of organizations implementing health programs on a daily basis. To efficiently use resources, funds, and time, it would be beneficial to partner with other organizations. Some possibilities are: Puentes, The ReFresh Project, Grow Dat Youth Farm, Liberty's Kitchen, and Cafe Reconcile. See the below for a more detailed list.

POTENTIAL GUEST SPEAKERS

1. *Local Farmers*

- Fletcher Family Farm
- Two Acre Farms
- City Greens Farm
 - <http://eatcitygreens.com/>
- Good Food Farm
 - Cory Ashby - cory.ashby@gmail.com
- Mr. Okra
- Southbound Gardens
 - <http://www.southboundgardens.com/>
 - Jordan Bantuelle or Ian Willson - southboundgardens@gmail.com
- Grow Dat Youth Farm



- <http://growdatyouthfarm.org/>
 - Leo Gorman (Farm Manager) - leogorman1@gmail.com
 - Leo has a B.A. in Anthropology and Latin American Studies and a Master's in History. His work experience involves educating on environmental impacts of free trade policy, co-authoring articles and book chapters on indigenous rights, popular education and immigration, running market gardens at a High School, and interning on organic vegetable farms. He currently leads the farm at Grow Dat Youth Farm, combining interests of education, social justice and sustainable agriculture (Grow Dat Youth Farm, 2015).
 - Hollygrove Market and Farm
 - <https://hollygrovemarket.com/>
2. *Community gardens & garden services*
- Sankofa CDC
 - <http://www.sankofanola.org/>
 - Jessica McNally (Lead Gardener) -Prior to her start at Sankofa, Jessica gained experience gardening around New Orleans, originally coming from a background in community engagement and organizing. At Sankofa she works to build neighborhood gardens through sustainable practices (Sankofa CDC, 2015).
 - Grace Williams (Gardens and Market Coordinator) - Having worked on topics of food, community, young people, and social justice in New Orleans, Grace now leads the Market at Sankofa. She also has experience in organic farming (Sankofa CDC, 2015).
 - LSU Agricultural Center
 - Center main webpage - https://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/administration/about_us/extension/
 - Master Gardener Program - http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/lawn_garden/master_gardener/
 - NOLA Green Roots
 - <http://nolagreenroots.com/>



- The Composting Network
 - <http://compostingnetwork.com/site/>

3. *School gardens*

- Edible Schoolyard
 - <http://www.esynola.org/>
 - Rahn Broady (Lead Garden Educator Ashe) - rahn@esynola.org
 - Nicole Gelb (Lead Garden Educator Dibert at Phillis Wheatley) - nicole@esynola.org
 - Amy Nau Zellweger (Lead Garden Educator Langston Hughes) - amy@esynola.org
 - Zach O'Donnell (Lead Garden Educator Green) - zach@esynola.org
- KIPP McDonogh 15 School
 - <http://kippmcdonogh15.org/>
- Sankofa CDC
 - See above gardener contacts (Gardens present at ARISE Academy)

4. *Non-profits*

- Grow Dat Youth Farm
 - <http://growdatyouthfarm.org/>
 - Johanna Gilligan (Executive Director) - johanna@growdatyouthfarm.org
 - Johanna has been working on food education for over a decade, starting at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden teaching students about plant science. In New Orleans she has worked with the New Orleans Food and Farm Network as their Educational Programs Manager, the non-profit Rethink focusing on school food reform, and has been an Urban Innovation Challenge Fellow at Tulane University, a finalist for Echoing Green, and a finalist for the Kellogg Foundation's Food and Society Fellowship. She currently works as the Executive Director of Grow Dat Youth Farm, which she founded with Tulane University in 2011 (Grow Dat Youth Farm, 2015).
- Broad Community Connections
 - <http://broadcommunityconnections.org/>
 - Jeffrey Schwarz (Executive Director)



- Jeffrey has been working on community economic development in New Orleans for eight years, focusing on finance, small business development, and the link between community health and the built environment. He has a B.A. in Economics and History, and a Master's in City Planning. As part of his studies, he researched fresh food access in New Orleans both before and after Katrina. Most recently he founded and continues to work at Broad Community Connections. Within the City he serves on several boards, including the Regional Planning Commission, Transport for NOLA, and Friends of Lafitte Greenway (Broad Community Connections, 2015).
- SPROUT NOLA
 - Emily Mickley-Doyle - ejeberha@gmail.com

Emily came to New Orleans in 2005, gaining a B.A. in Sociology. She has worked in community health and HIV care, completed an urban agriculture apprenticeship, and co-founded SPROUT NOLA. Emily is a member of the ReFresh NOLA Coalition and serves on both the Community Advisory Board for the Louisiana Clinical and Translational Science Center and the Orleans Parish Nutrition Advisory Board. She is also a Parkway Partners community gardener, a Louisiana Master Gardener, and a member of Friends of Lafitte Greenway, and New Orleans Food and Farm Network (NOFFN) (SPROUT NOLA, 2015).
 - Matt Glassman - sproutnola@yahoo.com
 - Matt is a New Orleans native who holds a Bachelor's Degree in Clinical Laboratory Science. He got involved in food justice, completing an Urban Farming internship at Hollygrove Market and Farm and the Gathering Tree Community Garden. Partnering with Emily, they began growing in 2012 to sell at markets and became active members of NOFFN. Matt co-founded SPROUT NOLA, mentoring gardeners in the community and assisting in building backyard gardens. He currently sits on the ReFresh NOLA Committee of the ReFresh Project (SPROUT NOLA, 2015).
- Sankofa CDC



- Rashida Ferdinand (Founder and Executive Director) - rashida@sankofanola.org
- Rashida is a Ninth Ward native, and holds both a BFA and MFA. She founded Sankofa CDC in 2008 with community stakeholders to share resources amongst Ninth Ward residents. These resources those related to urban revitalization, youth enrichment and education, health and wellness, and economic development. Rashida graduated from the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program, and currently serves on the Audubon Commission, Tulane Prevention Research Center Advisory Committee, LSU AG Center Orleans Parish Advisory Council, and LSU and SU Ag Center Advisory Leadership Council (Sankofa, 2015).
- Parkway Partners
 - <http://parkwaypartnersnola.org/>
 - Susannah Burley (Program Director) - sburley@parkwaypartnersnola.org
 - Susannah is the Parkway Partners' Program Director, with a background in landscape architecture. She heads the Urban Gardens, Schoolyard Gardens, and ReLeaf programs of the organization (Parkway Partners, 2015).
- Our School at Blair Grocery
 - <http://schoolatblairgrocery.blogspot.com/>
 - Nat Turner - natturnernola@gmail.com
- Backyard Gardeners Network
 - <http://backyardgardenersnetwork.org/>
- Eat Local Challenge
 - <http://www.nolalocavore.org/>
 - Lee Stafford - lee@eatlocalneworleans.com
- Recirculating Farms Coalition
 - <http://www.recirculatingfarms.org/>
- Crescent City Farmers Market
 - <http://www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org/>
 - Kate Parker - kate@marketumbrella.org



5. *Government & Universities*

- City Council Members
 - <http://nolacitycouncil.com/meet/meet.asp>
- Mayor
 - <http://www.nola.gov/mayor.aspx>
- Public Health Department
 - <http://www.nola.gov/health-department/>
- Fit NOLA
 - <http://www.nola.gov/health-department/fit-nola/>
- City Planning Commission
 - <http://www.nola.gov/city-planning/>
- Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans
 - <https://www.swbno.org/>
- Department of Agriculture
 - <http://www.ldaf.state.la.us/>
- Louisiana State University Public Health Department
 - <http://www.publichealth.lsuhs.edu/>
- Tulane University Public Health Department
 - <http://www.sph.tulane.edu/>
- Tulane Prevention Research Center
 - <http://prc.tulane.edu/>
- Urban Waters Federal Partnership
 - <http://www.urbanwaters.gov/>

6. *Community members & others*

- Gary Granata (Slow Food New Orleans) - gary@slowfoodnola.com

Gary is the current chair of the Slow Food New Orleans chapter, and holds a PhD in Exercise Science and Sports Nutrition and Masters in Foods and Nutrition. He has personal interest in cooking and gardening, which he combines with his work at Slow Food. His goal is to challenge New Orleanians' beliefs and attitudes on food, physical activity and personal health (Slow Food New Orleans, 2015).
- Cyril Saulny (Historian)- cyrilbsaulny@aol.com



- Alfred Jackson (Historian) - alvin1943@gmail.com
- Local Dietitians
- Local Chefs
- Local experts in physical activity

Resources

- Forsyth Community Gardening
 - Extensive resource list on: starting a community garden, legal and safety considerations, composting, container and raised bed gardening, diseases, food preparation, flowers and herbs, fruits and vegetables, fundraising, insects, plot gardens, soil, youth, and Spanish materials - <http://www.forsythcommunitygardening.com/PrintedMaterials.aspx>
- Community Gardens WA
 - Sample induction tools - www.communitygardenswa.org.au
- Partnership for Sustainable Communities
 - Farm business plans and useful worksheets - http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/urbanag/pdf/urban_farm_business_plan.pdf
- Cornell University Cooperative Extension and Department of Horticulture
 - Overview - <http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/grow-yourprogram/evaluation-toolkit/>
 - Evaluation guidelines - <http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/grow-yourprogram/evaluation-toolkit/evaluation-guidelines/>
 - Surveys (samples included) - <http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/grow-yourprogram/evaluation-toolkit/surveys/>
 - Interviews (samples included) - <http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/grow-yourprogram/evaluation-toolkit/interviews/>
 - Observations (samples included) - <http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/growyour-program/evaluation-toolkit/observation/>



- Other evaluation links - <http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/grow-yourprogram/evaluation-toolkit/evaluation-links/>
- Program evaluation overview - <http://files.campus.edublogs.org/blogs.cornell.edu/dist/3/72/files/2012/03/Evaluation-Overview-14cl0cv.pdf>
- National Ag Law Center
 - Legal information on farmers' co-op's - <http://nationalaglawcenter.org/research-by-topic/cooperatives/>
- Urban Ag Law
 - Information on legally selling produce - <http://www.urbanaglaw.org/foodag-and-health/>
- USDA
 - Regional Food Hub Resource Guide - <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5097957>
 - "How to Start a Cooperative" (PowerPoint presentation) - <http://www.rd.usda.gov/files/publications/How%20to%20Start%20a%20Co-op.pdf>
- California Center for Cooperative Development
 - Information on starting and maintaining agriculture cooperatives - http://cccd.coop/publications/general_resources/ag_resources

Successful Cases

- University of Michigan "Building a Community-Based Sustainable Food System"
 - Case studies and recommendations - <http://closup.umich.edu/publications/misc/Community-Based-SustainableFood-Systems.pdf>
- Rose Kennedy Greenway
 - <http://www.rosekennedygreenway.org/>
- NYC Highline



- Overview of design, partners, practices, etc. - <http://www.thehighline.org/about>
- Staff page for use as a model - <http://www.thehighline.org/about/staff-andboard-members>
- Sustainable practices - <http://www.thehighline.org/about/sustainablepractices>