

Draft Urban Ag Activity Plan: Comment Form

Response Text

Incorporate equity language before finalizing the plan, otherwise great stuff.

A community garden that doesn't utilize the individual rented plot system but is open to neighbors flowing into the garden and benefitting from it; the food grown in it, and the growing of it. Accessibility to community garden by bus.

No where in the plan do I see any mention of racial equity in the development or implementation. MPLS residents of color are experiencing the negative consequences of the industrial food system at a higher rate and have the most to gain from this push to build a local, sustainable food system. If racial equity is not explicitly worked into this plan I am concerned that the existing It is important to consider the health risks of 'IPM', especially to children, pregnant women, teens and vulnerable elders.

Organically grown and managed food production should be the standard. Racial and economic principles need to be basic to the I am excited to think of Minneapolis becoming a National or even Global leader/innovator in the realm of Urban Agriculture. I believe the more food we can raise sustainably, naturally and locally the safer we are as a community. As a long time resident I offer three areas I request the parks contribute to the urban food environment:[]

1. Make park land available to residents for community garden and/or urban farm space. Recognizing that there are issues to be worked out, I also assert that there are issues regarding any improvement.[]

2. Create organic recycling (composting) facilities in city parks. This replenishes and enriches the soil for the parks and neighbors. This would be similar to wood chip reuse programs. Composting can easily be managed with no stink and only an earthy fragrance.[]

3. Invite farmers markets to use park land and buildings for sale of local produce. What an opportunity to draw people who usually don't take notice or advantage of the parks.[]

I appreciate your effort on this important issue.[]

I see this plan as tremendously exciting, visionary and long-overdue. Minneapolis Parks could top its award-winning reputation by taking this plan to its ultimate conclusions and utilizing a good amount of our public space to feed the community. Gardens are beautiful and bountiful.[]

I would suggest contracting with Will Allen of Growing Power in Milwaukee to amplify the community engagement piece, particularly with youth and low-income people of color.[]

Dear Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board,[]

The expansion and availability of urban food gardening is crucial for the future. With the ever growing pressure and challenges of climate change, having a strengthened local food system is crucial for increasing resilience to the future food challenges. Increasing public exposure through increased numbers of community gardens, community programs, and local food access venues will help organically grow this important food movement. []

Being an organic farmer myself I know how wonderful local food tastes. When the bounty of veggies is at it's peak its an opportunity to teach people how to preserve and save their food for winter, when local, great tasting veggies are in short supply.[]

Rather than following other cities models of local farming, lets make some real changes and be an icon for the rest of the world. Reduce our food deserts. And educate the public on how to grow food. It's the most important thing we as humans can do.[]

Thank you,[]

Incorporate an equity lens on how this plan is implemented and evaluated. example: defining accessibility in both economic and geographic ways. Example: ensuring all neighborhood parks across the city benefit from this plan and resources are allocated Evaluation measures for each goal must include racial equity principles. Capital budget and operating budget allocation must respond to existing racial disparities and prioritize communities of color.

Thank you for inviting the public to participate in shaping the parkland. []

Given the momentum in the movement for localizing food cultivation, there is a great deal of scope for considering each park as an ecosystem that can be shaped with long term goals in mind. Each sight could be an incubator for research providing over time vital information about the complimentary aspects of nurturing an ecosystem designed to grow food and the community as well. In addition to providing space for urban food gardening, the park's plan could include planting a variety of native pollinator plants to serve bee populations throughout the growing season and adding rain gardens strategically to capture rainwater run off. Urban gardens located within the parks could be connected to local communities as part of a seasonal program for engaging children and youth in the science and research of food cultivation. This research could be documented over time providing opportunities for learning as well as vital information about the kinds of plants (vegetables, fruit varieties, etc) that will grow in various conditions, maintaining soil health, water resources and seed saving. In the non-growing season, parks can continue to provide a place for communities to be connected by the common denominator of food offering opportunities for learning about cooking, food

How about exploring shifting the use of golf courses that aren't breaking even toward urban agriculture?

How does a neighborhood influence implementation decisions? For instance, the Waite Park Rec+ program is one of the largest in Minneapolis; however, the Waite Park Community Center is not air conditioned for summer use. Can we request that the Waite I support the urban ag plan, particularly the ideas of adding edible landscapes on existing park property. If the park board can do this, and educate the public about what's being done and why, that will be a great service to the region.[]

[]

thank you for your work![]

[]

Andrew Adelman[]

Longfellow

My favorite idea I see here are the fruit trees and shrubs, etc - what a great fun idea! Some keys to implementing will be getting the word out about harvest times, and avoiding people who pick it for fun and then throw it away - and alternatively, not having anything picked at all![]

[]

I think wildlife should be allowed to flourish on these resources too, within reason, including caterpillars and all sorts of bees and bugs, etc. Education on native pollinators would be great, not just an emphasis on honeybees.[]

[]

The baseball diamonds are great when they are in use - but this is very seldom. How can we "use" that space for livestock or

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board's mission is to preserve, improve, and maintain natural spaces for all Minneapolis residents with an ever-changing world and policies in mind. Industrially produced and processed food is engrained in the diets of Americans as are higher obesity rates, doctor visits, asthma, and overall unhealthy youth. With the green revolution and urban agriculture slowly, but steadily, gaining momentum across the globe and in the United States, Minneapolis has the opportunity to forefront this wave of health advocacy and sustainable living with the implementation of the Urban Agriculture Activity Plan. Minneapolis has been known for its beautiful and well-kept parks since the beginning of the 20th century. These parks have adapted to change over the past 100 years and must continue to do so. Urban agriculture is not only a force of hope within the health revolution of youth who's school lunches are ever-more sugar packed, but also represents the paradigm of sustainable living and promotion of healthy and resilient ecosystems. Planted perennials and edible, foragable, crops promote long-lasting ecosystems (no matter what scale), healthy soil, beautiful landscapes, and healthy individuals. Study after study has proven that movement and outdoor activity is an inseparable part of an overall healthy mind and body. Edible landscapes and parks promoting urban agriculture and education would not only promote healthy ecosystems, but healthy community members. Citizens that are well fed, exercise regularly, and gather at community events are happier, cost less (crime rates lower, medical attention diminishes, and maintenance of park facilities on an input-output basis decrease), and give back to the community. The Urban Agriculture Activity Plan should be implemented immediately and if done correctly, could greatly improve Minneapolis community engagement, sustainability, tourism, and resilient ecosystems. □

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□

On need for outdoor space for children:□

<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/may/21/children-weaker-computers-replace-activity>□

<http://www.nwf.org/be-out-there/why-be-out-there/health-benefits.aspx>□

□

Urban Foraging:□

<http://www.theatlanticcities.com/neighborhoods/2013/06/hungry-heres-map-every-urban-plant-you-can-snack/6054/>□

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2013/04/23/178603623/want-to-forage-in-your-city-theres-a-map-for-that>□

□

Resilient, perennial landscapes:□

<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2013-05-02/mark-shepherd-on-restoration-agriculture>□

<https://www.ksu.edu/wgrc/Publications/2010/8964.pdf>□

I am so excited to see this effort. It makes sense to utilize our urban parks in this way. We need to make good healthy vegetables more available in urban areas. Gardening in this way has diverse benefits -- in terms of physical health, social cohesion. spiritual, While I support the MPRB's efforts to implement an urban ag plan, I do not believe the current draft goes far enough. A few general observations: □

The plan does not speak to the need for increased surplus food production in an urban setting, and a solid plan for MPRB's participation in that expansion. Community gardens are a wonderful and important component in a healthy and sustainable urban food shed, but they do not produce the surpluses needed for true urban resilience. This resilience piece is critical as we look into the future of food production and distribution.□

There is no explicit support for low income communities in the plan. □

There is too much emphasis on food vendors (i.e. food sales), not enough emphasis on transformative food systems where communities, particularly low income, can utilize park land to increase access to healthy food.□

Given the fact that 48% of park visitors are non-residents, there should be some clarity around goal three's stated objective of increased available food for park users. □

Many of us in the community would strongly suggest an explicit statement of support for a ban on pesticides and herbicides on park land.□

The prohibition of larger scale, individually operated food production plots for individual profit smacks of hypocrisy, given the park board's relationship with Sea Salt Eatery. Perhaps I do not fully understand MPRB's relationship with this business, but on the

Please invite the boards or presidents of ecological organizations to the process. I do not have anything against citizens, but there should be a much broader source of progressive information from specialists in all areas.[]

[]

The administrative and economic context overshadows the ecological and social benefits. The document is safe, but it would be nice to know what the limiting factors are up front. []

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I would think there is a division within the city government as to how this is handled. []

[]

Best use of space?[]

How many people use a tennis court each week?[]

What if that was a garden space?[]

[]

Can Ice rinks be used as gardens in the summer?[]

Add another Goal 4: allocate resources in accordance with racial justice principles. Equitable allocations that responds to the needs of each community, acknowledging that the needs of some neighborhoods will be greater than the needs of others due to historical structures of racial and economic targeting. Respond to local citizens, enable land use tailored to and appropriate with the culture of each neighborhood. For any capital investment, do an impact analysis toward ensuring that communities of color are getting those resources first in ways that rise to the needs of these neighborhoods... so communities of color who need

I love the idea of using our parks (public lands) as possible places to garden, grow food and grow our communities' sustainability and resilience. My Dream: the local park has mostly edible landscaping, (this does not 'cost more' to maintain because the right plants are in the right place. An apple tree does not necessarily cost more to prune than any young tree. Classes can be taught on site to teach pruning/care and the class can do the work.) Children young and old are playing in the park, on the equipment and in the sports areas. They could be inside on the computers, but it is a nice day and they are outside, when they are hungry they wander over to grab a few raspberries, or an apple or apricot, whatever is in season. Some of the neighbors are working on their community veggie gardens, one garden is a 'community' garden- anyone can work in it or eat from it. The turf areas are much less than in the 'old days' of the park, but there are still plenty of areas for a game of tag or for a picnic. In my dream the trees are fruit and nut trees, the hedges- and there many of them in the park, contain raspberry bushes, blueberries, hazels, currants, gooseberries etc. The flowers are attracting pollinators like crazy, the herbs smell great. The workers who tend the parks are very happy with their jobs, they get to work in beautiful, edible, sustainable places everyday, they meet people from the neighborhood who love their parks. The workers see that because the neighbors really rely on their park, that the neighbors also care for the park, they will often pull a weed, collect a bit of trash or even water a dry flower if needed. All of this only helps the park workers. []

Back to reality: The Huffington post just ran an article putting the happiness and health of Minneapolis/St Paul clearly on the
THANK YOU!!!

Great plan! Move ahead. Cant wait to volunteer in this program![]

Great plan! Move ahead. Cant wait to volunteer in this program![]

[]

Susan Lane[]

salane@visi.com

The idea of "Urban Agriculture" sounds marvelous. However, I'm not at all sure how it can be reasonably implemented in the parks. If it means private garden plots, I'm not sure how that fits with use of the parks by the public. So, there is some problem trying to figure out how to fit together uses for private purposes and for public purposes. []

[]

And, I understand that some park land was donated to the parks and is subject to very restrictive covenants on how the land can be used. There is also the matter of whether any gardens would be used to produce for private consumption or for sale. This could effect the tax-exempt status of the land.[]

I believe the ban on harvesting sap from healthy boulevard maple trees should be revisited. The ban may be needed for young trees, under a certain diameter, but foresters, syrup gatherers and most research shows no detrimental effects on healthy maples. Maybe the trees could be evaluated for size and health before tapping.[]

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Great draft.[]

[]

Missing the economics to the park. We could sell honey, fruit, nuts etc and use the money for the park system similar to how the restaurants are providing revenue. Farms can be set around the park system providing employment opportunities for youth or difficult to employ people offering training opportunities. We can sell CSA shares. We can have our own Minneapolis Park Brand of food! Let's do what we are doing on a larger scale.[]

[]

Recreation is the priority of the parks.

As an avid gardener I say that I don't see community gardens and local parks sharing space, there isn't enough space.

Could the Park system let urban gardeners use their small bits of real estate shown on the literature that has been handed out at the community meetings ?

There is lots of park land that is "green space", could the Park Board plant native species that produce edible fruits ?

Thank you,

Bottineau Neighborhood Association would like to see a youth garden started at Bottineau park as there is an Urban Farm next to the park and there may be some overlapping teachable moments for the youth and community.

I am a member of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park Legacy Council. I have two suggestions. These were brought up consistently in community discussions:

1. There are significant numbers of people in our community who would like to use a section of the park for growing vegetables.
2. Members of the community would like the Park to host a Farmer's Market on one or two days per week during the season.

Ginger,

For ease of categorizing comments, here they are in the form of a bullet list.

- > a rental policy for private farmer market vegetables
- > provide a demonstration of applying ecological principles and their monitoring

Thanks kindly for accepting these comments.

Sincerely,

Beth Markhart
Urban Agriculture Recommendations

Recommendation A

Update Park & rec Buildings and/or surround land, so that they can offer off-hours

- * Host a Tool Lending Library (in conjunction with a local organization or program)
- * Donations for foodshelves
- * Access to water for adjacent community gardeners
- * Access to water for washing equipment during the years
- * Host a hand-operated sifter for people to separate out worm casts.
- * Host a community bread oven

Recommendation B

Expand community services from providing woodchips (thanks!!) to providing woodchips at local community gardens. Community garden groups can request directly, or Parks can work through Gardening Matters (as the City of Minneapolis currently does for providing COMPOST to community gardens at present).

Recommendation C

PUBLIC MEETING

I would like to request that information on future meetings, and the planning/development process be accessible, timely, and available in multiple languages via diverse media, etc. Thank you.

In addition to making information accessible and available, that people of color, indigenous, immigrant, refugee, etc. communities have equal access to the development process, in addition to urban farming at park - equal to current urban farmers - and I think it is a great step forward that this survey is happening and that MPRB is looking comprehensively at how to increase support and participation in urban agriculture. I was a garden educator at the JD River's Children's Garden in Theodore Wirth Park this last summer and thought the programming and partnerships that we created with schools, community groups, and neighborhood residents was very successful. While the programming was successful, the garden itself had its limitations because of time constraints and limited staffing. We could have grown 2-3 times the amount of food that we did had we had more staff time. At our end of the year meeting, we talked about the possibility of partnering with another organization or urban farmer to use a portion of the land that we were not able to cultivate. I think that this is a fantastic idea, and a model that could be replicated throughout the city's park system. Opening up park land to be used for urban agriculture could create stronger partnerships with the neighborhood, provide opportunities for mini-markets and produce sharing, educational opportunities for youth and adults, could build a sense of pride and ownership in the parks, and could help reinforce a message of building a healthy, active lifestyle through gardening and eating healthy. Whether through traditional community gardening plots, children's gardens with educational opportunities, or partnering with neighborhood organizations or urban farmers to farm the land - I believe that there are Thanks for soliciting public feedback about this! I would love to see some park land devoted to urban agriculture, especially spare plots in odd places that aren't used as parks--for instance, the grassy corners at Longfellow Ave and 43rd St and 44th St. I've long wished to see fruit trees in our parks, both to support those of us with fruit trees on private land that need fellow pollinators and for public consumption. I also know cities that collect compostables and then make the compost available to gardeners; this would

PUBLIC MEETING

I would like to have the notes that were taken to be publicly available if that is not already planned. I enjoyed how well everyone

PUBLIC MEETING

Better notification. Online, social media might be a good way to involve more people. Advertise on neighborhood electronic

PUBLIC MEETING

Add public meeting process (charrette style) to phase II. Look at MDT (MN Design Team) model as an info gathering intensive

I believe that the city needs to take this opportunity to move beyond the great first steps of last year and adopt a more visionary policy around urban agriculture. MPRB must play an active role in developing and investing in a policy that recognizes our need for long term resilience and a reduction of dependence on outside providers and cheap petrol. I'd suggest a freeing up of city and park land for interested and capable growers to create municipal farms that benefit the communities they are in, particularly in communities historically without access to fresh produce. In my wildest dreams the city would ultimately work toward this as a vital piece of our long term viability as a city and treat urban farming on park land as a utility. That said, perhaps a more near term strategy would be appropriate and more politically palatable. For example, if growers using park land wish to rent land from MPRB and charge market rates for produce perhaps there is a higher fee for use of the land. But i feel strongly that there should also be a model that encourages sliding scale and needs based approaches as well. in the long term park land is a vital piece to our food security; using a market based approach for land allocation will not necessarily provide for that.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments.

Sincerely,

Jim Bovino

California Street Farm