

TOWN OF  
**QUEEN CREEK**  
ARIZONA

# Community Gardens



# Community Gardens

- Community gardens offer a wide range of benefits, and initially tend to generate a lot of excitement.
- To be successful for long term a garden needs an organizational committee, ongoing funding, garden rules, sponsorship and, above all else, a group of committed people.



# Starting a Community Garden

- Costs associated with starting a community garden will vary depending on the site. Start-up costs and activities include:
  - Availability of potable water; infrastructure needed to serve the site
  - Soil testing to determine suitability of soil
  - Availability of restroom and handwashing facilities
  - Garden design and layout
    - Water delivery
    - Drainage
    - Plot layout and location of common areas



# Start-up Costs Cont.

- Paved roadways and parking areas that comply with PM-10
- Onsite infrastructure and equipment (water lines, fencing, garden shed, benches, shade, common meeting area, tools, etc.)
- Any mitigation of impacts to neighbors
- Marketing the garden to generate interest
- Time spent electing and organizing a garden board and setting up rules



# Maintaining the Garden

- A strong and dedicated presence will be needed consistently to keep the garden running smoothly for the long term.
- Ideally the garden would be managed by a committee made up of interested and committed citizens that would manage and organize the garden.



# Ongoing Costs for Maintaining the Garden

- Water used by the garden
- Liability insurance
- Maintenance of common areas, the garden shed and tools, and empty or abandoned plots
- Managing the garden – resolving day to day issues, communicating with members, keeping members active
- Maintenance of areas adjacent to the garden that may experience increased weed growth or added wear and tear
- Maintenance of parking areas and driveways



# Community Gardens in Maricopa County

- Majority of community gardens in Maricopa County are sponsored and managed by non-profit groups.
- Examples of municipal involvement:
  - Avondale leases land to a group of residents who are responsible for managing the garden and all associated ongoing costs.
  - Mesa is considering starting a garden and covering much of the ongoing costs and providing staff support.



# Possible Alternatives for a Community Garden in Queen Creek

## ■ Option 1

- Start a community garden, and consider the garden a community park. In this scenario the Town would cover all the costs for improving, maintaining, marketing, and managing the garden.
- High fiscal impact. Additional budget would need to be allocated for capital and staffing costs.





# Possible Alternatives

- Option 2
  - Lease Town property to a citizen or non-profit group who would be responsible for all on-site improvements and ongoing costs such as water and liability insurance.
  - Ongoing costs would likely be a hardship without strong non-profit support.
  - Some Town fiscal impact for maintenance of driveways, adjacent areas, and common areas or abandoned plots if they become an eyesore. Budget funds would need to be allocated.



# Possible Alternatives

- Option 3
  - Consider a community garden program as a supplemental request during the FY12/13 budget process.



# Fiscal Impacts

- Based on a brief review of existing Town properties, the start-up costs could range from \$5,500 - \$20,000 depending on the site that is chosen and the Town's level of involvement.
- Maintenance costs for the Town will depend on the level of ongoing Town involvement.



# Community Gardens

Questions?

