

Ag Urbanism Toolkit: Community arden Meeting – November 14, 2015

1 Purpose

A steering committee developed under the Agricultural Urbanism Toolkit program (a grant project funded through the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University), collaborated with gardening enthusiasts to host a morning workshop to explore community gardening and educational programs. The workshop had two goals, 1) to raise awareness about the current community gardening efforts and opportunities that exist in the Greater Des Moines area and 2) conduct a survey to better understand what additional resources are needed to support new and existing community gardeners.

Partners: A Garden in Every School, Agricultural Urbanism Toolkit (Community Design Lab, ISU Extension and Leopold Center), City of Des Moines, Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens, Des Moines Public Schools, Iowa Lutheran Services, Iowa State University Extension, Forest Avenue Outreach, Faith and Grace Garden, and Teachers Going Green.

2 Results

- Nearly **40** participants attended the workshop and **28** filled out the survey.
- Of those 28 surveyed, **16** were currently involved in an active community garden (school, neighborhood, city garden, etc.)
- When asked about challenges to starting and managing community gardens, the most common responses were **financial support, establishing management, volunteer support** and **educational resources**.
- Respondents said that having **access to food and gardening for a healthier lifestyle** were the most common motivation for getting involved in community gardening. Being able to **donate food** and **improve the food systems** were a close second.
- When asked what how likely respondents would be to take advantage of certain educational resources, **workshops** and a print/digital **how-to manual** were the most likely to be taken advantage of.
- Respondents indicated that their desired format and time commitment would be **hourly workshops**.
- In terms of finding the most value for the education resource and time commitment, both **hourly workshops** and a **printed manual** ranked the highest.