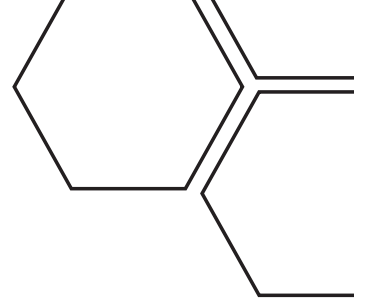


**RE-IMAGINING CLEVELAND >> FIELD MANUAL**  
**FOR VACANT LAND REUSE PROJECTS**



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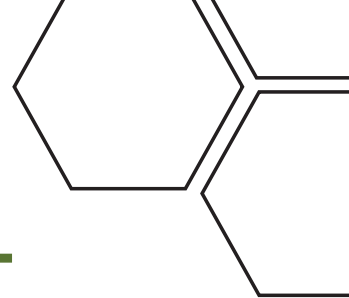
**Cleveland  
Neighborhood  
Progress**



For up-to-date resources and links to more detailed information, please visit:

<http://www.npi-cle.org/placemaking/reimagining-cleveland/resources/>

# RE-IMAGINING CLEVELAND FIELD MANUAL



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# INTRODUCTION

The *Re-imagining a More Sustainable Cleveland* program has been beautifying vacant land and transforming Cleveland neighborhoods since 2008. *Re-imagining Cleveland* has:

- Created appealing green spaces all over the city
- Helped to stabilize property values
- Improved the environment
- Provided locally grown food
- Strengthened relationships between neighbors

But the rewarding work of leading a vacant lot reuse project doesn't end when the last flower is planted or as the first growing season fades into winter. If we want our gardens, orchards, vineyards, and parks to become a permanent part of Cleveland neighborhoods, we must maintain these spaces and keep them in top condition for years to come.

## QUICK REFERENCE

This manual includes information about many aspects of urban gardening and green space maintenance.

- Chapter 1 focuses on **PLANNING & MAINTENANCE**, to help you address common site issues and deal with the inevitable challenges you will face.
- Chapter 2 is all about **PLANTS**. Choosing the right plants will make it easier to maintain your site over time.
- Chapter 3 lists helpful **RESOURCES** for planning and designing your site, finding plants, getting landscaping advice, recruiting volunteers, and finding funds for your project.

The manual also collects wisdom from the field—advice and feedback from *Re-Imagining* grantees reflecting on their vacant lot reuse projects. You'll find quotes, ideas, and encouragement to help with your own project.







# 1 MAKE A PLAN

Every green space is unique, but this manual provides general guidelines and resources to help you maintain your site.

## CREATE A MAINTENANCE PLAN

At the beginning of each growing season, take some time to think about what your project will need in the coming months.

“Have small but significant goals that are achievable. Stay focused on one or two main goals.”

- Jim Edwards

### YEAR ONE: CONSULT EXPERTS

When you're just starting out, talk to other gardeners, farmers, and environmental activists in your community to get an idea of the issues you're likely to face. Cleveland Neighborhood Progress can put you in touch with successful *Re-imagining* grantees who manage projects similar to yours. Call us, we can help!

### FOLLOWING YEARS: REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCES

- What were the biggest problems you faced last year? *See pages 5-6 for a discussion of common problems.*
- Did some plants or crops do better than others? *See pages 13-17 for help with plant selection.*
- Were weeds a problem? If so, what steps can you take now to keep weeds under control this year? *See pages 16-17 for advice on weed control.*

### IDENTIFY NEEDS

For almost any urban green space, you'll need to:

- Prepare the soil, including soil amendments and fertilizer.
- Plant new seedlings.
- Add mulch around plants to help keep the soil moist and reduce weed growth.

- Water regularly, especially when right after planting and during dry weather.
- Weed regularly to keep your site looking good and prevent weeds from crowding out the things you've planted.

Some initial questions to consider:

- Do you have hand tools and shovels? Do you need to buy tools or borrow them? *See pages 25-26 of the resource section.*
- Will your water come from a spigot and hose, a rain barrel, or a water-hydrant permit? *See pages 27-28 for information about tapping fire hydrants and installing rain barrels.*
- Which nurseries or seed-catalogs you will use? *Check out the resources section, beginning on page 29.*

### **DETERMINE HOW MUCH TIME YOU'LL NEED**

Depending on the size and complexity of your project, you will need roughly two to ten hours each week for maintenance during the growing season—with more time at the beginning of the season for planting, and at the end for clean up and preparing the site for winter.

- Will you plant all your new seedlings and lay down mulch over the course of a few days, or stagger your work throughout the season?
- Watering needs to occur regularly – will it be daily, weekly, or bi-weekly?
- Given the amount of weeds that appear in your garden, will you need to weed weekly or monthly?

### **FIND HELP**

Can you handle all of the responsibilities yourself, or will you have to delegate some tasks to others in the community? Identify people who'll be responsible for helping with each task. Delegate responsibilities, ensuring that each person is capable of handling what you've asked them to do. *For more advice on getting volunteer help, see page 32 of the resource section.*

Prepare a detailed calendar that lays out all of the necessary maintenance tasks, specifies when they will be performed, and identifies who will carry out each job. *The calendar template on page 37 will help you organize the work.*







## STICK WITH THE PLAN

Enter each growing season with a solid maintenance plan in hand. This initial planning will pay off over the course of the year; instead of continuously dealing with maintenance issues as they occur, you can stick to your plan and work in an efficient, predictable way.

## KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

Many new gardeners wish they could plant an appealing site that looks good, with minimal effort, throughout the year. But all projects require maintenance. When you're working with living, growing, plants, you have to anticipate changes and on-going maintenance needs. You also have to account for unpredictable weather, vandalism, and other surprises.

But you can design your site to reduce maintenance demands while still keeping an attractive appearance. Here are some issues to keep in mind:

"The ground on our site was very compacted and includes many bricks, stones, etc, so required all raised beds."

*-Sharon Glaspie, Garden Boyz Market Garden*

### SOIL COMPACTION

Many parts of Cleveland have heavy clay soils. Demolition equipment can compact the soil, which makes it hard for plants to survive.

Good soil is important to the health of your plants, shrubs, and trees. Start with soil testing and add organic matter—like compost, peat moss, and manure—based on test results. Adjust the pH as needed, using sulfur or lime, to help build a soil that can support the health of your plants. In the off-season, consider planting a cover crop such as clover or alfalfa to reduce compaction and add nutrients to the soil.

### VANDALISM

Get to know your neighbors. Enlist their help in keeping an eye on your site. But be prepared to deal with vandalism, littering, and plant theft. Unfortunately, most gardens experience occasional problems. The best action you can take is to replant immediately. Most vandals become bored after a while and stop. And don't leave sticks and stones on site that could be used as projectiles.

Good community outreach, especially to young people and your garden's immediate neighbors is important. Don't get discouraged. If your site has continuing



problems with vandalism, install a fence and plant holly or pyracantha along it. These plants have thorns which deter vandals. Or you can plant a small garden outside of your fence, with plants and produce for those who might otherwise be tempted to take things from your main garden.



### **IRRIGATION & WATERING**

You'll need access to water, especially if you're growing vegetables or other water-intensive plants. You can tap a fire hydrant with a permit from the City of Cleveland. *See page 28 for more information.*

Water your site regularly when first planting. Many trees and perennials are best planted in the fall, when they will require less water than if you plant in the heat of summer. Most fruit trees prefer spring planting. If you're growing vegetables, consider drip hose systems.

### **COMPOSTING**

Composting is an easy way to improve soil health. Instead of throwing away yard waste like leaves and grass clippings, composting turns these materials into usable soil. Composting takes time but is relatively easy. A simple formula is 2 parts "browns" (dry leaves, shredded newspaper) to 1 part "greens" (grass clippings, rotten food). Layer these materials and water well. Turn frequently with a shovel or pitch fork. Your pile will soon break down into nutrient-rich soil.

### **LANDSCAPE APPEARANCE**

For many people, a grassy lawn is the only acceptable urban landscape. Anything else looks wild, weedy, and inappropriate for a city neighborhood. But these perceptions are changing, in part due to the beautiful *Re-imagining* projects and other vacant land reuse efforts in place all across the city. Changing people's perceptions and preferences is a gradual process, but your neighbors may eventually learn to love a more natural look, especially if you keep the edge along the front sidewalk tidy.

## ENGAGE YOUR NEIGHBORS

Maintenance is hard when you're the only person responsible for your project. But you don't have to shoulder the entire burden yourself. Your neighbors may be willing to volunteer their time and take a stake in your project. Vacant lot projects can inspire a sense of pride that will motivate people to get involved.

"Do newsletters or info sheets for surrounding neighbors, inviting them to be a part of the project. Encourage their input!"

- Janet Cummings,  
*Helping Stone  
Legacy Garden*

### SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

Advertise your project on community bulletin boards, in newsletters, at block-party events, local churches, and schools. Invite your neighbors to help maintain the project. Identify tasks that volunteers can perform. Instead of asking for "help with my landscape project," make a more specific request. For example, "someone to water the central flower bed on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings." Regular assistance of this sort can ease your responsibilities and cover for your absence if unforeseen events temporarily prevent you from tending to your project. If there are interested volunteers living near your site, do your best to involve them in your project.

## COMMUNICATE WITH FUNDERS

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress and your local community development corporation can be valuable partners following your initial project implementation. Your local CDC can help by:

- Spreading the word about your project and recruiting neighbors to assist with maintenance .
- Connecting you with corporations and community organizations looking for volunteer opportunities.
- Alerting you to discounted maintenance supplies available through public programs.
- Sponsoring your grant applications if you seek additional funding.
- Advocating on your behalf if you face issues like trespassing or vandalism at your site.





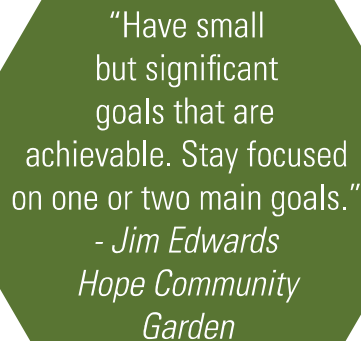


Cleveland Neighborhood Progress can assist in these same areas while also connecting you with fellow *Re-Imagining* grantees who can provide useful advice. The more your local CDC and Neighborhood Progress know about what your project needs, the more helpful they can be.

## START SMALL

The size and scope of your project determines how much time and money it will take to maintain it.

Factors like soil condition, rainfall, and the invasive species will affect every project. But larger and more complicated projects will be harder to maintain than small and simple ones. Keep maintenance needs in mind when setting goals and making decisions about your site.



“Have small but significant goals that are achievable. Stay focused on one or two main goals.”  
- Jim Edwards  
Hope Community Garden

## CONSIDER YOUR LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE

Be realistic in your ambitions so you can maintain your project for the long term. Consider the following questions:

- How much free time do you have for maintenance work?
- How much help can you expect from your neighbors?
- Will you be able to supplement an initial *Re-Imagining* grant with other funding to offset maintenance costs?
- How much of your own money are you willing to spend to keep your project in good condition?
- Given your experience with gardening or green-space management, how complex should your project be?

Once you answer these questions, you’ll be able to tailor your project accordingly. It’s great to dream big. But plan carefully and be realistic.

## USE AVAILABLE RESOURCES

*Chapter 3 of this guide lists a wide range of resources—free and discounted supplies, potential sources of volunteer labor, educational and training programs, and more. Take advantage of these resources to reduce the*




cost of managing your project. If you have questions about how to make use of any of these resources, contact Cleveland Neighborhood Progress or your local community development corporation.

### **MORE INFORMATION**

This guide doesn't cover every issue you may encounter in your first year. If you need more detailed or project-specific help, visit: [www.npi-cle.org/placemaking/reimagining-cleveland](http://www.npi-cle.org/placemaking/reimagining-cleveland)

## **TRANSFER SITE CONTROL (A LAST RESORT)**

You may reach a point where the responsibility for maintaining your site is more than you can handle. Or maybe you plan to move, or you experience some other life event that prevents you from continuing the work you've been doing on your site. Rather than abandoning the project, try to find someone who could take over. Is there someone else in your organization or community that might be willing to take on the project? Can anything you've built on-site (fencing, planters, raised beds, irrigation) be reused on-site or at another site? Take time to consider future possibilities and plan accordingly. Be sure to communicate with funders, CDCs, community groups, and your neighbors, even in the case of site transfer.



"Our site was one long block of weeds. It is now a cleared site where you can see young people busy learning. The garden is located on a main thoroughfare and displays the beauty of nature throughout the seasons."

*-Sharon Glaspie, Garden Boyz Market Garden*

## **FOR RE-IMAGINING GRANTEES**

If you find yourself unable or unwilling to maintain your project, please contact Cleveland Neighborhood Progress and let us know about your situation. Even if we can't make your maintenance responsibilities more manageable, we can ensure that the work you've put into your project does not go to waste. We are often contacted by urban farmers, community gardeners, schools, churches, and others who are interested in acquiring vacant land. We may be able to arrange for someone to assume responsibility for your site if you can no longer maintain it. Contact us if you'd like to explore the possibility of transferring control of your site.





- Growth habit: Shrub
- Flower color: Purple
- Foliage: Silvery green
- Soil requirements: Well-drained, slightly acidic



# 2 KNOW YOUR PLANTS

This section covers plant selection and maintenance, along with design and maintenance issues to consider for your project.

## LOW-MAINTENANCE LANDSCAPES

“In the shady areas we had success with hostas, astilbe, and ferns; in sunny areas, native flowers, tulips, daffodils, foxgloves, and irises.”

*-Michelle deBock,  
Watterson-Lake  
Learning Garden*

Low-maintenance plants include perennial grasses and flowers that need less mowing, pruning, water, and fertilizer than more commonly used plants. Native plants are often low maintenance, since these species are used to Cleveland’s climate. But there are plenty of non-native plants (including lawn grasses) that are also easy to plant and maintain. To decide what types of plants are best suited to your project, consider your personal preferences along with the purchase costs, planting conditions, and the maintenance requirements of each plant species you’re considering.

## NATIVE PLANTS

Native plants have originated here in Northeast Ohio and are well-suited to the local climate. Native plants can often thrive with very little watering and other maintenance support. After an initial investment of time to establish native plants at your site, these plants will often grow independently and sustainably. Also, the strong root systems of well-adapted native species can help prevent soil erosion and stormwater runoff, thus ensuring a healthy growing environment for the other types of vegetation at your site.





Native plants also provide food and habitat for native birds, insects, and wildlife. An example is common milkweed, which is an important food source for larvae of the monarch butterfly.

However, native plants can be hard to find. They sometimes need to be ordered online or by mail, and the quantity

and timing of their availability can be very limited. Also, people sometimes think they look like weeds. But native plants are growing in popularity, and that interest has made them easier to find and more commonly accepted.

You might also consider “nativars” for your site. Nativars are near-native plants that have gone through an artificial breeding to create new varieties based on looks, ease of growing, or both. “Nativar” is also used to describe native plants that are found in other areas. Although they offer certain advantages, keep in mind that there are also some concerns. For example, nativars might breed with true natives and change the genetics of native plants, out-compete natives, or confuse animals that rely on native plants for food or habitat.

*Consult the resources in Chapter 3 for more detailed information on native plants and a series of complete listings of Ohio’s native species.*

## **LOW-MAINTENANCE NON-NATIVE PLANTS**

Non-native plants first appeared in Northeastern Ohio during colonial times. They comprise the vast majority of plants that are familiar to us, including dandelions, English daisies, Queen Anne’s lace, hostas, and most vegetables. Most of the plants that are sold by plant growers and commonly seen in the city are non-natives.

Non-native plants can be affordable, easy to find, and low maintenance. The main drawback to using non-native plants is that they may not provide food or habitat for animals. This does not mean you won’t

see bees, birds, and butterflies if you use non-native plants, but they aren't as attractive or beneficial for native animals. Also, non-native plants tend to be stolen more frequently—particularly flowering shrubs that are commonly used in landscaping, such as azaleas, where their familiarity seems to make them more valuable.

When choosing plants, choose plant attributes that will reduce their maintenance requirements. Many websites now list detailed growing requirements, but ask a greenhouse grower or landscaper if you're uncertain about a plant's needs. Some things to consider:

**PERENNIALS** are more expensive and sometimes harder to establish, but may be preferable to annual plants, since they don't need to be seeded or planted each year.

**SUNLIGHT REQUIREMENTS** It's important to match a plant's requirements to conditions on your site to ensure plant survival.

**SOIL MOISTURE REQUIREMENTS** Opt for drought tolerant plants to save on summer watering. Plants that tolerate fluctuations in soil moisture survive well in this climate.

**SOIL TYPE REQUIREMENTS** If you don't know the soil type (sand, clay, loam) at your site, opt for plants that grow in a wide variety of soils.

**DEER/CRITTER RESISTANCE** Choose deer resistant plants that won't require added protection.

**SALT TOLERANCE** If plants are located near roadways, choose species that are salt tolerant.

**TOXICITY** Many plants have berries or leaves that are poisonous to humans or pets. Choose plants that are nontoxic (at minimum) or edible to reduce the risk of accidental poisoning.







**Control these invasive species:** (Top to bottom) Garlic Mustard, Wild Tarragon, Bindweed, Mugwort, Pokeweed, Thistle.

**PRUNING REQUIREMENTS** Consider maximum height and whether a plant will need to be cut back periodically. Non-woody plants and grasses are easier to install and remove, but some woody plants are low-maintenance and work well in urban settings.

**NON-INVASIVE** To reduce the need for weeding, stick to plants that do not spread very quickly. Avoid vines and plants that spread via stolons or rhizomes (i.e. bamboo, strawberries) unless you're willing to install barriers that can contain them.

## INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species can quickly take over an area. These plants are easy to grow and appear to be low maintenance, at least when first planted. However, in the end, they can out compete your other plants and become a nightmare to control, consuming a lot of time, money, and labor. The earlier you can spot a potential invasive plant on your site, the sooner you can act to control the problem.

A plant that is native or non-invasive in one area can be invasive in another. For that reason, garden centers and online sources that have a regional or national customer base may sell plants that are invasive in Northeast Ohio. There are too many invasive plants to include in a concise list, so protect yourself from invasive plants by cross-checking your plant lists against an Ohio invasive plants resource, and investigate any plant on your site that thrives without attention.

Be especially vigilant against weeds that are difficult to remove, such as Garlic Mustard, Wild Tarragon, Bindweed, Mugwort, Pokeweed, and Thistle.

## LOW-MAINTENANCE LAWNS

Low-maintenance lawns have deeper roots and grow more slowly than traditional turf grasses. This reduces the need for mowing, watering, and fertilizer. They are frequently branded as "low-mow," "no-mow," or "eco-friendly" lawns and range in appearance from being very lawn-like (e.g., various fescues [except for tall fescue], dwarf perennial ryegrass) to having little or no grass in them at all (e.g., clover, prairie flower mixes). Low-maintenance lawns save time and money, and also reduce the need for chemical fertilizers and weed killers.

It is possible to establish a low-maintenance lawn on urban lots that were formerly residential or commercial sites, but it requires special care and expertise, as compared to regular lawns. Often, low-maintenance lawns require seeding in the fall to give them a head start on next season's weeds. It's also necessary to kill any existing lawn before spreading the low-maintenance seed mix. Low-maintenance lawns require:

- Regular maintenance to control weeds during the first 1–2 growing seasons; limited maintenance thereafter
- Infrequent mowing that's timed to knock back weeds
- Spot treatment by hand-pulling or chemically treating weeds

To ensure a successful low-maintenance lawn, consult instructions from the seed company and follow them strictly. If possible, consult with a landscape contractor that has expertise in low-maintenance lawns. Be leery of contractors who do not have experience with low-maintenance lawns and who seem skeptical or dismissive of the manufacturer's instructions—failing to follow the instructions often leads to failure of the low-maintenance lawn mix.

## LIVING MULCH

Wood mulch is used around plantings to reduce weeds, retain moisture for plants, and hold soil in place. A downside to wood mulch is that it degrades over time and must be re-applied annually, which requires time, money, and physical labor. Instead of wood mulch, you can use low-growing plants that provide the same benefits—weed reduction, moisture retention, erosion control—but require less upkeep. This is sometimes called green mulch or living mulch.

Living mulch can be any low-growing plant. Beyond short plant height, follow the criteria for low-maintenance plants. In particular, look for plants that will not choke out the main plantings or invade other areas of the site. Small grasses or sedges that grow in clumps can look attractive under taller perennials. Short clovers are another option that have attractive flowers and provide nitrogen to plants. Edible plants, such as microgreens or herbs, can also be used as a living mulch and have the added benefit of being a food source.



Consult more detailed guides for low-maintenance plants to find plants that are low-growing (<6" height) and can function as living mulch in place of wood mulch.

## PLANT SELECTION

Here are some guidelines for choosing plants based on your project type.

"It was difficult to garden on land that was formerly a commercial site where buildings once stood due to all the debris in the soil."

*-Sharon Glaspie,  
Garden Boyz*

### COMMUNITY, MARKET, AND RAIN GARDENS

Herbaceous perennial flowers are a good, low-maintenance choice for border areas. Plant seeds or starts in the fall or spring. Plant starts, though more expensive, have a higher rate of survival. Make sure to water a new border at least four times per week if it does not rain. For the first year or two after a border is planted, you'll need to weed frequently to maintain new plantings.

Each fall, cut back the stalks of your plants to allow for new growth in the spring. Or you can leave some stalks in place for winter appeal, and cut down different patches of the plants each year.

### PARKS, NEIGHBORHOOD PATHWAYS, AND SIDE-YARDS

You can create a small forest ecosystem on your site by using plants that work well together. For example, include:

- One or more large trees for the canopy layer.
- Several smaller trees for the under story.
- Shrub around the bases of the trees for a shrub layer.
- Green plants (herbaceous species) for the forest floor.

By designing your site as an ecosystem, your plants and trees will complement each others' growing needs, leaving you with a healthier landscape and fewer maintenance requirements.

### ORCHARDS

For orchards, you can use native plants along border areas, but it's usually not practical to install natives beneath the fruit trees. You can, however, install a low-maintenance ground cover under fruit trees, such









as white clover, which doesn't have to be mowed as frequently as grass. It also encourages pollination and fixes nitrogen in the soil. If you are interested in creating an orchard ecosystem, consult orchard management guides for further ground-cover ideas.

## TREES

Pruning is the best and worst thing you can do to your tree. All trees require maintenance based on landscape objectives, species, size, and past care. Unless you're an expert, it's best to consult with a qualified arborist.

Before you begin, determine your objective. Are you pruning for clearance, health, or flower and fruit production? The objective will drive the method or type of pruning.

When making cuts, remain outside of the branch protection zone. This zone is a natural line of defense to prevent decay; it occurs between the branch bark ridge and collar.

The pruning process occurs in three ways: removal, reduction, and heading of plant tissue.

- A removal cut removes a branch back to its point of origin on a trunk, stem, or larger branch.
- Reduction cuts removes a stem or branch back to a lateral that is at least one-third the size of the reduced plant part.
- Heading cuts are made between branches; these cuts are less preferred and often referred to as topping.

### PRUNING GUIDELINES

- Remove no more than 25% of a tree's live crown in a single year. Prune cracked, crooked, crossed, dead, diseased, and dying branches as needed.
- Prune during the winter months before growth resumes and when pests may be less active.

- Use sharp clean pruning tools that saw cleanly, leaving no stubs or jagged edges.
- Sterilize tools with a 10 percent bleach solution or disinfectant spray.

For more detailed guidance, consult an orchard manual, an arborist, or the website of the US Department of Forestry.

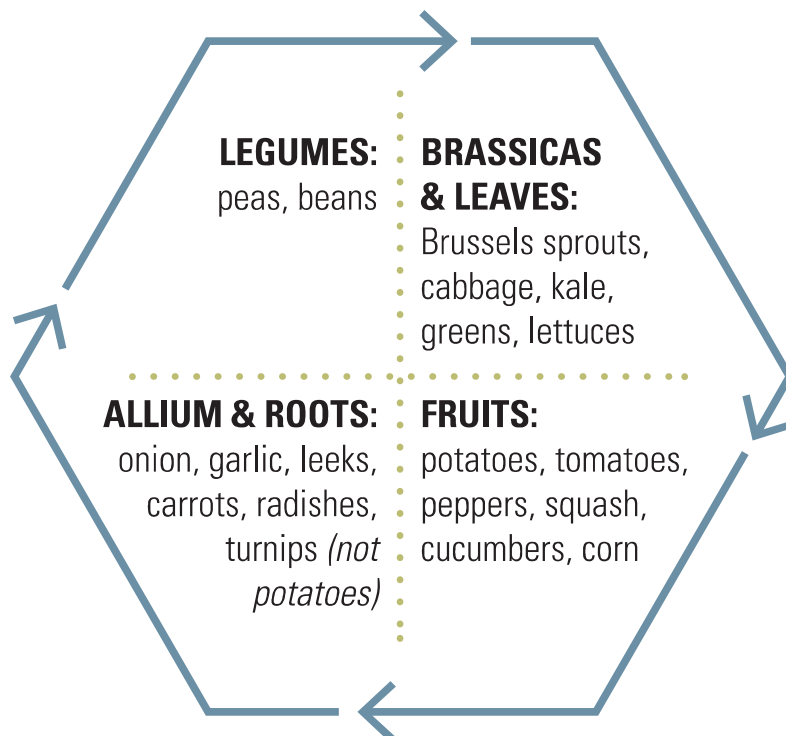
## CROP ROTATION

If you grow produce every year without adding soil amendments or fertilizer, you'll eventually notice a decline in productivity. Soil nutrients can get depleted by repeatedly planting the same fruits and vegetables in the same place each year. To combat this, growers can supplement their soil with compost and winter cover crops to add nutrients, and practice crop rotation.

The most effective rotation for produce is the following cycle:

- Fruits *followed by*
- Alliums & root vegetables, *followed by*
- Legumes *followed by*
- Brassicas & leafy veggies *then back to*
- Fruits

This creates a cycle where each family supplements needed nutrients for the next. Crop rotation also helps prevent plant diseases.









# 3 GET HELP

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Before you plant (or re-plant) anything, give some thought to the overall design and appearance of your site. Good design ensure that your project is an asset to the neighborhood and it will also make it easier for you to care for and maintain the landscape over time.

There are many excellent gardening books you can refer to for design inspiration. The Cleveland Public Library and the library at the Cleveland Botanical Garden offer a wealth of resources.

Also, you can ask a landscape architect, landscape designer, or experienced gardener for advice in developing an overall plan for your site. Contact Cleveland Neighborhood Progress or your local community development corporation for advice in locating a design professional. Other resources include:

### **AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS OHIO CHAPTER**

[www.asla.org/ISGWeb.aspx?loadURL=firfin](http://www.asla.org/ISGWeb.aspx?loadURL=firfin)

The ASLA has a "Firm Finder" feature on its website. Simply enter the name of your city and the site will provide links to landscape architects working in your area.

### **CLEVELAND URBAN DESIGN COLLABORATIVE (CUDC) KENT STATE UNIVERSITY**

[www.cudc.kent.edu](http://www.cudc.kent.edu) | 216.357.3434

The CUDC offers a graduate program in landscape architecture, based in Downtown Cleveland. Graduate students are sometimes available to provide design assistance for vacant land reuse projects. Contact the CUDC for more information.

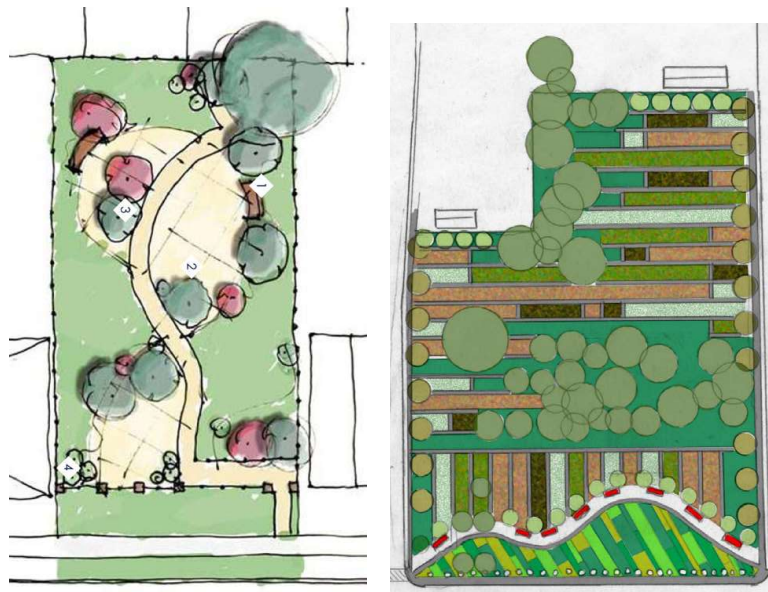


## START WITH A PLAN

A green space plan doesn't need to be complicated. Start with a piece of graph paper, with every square on the page representing one square foot of your garden. Try different arrangements of plants, pavement, fencing, and other site features on paper before you put a shovel in the ground.

Elements of the plan may include:

- Trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and groundcovers. Or if you're creating a food-producing garden, the range of crops you plan to grow, fruit trees, herbs and spices, etc.
- Fences and paving
- Raised beds and planters
- Functional features such as compost piles, tool sheds,
- Art elements, water features, lighting
- Seating and shade structures
- Greenhouse or hoop house for extending the growing season



**Examples of plans** for a small green space (left) and a community garden (right).



**Neighborhood green space:** Colorful annual flowers near the sidewalk, combined with stone edging and public art give this green space in Slavic Village its uniquely beautiful appearance. Evergreen trees and shrubs establish strong edges for the site and provide winter interest.



**Community garden:** In addition to growing food for neighborhood residents, this community garden has an attractive street edge consisting of raised beds with flowering plants for colorful curb appeal.



## GENERAL DESIGN TIPS

Food gardens, rain gardens, side yard expansions, play spaces, and gathering spaces all have different design requirements. But these general guidelines apply to a wide variety of green spaces:

- Think about how your site will look from the street. Curb appeal is important to the success of any neighborhood greening project and will help to enhance surrounding property values.
- Make sure the front edge of your site, next to the public sidewalk, is designed to look neat and attractive. Avoid plants that grow extremely tall or have a weedy appearance near the sidewalk edge.
- Consider views from neighboring houses. Screen the “working” parts of your garden (compost piles, storage areas, etc.) from public view with a decorative fence or low hedge.
- Taller plants around the edges of your site will create a sense of enclosure, but make sure you have some clear views into the site to reduce the risk of vandalism and illegal dumping.
- Choose durable materials for paving, fences, raised beds, trellises, and site features. For example, stone or brick edges for planting beds will look better and last longer than railroad ties.
- Gravel pathways look nice and allow rainwater to soak through into the ground, but gravel will require regular sweeping and raking, to keep it from spilling out onto the sidewalk and street. Brick or concrete paves cost more to install, but will require less maintenance over time.
- Look for salvaged materials, such as lumber and bricks from demolished houses, which are typically less expensive and more context-sensitive than new materials purchased at a building supply store.
- Solar-powered light fixtures are useful, especially if you anticipate that it will be used in the evening hours. Lighting also creates appeal in the dark winter months.

## COMMUNITY GARDENS & URBAN FARMS

- Although food-producing sites are working landscapes, they should still be designed to look attractive and well cared for.
- Raised beds are often needed to hold clean soil for growing food. Draw up a plan for your raised beds before you start construction, so they will look organized on the site and allow for clear paths between planting areas.
- Planting crops in stripes or bands across your site will allow for easy access while also creating an attractive, intentionally design appearance.
- Look for edible flowers and flowering spice plants to include in your garden, to provide color and beauty.
- Hoop houses, tool sheds, and other garden structures sometimes look out of place in an urban environment. It's often best to locate these structures toward the back of the site and to screen them with evergreen trees and shrubs.
- Compost piles may annoy your neighbors. A well-tended compost pile will not smell bad or attract wildlife, so be sure to maintain your pile and turn it frequently. A compost bin, screened with landscaping, is a good way to keep this important landscape element from becoming a nuisance.
- If you have space, consider adding a picnic table for a true farm-to-table experience.





## GARDENS AND GREEN SPACES

- Think about color and the effect you're trying to achieve. A mixture of many kinds of flowering plants with different colors and bloom times will create energy and excitement at your site and provide season-long interest. Limiting your color palette to a few flowering plants in a similar color range will create a more calm and relaxing experience.
- Select plants for color, fragrance, and texture—a site that looks, smells, and feels good is a delight for the senses.
- Create a defined point of entry into the site and frame a nice view with fences, hedges, or taller plantings.
- Consider establishing a focal point in your garden—this can be a bird bath, seating, a special plant (or cluster of plants) or some other element that attracts attention and gives your eye a place to rest.
- Design your site for all four seasons. Evergreen trees and shrubs provide year-round greenery. Ornamental grasses and vines can be attractive site features even after the growing season. Some trees and shrubs have colorful or decorative bark, which looks good even after the leaves have fallen.
- Design for comfort—shade trees, seating, a fire pit, or other features will make your green space an appealing place to be.

“The Peace Garden has taken an ugly lot and turned it into an attractive spot in the community, with benches, information kiosk, and labyrinth - it has become a spot that provides community residents a place to relax, meditate, and converse individually and/or collectively.”

*-Judy Montfort, Cleveland  
UMADAOP park*

## FUNDING SOURCES

The following organizations provide support for new projects and resources that can supplement your efforts and ease the burden of on-going maintenance. Before applying, consult with your local community development corporation. They may be able to help with the application process, write a letter in support of your project, or act as a fiscal agent if you receive funding.

### FOUNDATION CENTER

1422 Euclid Avenue, Suite 1600, Cleveland 216-861-1933

[www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)

Your project may qualify for local or national grants. The Foundation Center is open to the public. The Center offers a grants database, a library of grant opportunities, and regularly scheduled workshops and seminars on grant writing and other funding strategies.

### NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

5000 Euclid Ave Suite 310, Cleveland | 216-229-4688

<http://www.neighborhoodgrants.org>

The Cleveland Foundation's Neighborhood Connections program provides grants, ranging from \$500 to \$5,000, directly to resident-led organizations to support community efforts in Cleveland. Pocket parks, public pathways, and community gardens may be candidates for funding to cover ongoing maintenance costs, especially if many neighbors are engaged in the project. Grants are awarded annually. To apply for a grant, you must identify a nonprofit organization (such as Cleveland Neighborhood Progress or your local community development corporation) to act as a fiscal agent and handle the grant money. You must also supplement grant funds with matching contributions such as cash, volunteer labor, or donated goods and services. Community groups can apply for funding every year.

### CLEVELAND COLECTIVO

[www.clevelandcolectivo.org](http://www.clevelandcolectivo.org)

Cleveland Colectivo provides grants, ranging from \$500 to \$5,000, for community projects. Colectivo is a "giving-circle" in which private individuals donate money and vote for the projects they want to support. You can apply for funding to establish a site and/or for materials and





maintenance efforts. Cleveland Colectivo awards grants on an annual basis. Applicants must first attend a “Pitch for Change” session in February and give a short presentation about their project. Some presenters are then invited for interviews that take place during the spring. Funding recipients are chosen

from these interviewees.

### **GARDENING FOR GREENBACKS**

Cleveland Economic Development Department, 601 Lakeside Avenue, Room 210, Cleveland | 216.664.2406  
[www.rethinkcleveland.org/About-Us/Our-Programs.aspx](http://www.rethinkcleveland.org/About-Us/Our-Programs.aspx)

Cleveland’s Department of Economic Development runs the Gardening for Greenbacks program to fund commercial growers who sell their produce at farmers’ markets and other venues. The program funds only for-profit market garden projects. Qualified applicants are eligible to receive up to \$5,000. These funds can be used for tools, materials, and irrigation/watering systems, among other things. Gardening for Greenbacks accepts applications on a rolling basis. There is no submission deadline.

### **THE HERSHEY FOUNDATION**

10229 Prouty Road, Concord Township | 440-256-6003  
[www.fdnweb.org/hershey](http://www.fdnweb.org/hershey)

The Hershey Foundation funds projects and initiatives in Northeast Ohio that provide growth and development opportunities for children. You may be able to secure funding from the Hershey Foundation if your project:

- Is near a school.
- Has children who help manage it.
- Provides a service or learning venue for youth groups.
- Engages young people in some way.

The Hershey Foundation only awards grants to nonprofit organizations, so your application must be submitted in conjunction with Cleveland Neighborhood Progress or a community development corporation. The application process begins with a one-page project summary, including the proposed use of funds and requested dollar amount. If your project is a good candidate for funding, you will be invited to submit a full proposal. Funding requests are considered twice a year. The deadlines for full proposals are February 1 and August 1.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS**

Your local community development corporation may be able to support your efforts or connect you with potential funding sources in your neighborhood. If you're looking to cover some of your maintenance costs, it's worth the call to see whether your local community development corporation can help. They may also be able to find volunteers to help with maintenance work.

### **TOOLS & MATERIALS**

These organizations can aid your maintenance efforts by providing gardening tools, materials, and volunteer labor.

### **COMMUNITY HOUSING SOLUTIONS**

*East side:* 12114 Larchmere Blvd., Cleveland | 216-231-5815

*West side:* 1967 W. 45th Street, Cleveland | 216-651-0077

[www.commhousingsolutions.org](http://www.commhousingsolutions.org)

Community Housing Solutions' Tool Loan Program offers gardening tools for project maintenance. The program is free to all Cleveland residents. You'll need to provide some basic information and complete a short registration procedure. Once registered, you will receive a tool loan card that gives you access to the program for two years (renewable). Community Housing Solutions has east and west side locations, open Monday through Friday. The program operates on a first-come, first-served basis. With a valid loan card, you'll be able to borrow any of the tools currently available (wheelbarrows, pruning shears, trimmers, rakes, shovels, etc). Most loans are one day, but some tools can be borrowed for longer periods with advanced reservation. You'll be responsible for the pick-up, transport, safe use, and return of tools.





## **PURCHASING EQUIPMENT AND TOOLS**

Local hardware stores and national chains such as Lowe's and Home Depot are good sources for tools and equipment. Many of the larger stores rent heavy equipment for larger site work.

## **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY RESTORE**

*West side:* 2110 W. 110 St, Cleveland | 216-429-3631, ext.238

*East side:* 4601 Northfield Rd, North Randall | 216-413-3035

[www.clevelandhabitat.org/restore](http://www.clevelandhabitat.org/restore)

With an inventory of donated home-improvement items, Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity's ReStore can provide inexpensive tools and maintenance resources to Re-Imagining project managers. The ReStore sells its inventory for a (usually below-market) price. Community Housing Solution's Tool Loan Program is ideal for short-term and non-recurring tool needs, but if you require tools for regular maintenance work, you should consider buying them at inexpensive prices at the ReStore.

## **CLEVELAND NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRESS CLEAN & GREEN TRAILER**

11327 Shaker Blvd, Suite 500W, Cleveland | 216-830-2770

[www.npi-cle.org](http://www.npi-cle.org)

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress owns a "Clean and Green Trailer," equipped with essential maintenance tools and landscaping equipment. CNP lends it to community development corporations and other local organizations free of charge for periods of 1-3 days. The trailer is delivered to and picked up from the location that you specify in your reservation. The trailer is in high demand, regular time blocks are set aside when *Re-Imagining* project leaders have priority in making reservations.

## **RAZING CLEVELAND**

330-822-2420 | [www.razingcleveland.com](http://www.razingcleveland.com)

Razing Cleveland buys and resells building materials reclaimed from abandoned properties. For projects with raised plant beds, fences, and other structures, Razing Cleveland can be an inexpensive source of wood and other materials. The website lists current inventory; wood beams and other basic materials are often available for as little as a few dollars per unit.

## **SUMMER SPROUT**

OSU Extension | 216.429.8200 ext. 246

Administered by the City of Cleveland's Department of Community Development and the Ohio State University Extension, Summer Sprout is a community-gardening support program for Cleveland residents. All community gardens in the city can apply for membership. Once a Summer Sprout member, your garden will be eligible to receive seeds, starter plants, soil materials and testing, humus, and lumber for raised-bed planting.

## **CITY OF CLEVELAND – FREE RAIN BARRELS**

Cleveland Office of Sustainability | 216-664-2455

[sustainability@city.cleveland.oh.us](mailto:sustainability@city.cleveland.oh.us)

Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District | 216-881-6600

[www.neorsd.org](http://www.neorsd.org)

Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District

216-524-6580 | [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org)

The City provides free rain barrels to Cleveland residents. After meeting some basic requirements, homeowners can have rain barrels delivered and installed by high school students participating in the Mayor's Youth Summer Employment Program. Keep in mind, you must:

- Have a rectangular downspout that is not visible from the street and that drains into a sewer.
- Obtain a free downspout diverter from the City and install it before your rain barrel is delivered.
- Pick up the necessary paperwork from your local CDC and return it by the mid-summer deadline.



“The rain barrels required a bit of work but they were very helpful this summer and were consistently filled from the runoff from the shed.” - Michelle deBock, Watterson-Lake Learning Garden



For guidance on how to use rain barrels and integrate them into your watering routine, visit the websites of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District.

### **CITY OF CLEVELAND – FIRE HYDRANT ACCESS**


The City of Cleveland grants inexpensive fire-hydrant access to owners of urban green spaces without other water sources on their property. All *Re-Imagining* project managers, land owners, and people with a license from the land bank are eligible to apply for a water-hydrant permit, which costs about \$100 per year. In order to receive the discounted hydrant permit for use during the growing season, you'll need to:

- Test your soil for heavy metals.
- Demonstrate that you do not have other water sources on-site.
- Submit a short questionnaire.

### **SOIL TESTING**

UMass Soil and Plant Tissue Testing Lab  
203 Paige Laboratory, 161 Holdsworth Way, Amherst,  
MA 01003  
413-545-2311 | [soiltest@psis.umass.edu](mailto:soiltest@psis.umass.edu)

Soil testing will help identify environmental hazards and determine which nutrients are available or missing in your soil, to support the range of plants you'd like to grow. To initiate a soil test, collect soil samples from your site and send them to the University of Massachusetts for testing.



“Have your soil tested. Have a plan or a design of what you want the vacant lot to look like. Check for permits!”

-Yvonne Kimmie  
3648 E. 147th St.

### **CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO COMPOSTING/MANURE**

3900 Wildlife Way | 216-635-3337  
[www.clevelandmetroparks.com/Zoo/  
Composting-ZooPoo.aspx](http://www.clevelandmetroparks.com/Zoo/Composting-ZooPoo.aspx)

The Metroparks Zoo recycles the waste produced by its animals and processes it into manure, which is available for sale to the public. Manure sales take place during the spring and fall. The manure can be picked up at the zoo; the low prices are likely to beat those of most private suppliers.

## **PLANTS, SEEDS, SOIL, MULCH, ETC.**

There are many places to buy landscaping materials and supplies in the Cleveland area. Here is a brief sampling:

### **Bremec Garden Centers**

12265 Chilicothe Rd,  
Chesterland | 440-729-2122  
13410 Cedar Rd, Cleveland  
Heights | 216-932-0039

### **Cahoon's Nursery**

27630 Detroit Rd, Westlake  
| 440-871-3761

### **Gali's Florist and Garden Center**

21301 Chagrin Blvd, Beachwood | 216-921-1100

### **Highland Landscape Supply**

5860 Wilson Mills Rd, Highland Heights | 440-442-9093

### **Kurtz Brothers, Inc.**

1180 Miller Rd, Avon | 216-986-7033

### **Pettiti Garden Centers**

6950 W. 130th Street, Cleveland | 440-884-7919  
621 Richmond Rd., Cleveland | 440-684-0453  
33777 Chester Rd, Avon | 440-937-0690

### **Rosby Greenhouse and Garden Center**

42 E. Schaaf Rd, Brooklyn Heights | 216-661-6102

### **Three-Z Supply**

8700 Heinton Rd, Valley View | 216-524-4544  
34020 E. Royalton Rd, Eaton Township | 440-748-6701

## **SEED CATALOGS**

Nurseries and landscape suppliers distribute annual seed catalogs that list available seeds and prices, describe plants, and provide details on growing conditions. Paper catalogs can be ordered by mail. Digital versions are often available on company websites. Popular catalogs include: Burpee; Fedco Seeds; Johnny's Selected Seeds; Seeds of Change; Nichols Garden Nursery; and Seed Savers Exchange.





## NATIVE PLANT RESOURCES

### OHIO PRAIRIE NURSERY

11961 Alpha Rd., Hiram | 330-569-3380  
[www.ohioprairienursery.com](http://www.ohioprairienursery.com)

### CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

1 Wade Oval Drive, Cleveland | 216-231-4600  
[www.cmnh.org](http://www.cmnh.org)

Perennials, shrubs, and trees are available at an annual sale in the spring. The museum also has a seed bank where seeds are available for free check-out.

### SHAKER LAKES NATURE CENTER

2600 South Park Blvd., Shaker Heights | 216-321-5935  
[www.shakerlakes.org](http://www.shakerlakes.org)

Perennials, shrubs, and trees are available at an annual sale in the spring.

### AVALON GARDENS NURSERY

12511 Fowlers Mill Rd., Chardon | 440-286-2126  
[www.avalongardensinn.com/nursery](http://www.avalongardensinn.com/nursery)

### BLUESTONE PERENNIALS

7211 Middle Ridge Rd., Madison | 800-852-5243  
[www.bluestoneperennials.com](http://www.bluestoneperennials.com)

### NODDING ONION GARDENS

Frostville Farmer's Market, 24101 Cedar Point Rd., No. Olmsted  
[www.frostvillefarmersmarket.com](http://www.frostvillefarmersmarket.com)

A native plant nursery focused on wildflowers. The nursery is located in Columbia Station but sells exclusively at the Frostville.

### NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NORTHEASTERN OHIO

[www.nativeplantsocietyneo.org](http://www.nativeplantsocietyneo.org)

The Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio's website contains information about planting native species and organizing your green space, including a blog dedicated to native planting news and ideas. The site includes a "virtual herbarium" with photos and growing details for native species. There are also links to partner organizations and information sources.

## **MIDWEST NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**

[www.midwestnativeplants.org](http://www.midwestnativeplants.org)

The Midwest Native Plant Society's website provides an extensive, categorized list of native species that are suitable for home planting and likely to attract birds and butterflies.



## **OHIOLINE: OSU EXTENSION**

[www.ohioline.osu.edu](http://www.ohioline.osu.edu)

The Ohioline service of the Ohio State University Extension provides links to information about native plants and landscape maintenance, and a comprehensive list of native plant species. A native landscaping fact sheet describes native species that attract birds and butterflies, with details about soil and light conditions where each plant is most likely to grow. A native plant bibliography lists books, magazines, and journal articles, along with discussion forums dedicated to just about every aspect of native planting.

## **LADY BIRD JOHNSON WILDFLOWER CENTER**

[www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)

The University of Texas' Lady Bird Johnson Center maintains extensive information about native flowers, trees, shrubs, and grasses in all 50 states. The section dedicated to Ohio contains nearly 150 listings of native species, along with photos to help you identify the plants for your site.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY: LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS**

[www.epa.gov/greenacres](http://www.epa.gov/greenacres)

The EPA has published a detailed guide which explains the benefits of native planting, summarizes different project types and provides advice in choosing between them, describes how to initiate a project and plant seedlings, and discusses effective ways of identifying and dealing with invasive species.



## **MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY: NATIVE PLANTS AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES**

[www.nativeplants.msu.edu](http://www.nativeplants.msu.edu)

To attract (or repel) specific types of wildlife at your site, Michigan State's website explains the role various native plants play as habitat or food for insects and birds that pollinate plants and eat pests.

## **VOLUNTEER HELP**

### **HANDS ON NORTHEAST OHIO**

3615 Superior Ave #3102a, Cleveland | 216-432-9390

[www.handsonneo.org](http://www.handsonneo.org)

HandsOn Northeast Ohio matches volunteers with community projects throughout the region. HandsOn has many corporate partners who supply volunteers and physical resources to community projects. If you have a one-time need for assistance, contact HandsOn and ask about setting up a volunteer event.

HandsOn also allows non-profit organizations to post both one-time and recurring volunteer opportunities on their website, which is visited by thousands of interested volunteers each year.

"We loved having students from CNP, Cleveland State University, and Case Western Reserve come and learn and see our sites."

### **CLEVELAND NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS**

11327 Shaker Blvd, Suite 500W, Cleveland | 216-830-2770

[www.npi-cle.org](http://www.npi-cle.org)

Volunteer assistance is not regularly available through Cleveland Neighborhood Progress or community development corporations. However, CNP has relationships with corporate partners and other organizations that sometimes supply volunteers for community projects. Your community development corporation may have relationships with local businesses, churches, youth groups, schools, and others who could potentially supply volunteers.

## **INFORMATION, EDUCATION, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Gardening education, training programs, and information about maintenance practices are available through these organizations:

## **CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDEN**

11030 East Blvd., Cleveland

216-707-2824

[www.cbgarden.org](http://www.cbgarden.org)

The Cleveland Botanical Garden operates the Green Corps urban agriculture work-study program each summer. Local youth learn about planting and agricultural science by working at Green Corps sites in the city. The Botanical Garden also hosts free educational seminars and gardening workshops at these sites throughout the summer, providing valuable training opportunities. Additionally, the Botanical Garden studies vacant land-reuse strategies, soil treatments, low-maintenance vegetation, and other topics as part of its applied research efforts. The Garden's consulting services provide city residents with the opportunity to have expert horticulturists answer gardening questions by email or make site visits (for a fee).

## **THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION - CUYAHOGA COUNTY**

5320 Stanard Ave., Cleveland | 216-429-8200

[www.cuyahoga.osu.edu](http://www.cuyahoga.osu.edu) | [www.plantfacts.osu.edu](http://www.plantfacts.osu.edu)

The Ohio State University Extension Service has a wealth of resources to support community gardeners, urban farmers, and green space managers in Greater Cleveland. The website includes fact sheets and gardening guides that can help you perform just about any maintenance task in your green space. OSU publishes newsletters on specific topics like fruit, vegetables, and floriculture, which provide updates about growing conditions, invasive species, latest research, and best practices from gardeners throughout the state. The PlantFacts site contains a searchable database of plant images to help you identify weeds and invasive species. The site also includes how-to





“Ecovillage Produce LLC partners gain valuable resources from the Ohio State University extension gardening classes, and from group plant buying.”  
-Barbara Strauss, Ecovillage

videos and frequently asked questions posted by other community gardeners. The OSU Master Gardeners are a group of specially trained volunteers who are experts in all aspects of gardening. They answer questions, conduct training sessions, and provide specialized advice to gardeners.

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
EXTENSION—INFORMATIONAL  
GARDENING VIDEOS**

[www.extension.umd.edu/hgic/resource-library/video-library](http://www.extension.umd.edu/hgic/resource-library/video-library)

The University of Maryland’s Extension service has produced over 100 informational videos covering just about every aspect of garden management. Whether you’re looking for a detailed how-to video demonstrating a specific maintenance task, guidance on how to deal with garden pests and invasive species, directions for building and maintaining raised beds, or a walk-through of an example annual maintenance calendar, this University of Maryland website can be an invaluable resource.

**THE NEW AGRARIAN CENTER**

440-941-4009 | [www.cityfresh.org](http://www.cityfresh.org)

The New Agrarian Center provides educational support and gardening advice with a focus on urban food growers and market farmers. Contact for information about technical assistance programs and training sessions, and other resources available for urban gardeners and market farmers.

**WESTERN RESERVE LAND CONSERVANCY/  
THRIVING COMMUNITIES INSTITUTE & THE  
HOLDEN ARBORETUM**

2012 W 25th St Suite 504, Cleveland | 216-515-8300  
[www.thrivingcommunitiesinstitute.org](http://www.thrivingcommunitiesinstitute.org)

9500 Sperry Rd., Kirtland | 440-946-4400  
[www.holdenarb.org](http://www.holdenarb.org)

The Western Reserve Land Conservancy and the Holden Arboretum have joined forces to support urban tree-planting projects within the city of Cleveland. Both organizations employ experts in the forestry and land-management fields, and they are willing to arrange free site visits to orchards (or other projects that make

extensive use of trees) in order to provide technical advice and maintenance assistance. These organizations may also be able to provide material assistance in the form of volunteer labor and physical supplies like mulch, wood chips, and replacement trees.

### **THE COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVANCY**

330-657-2542 | [www.cvcountryside.org](http://www.cvcountryside.org)

Based in Akron, the Countryside Conservancy operates several farms in the Cuyahoga Valley, sponsors farmers' markets, and offers an educational program called Countryside U. With classes and training events throughout the year, Countryside U teaches gardeners about growing, management, and maintenance tasks. The Countryside Conservancy also sponsors Local Food Swaps, where gardeners and farmers can meet and exchange ideas and advice while marketing their produce.

## **INSPIRATION**

It can be helpful to see the different plants in person. The parks, gardens, and arboretums listed below offer great opportunities for observing mature native plants and are staffed by experts who can help with your research and planning.

### **CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDEN**

11030 East Blvd., Cleveland | 216-721-1600  
[www.cb garden.org](http://www.cb garden.org)

### **THE HOLDEN ARBORETUM**

9500 Sperry Rd., Kirtland | 440-946-4400  
[www.holdenarb.org](http://www.holdenarb.org)

### **SECRET ARBORETUM, OHIO STATE EXTENSION**

2122 Williams Rd., Wooster | 330-464-2148  
[www.secret.osu.edu](http://www.secret.osu.edu)

### **OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: DIVISION OF NATURAL AREAS AND PRESERVES**

[www.naturepreserves.ohiodnr.gov](http://www.naturepreserves.ohiodnr.gov)

Comprehensive listing and maps of state nature preserves.







# PLAN YOUR YEAR

## GREEN SPACE CALENDAR

As any gardener can tell you, the seasons change dramatically the course of a year. That's what makes landscape projects so interesting. Maintenance needs vary depending on the time of year and the kind of project you have. It's important to think through a year's worth of maintenance needs when planning your project. This section provides seasonal tips and gives a sense for how often tasks need to be performed over the course of a year. Your own project needs may vary, but the month-by-month calendar on the following pages provides prompts for common seasonal tasks. Use these to keep a record of what you did and when. It will also help you keep track of planting dates, successes, and failures.

This section also includes recommendations for Cleveland-specific planting dates according to our growing zone, 6b/6a. Take a look at the required growing times and transplant dates for many annual fruits and vegetables. Use these dates to plan backwards across your growing season.

You may find the calendar useful during the growing seasons and also in winter when you look back, assess, and plan for next year.



"The site is used frequently by the community between the spring and fall seasons. During the winter season we observe children playing." - Anthony R. Whitfield, Quebec Serenity Garden



































# PLANTING DATES

Cleveland hardiness zone: ..... 6b/6a

Spring frost-free date: ..... May 20

Fall first-frost date: ..... Oct 21-31

<b>CROP</b>	<b>SEED START</b> (weeks before transplanting) (*direct sow)	<b>TRANSPLANT/ DIRECT SOW</b> (weeks relative to frost-free date)	<b>DAYS TO MATURITY</b> (from transplant/ sow date)
ARTICHOKE	8	0	100-150
BASIL	6	1 after	60-90
BEANS	*	0-2 after	48-60
BEETS	* or 4-6	2 before	55-70
BROCCOLI	4-6	2 before	60-80
CABBAGE	4-6	4 before	65-120
CARROT	*	3-5 before	55-80
CAULIFLOWER	4-6	2 before	90-110
CELERY & CELERIAC	10-12	1 after	90-100
COLLARD GREENS	4-6	4 before	55-65
CORN	*	2-3 after	60-80
CUCUMBER	3-4	1-2 after	60-75
EGGPLANT	8-10	2-3 after	60-80
KALE	* or 8-9	4-6 before	55-75
KOHLRABI	* or 4-6	4-6 before	45-60
LEEKs	8-10	2 before	120-170
LETTUCE	4-5	3-4 before	40-90
MELONS	3-4	2 after	85-95
OKRA	* or 4-6	1 after	50-60
ONIONS	8-10	4 before	90-150
PARSLEY	9-10	2-3 before	40-60
PEAS	* or 3-4	6-8 before	60-80
PEPPERS	8	0	65-80
PUMPKINS	3-4	2 after	100-120
SPINACH	4-6	3-6 before	40-50
SQUASH	3-4	2 after	50-60
SWISS CHARD	4-6	2 before	50-60
TOMATOES	6-8	0	70-85
WATERMELON	3-4	2 after	80-95