

GARDEN ASSET MAPPING: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Whether you're starting a garden or embarking on a new project for your existing garden, one of the best things you can do in the planning process is to step back and get a better picture of your garden, its surroundings, and what resources you can tap into to make it stronger.

A **GARDEN ASSET MAP** is a drawn representation of the physical and/or social resources and connections available in and around your garden, as well as in your broader community.

What to draw: (3 layers to explore)

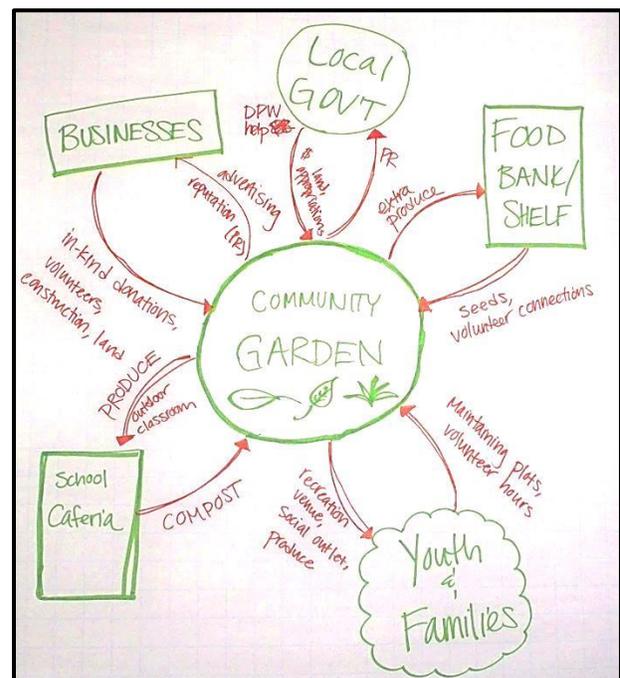
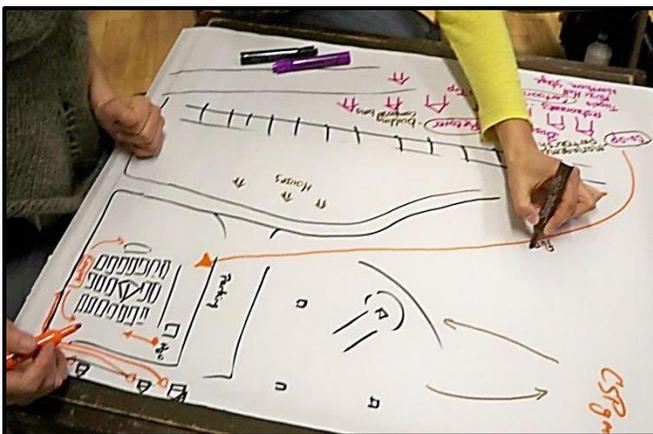
1) Inner circle:

- *Physical:* sketch out the existing or potential physical garden site
- *Social:* include existing or potential resources available amongst those directly connected to your garden project (leadership team, gardeners, volunteers, etc.)

2) Middle circle:

- *Physical:* sketch out what's nearby (neighborhood, school, farmers market, food shelf, recreation area, businesses); traffic patterns (when and how are people passing by)
- *Social:* include existing or potential resources available amongst those in your immediate community (neighbors, teachers, parents, organizations, businesses, institutions, etc.)

3) **Outer circle:** include existing or potential resources and connections available with the broader community (businesses, organizations, and institutions outside of the garden area).



Your Style: A garden asset map should be drawn in a way that is most helpful for your group. For some groups, a more physical representation of the garden and its surroundings is best (above), while others get more out of a conceptual drawing of garden resources and connections (right).

What to discuss:

- *Why do you want to connect to resources?* The map can be used for multiple purposes, but it may be helpful to address one specific goal at a time (i.e. developing a garden, building a leadership team, seeking community support, or recruiting gardeners).
- *What resources are you looking for?* Setting your goal will help to determine what resources would be most helpful for you. However, stay open to resources that may not make in on your initial list.
- *What is the potential for connecting each of these resources?* Draw lines on your map with arrows showing whether the garden gets or gives something from the resource.
- *How are you going to reach out to make these connections happen?* Once you've determined what resources are available and why they might be useful, you'll want to think about how you're going to connect them to your garden (and visa-versa).