

COMMUNITY GARDENING 104

GEOLOGY: FINDING THE PERFECT SITE FOR YOUR GARDEN.



THINGS TO CONSIDER:

When choosing a site for your community garden, it is important to assess your needs and the site's provisions. Making the match is the second most crucial step in keeping the garden active for years to come.

Is there a water source at the potential site?

- Check for hose bibs if there are buildings on the property
- Vacant lots may have water meters already installed
- Nearby buildings may be a source of rain-catch or air-conditioner condensate

Does the area receive enough sun?

- Ideally, edible and ornamental plants need 6-8 hours of sun
- Ideally, humans need a little shade- a shade tree nearby would be a welcome feature

Is there any flooding in the potential site?

- Watch the prospective area after a heavy rain.

Are there any potential issues with environmental toxicity of the soil?

- If the property is near an industrial area or previously had a home built before 1978 consider having the soil tested for chemicals or heavy metals, such as lead, that might affect the safety of edible food.
- Consider using raised beds

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Is the prospective garden area a convenient and accessible location to all gardeners?

- If the potential garden area is centrally located to the residences of all interested garden members this may increase the cohesiveness and constancy of the group.

Are there established groups, such as churches, retirement homes or schools, within your neighborhood that may consider renting or loaning land long term?

- If your group is having trouble finding land, think about connecting with neighborhood entities that already have access to land.

What are the local codes and regulations that pertain?

- Determine any building setbacks on the lot which would impact where you want to locate your out buildings.
- Keep in mind that, in San Antonio, any underground irrigation must be installed by a licensed irrigator and all electrical components must be installed by a licensed electrician.
- Structures, curb cuts, underground irrigation, electrical components and tree modifications all require permits from the City.
- Fences 6' feet tall and over require a permit before installation begins.
- Signs and pathways may require permits from the City.
- Public spaces should plan for ADA access. Ensure that all levels of ability have access to the garden space.