



MONROVIA
COMMUNITY GARDEN
AT 303 WEST COLORADO



**AR-1 Amendment No. 1 to the
Agreement with Mountainside Communion
Related to the Monrovia Community Garden**

Background



- In 2018, City Council directed staff...
 - Study the possibility of establishing a Community Garden Program
 - Parks Master Plan process identified Community Gardens to be the third highest priority of survey respondents
 - Received requests for a Community Garden from engaged citizens
- Staff began the assessment on the feasibility of establishing a Community Garden Pilot Program – ***We learned we had a lot to learn!***
 - Met with experts in the field to learn best practice
 - Conducted research on community garden models utilized by neighboring cities
 - Investigated possible locations that would adhere to the perimeters needed for a successful community garden

Background

- *"Monrovia Magic"*
 - Staff mentioned the Community Garden efforts with representatives from Mountainside Communion
 - Mountainside shared that they were hoping to develop a Community Garden on their property for the community's use
 - Staff continues these discussions related to a possible partnership with Mountainside to coordinate development of a pilot program
 - Partnership plans included private and public gardening space and management by experts in gardening from Mountainside



The most successful Community Garden were managed collaboratively between the city, a non-profit, and community volunteers!

Background

- November 6, 2018 = Community Garden Study Session
 - Staff presented the plan to collaborate with Mountainside to City Council
- Following that, the City entered into a 3-year agreement with Mountainside for the development, construction and management of the Monrovia Community Garden Pilot Program
 - The contract included \$30,000 for the build out of the garden
 - \$15,000 annual investment for the ongoing management and maintenance of the garden
 - Included 7 free community educational workshops a year



Our Goals

- Garden Dedication = Saturday, July 20, 2019
 - Develop a Pilot Program by which the project team could better assess what the community is looking for in a Community Garden
 - Develop physical environment to provide communal and private gardening
 - Develop workshops to assess community members level of interest on various garden topics
 - Create a wonderful space for residents to feel connected to the community



Community Garden Components

| No. | Garden Components | Description |
|-----|----------------------------|--|
| 21 | Private Raised Garden Beds | 3' X 7' Beds / 4 Reserved for ADA access |
| 8 | Public Raised Garden Beds | Used for educational workshops, demonstrations, and recreational gardening |
| 5 | Communal Container Gardens | Demonstrate small space container gardening |
| 4 | Wooden Seating Benches | Used during workshops and open for public use |
| 15 | Communal Stone Fruit Trees | Public use |
| 1 | Community Compost Bin | Public use |



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2020

Contact: Margaret de Larios, Public Affairs Specialist
(213) 236-1842 / delarios@scag.ca.gov



SCAG Honors Six Innovative Local Projects with 2020 Sustainability Awards

Los Angeles, Calif. – Six exemplary and innovative planning projects will be honored as winners of the 2020 Sustainability Awards by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).



Planting tomatoes with Judy

Program Impacts

| Program Impacts | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | 2021-2022 |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Food Waste Diverted | 3.5 Tons | 7 Tons | 9 Tons |
| Participating Households | 21 Families | 30 Families (8 New) | 27 Families (9 New) |
| *Newsletter Subscribers | 40 | 150 | 600 |
| Attend Workshops (In person & Virtual) | 150 | 141 | 103 and counting! |
| *Online Video Tutorials | - | 9,112 | 10,415 |
| *Social Media Followers | Facebook= 295 Instagram = 384 | Facebook= 573 Instagram = 600 | Facebook= 761 Instagram = 1,001 |
| Volunteer Hours Contributed | - | 400 | 530 and counting! |
| Garden Pop Up Opportunities | 8 | 11 | 5 and counting! |

*Not a part of the original scope of work



Monrovia Community Garden 2020

-by the numbers-



3.5 Tons

of food waste diverted to
compost in our community
compost bin.



**2 Awards
Received**



CPRS District 13
Community Service
Award to the
MCG Volunteer
Leadership Team

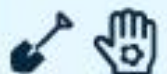


Green Region-
Resource Conservation
and Climate Action
Sustainability Award
from SCAG



8

new
households
onboarded to
program



30

households
involved in
the program



650 estimated pounds
of produce grown



150

workshop participants



9,112

views of online tutorials



4.8/5

average answer given on workshop survey
success for all 6 workshops this year

Visit monroviacommunitygarden.org for more information



2021 In Review

530

Volunteer hours by
Garden Leadership
Team

141

Workshop
Participants

1x a Month
Summer Street
Fair Booth
Interacted with

101
People

New
Households **9**

27 Households
in program

7 tons

Food Waste Diverted

683 Followers
53% from Monrovia

968 Followers
27% from Monrovia

11

Pop-up
Community
Gatherings

10,415

Online
tutorial
views

Visit monroviacommunitygarden.org for more information

Testimonials

"...the highlight for me is the community spirit that is fostered among the gardeners and those who walk by each day. People need a shared interest or activity to engage one another."

-Pastor of Formation Deborah Smith



Testimonials



"...The garden and our education program serve as examples to other cities of how a community garden can be a thriving part of neighborhood engagement and wellness. I've met more people in our city wandering around the garden, stopping by, taking a class, than I had in over ten years living here."

-Garden Director, Kristin Ritzau

Testimonials



"Growing with the garden leadership has been a highlight of my life.

I can't count how many people have walked by the corner community space and been thrilled to learn that the garden is for them. That they have access to new foods, friends, and a welcoming space where they can return every week to see something new growing, buzzing about, or a new smile to greet them. The garden has grown so much community and I can't imagine Monrovia not having this beautiful welcoming important space."

-Garden Leadership Team, Gio Leos

Testimonials



"As a part of my personal retirement growth, I was blessed to be asked to be a part of the Leadership Team for our community garden. I have the opportunity to interact with my community in a space that fills my heart."

-Garden Leadership Team, Judy Gomez

Testimonials



"We have learned so much in our first year at the community garden—and in our first garden ever! We started with virtually no knowledge and now we feel practically competent. The support through education and materials has been wonderful. And of course, eating our first meals from our winter and summer gardens were amazing!"

-Garden Plot Holder

Impactful Stories



Victoria and Robert were part of our first cohort of gardeners. A few months into their new gardening journey, Robert had a heart attack. In August of 2019, he named their plot "Fresh Start" because he was on a new health journey. Sadly in October 2019, Robert passed away. Kristin ran into Victoria at the garden as she was harvesting all of the cucumbers he planted that August. "I want to have them in the water at his service," she told Kristin, "because this was our chance to start over." The city honored Robert, a long time Monrovia, at a council meeting. And Victoria has been gardening the "Fresh Start" bed ever since to honor Robert and to stay connected to her community.

Impactful Stories



Mr. Ali was one of our first plotheolders. He and his caretaker, Chris, were heavily involved in the garden and our events. In his late 80s, the garden is what he looked forward to most during his week. The taller ADA accessible beds were greatly appreciated by Mr. Ali as his health issues made it virtually impossible to bend over or work lower to the ground. Mr. Ali passed away last year, but in his final year, the garden was said to be his favorite activity.

Lessons Learned



- COVID

- Program began 9 months prior to the shut down due to COVID
- COVID significantly impacted this study and certainly impacted our overall evaluation of the Pilot Program – **But we still thrived!**
 - Garden remained open and was managed safely
 - Request for space has been difficult to measure due to COVID- Demand is teetering on needing more space – Expected this will escalate as we return to “normalcy”
 - Program overall still exceeded our expectations even in light of COVID

Lessons Learned

- Community Spirit
 - Garden Leadership Team is essential!
 - Garden fosters community spirit and connection to the community
 - Group beds are challenging
 - Inspiration for others to grow at home
- Model Program
 - City is seen as a leader in LA County for innovative partnerships and programs
 - CPRS Award
 - SCAG Award



Lessons Learned

- Education
 - High desire for education
 - High attendance at all Workshops and Pop Ups
 - Strong interest in communication and materials from the Garden Leadership Team
 - Far reaching due to Virtual Workshop Platform
 - More desire for in person hands on learning
 - Need for more resources
- Compost
 - Compost station is in high demand and will continue to grow
 - SB 1383 Organics Recycling
 - One of the most productive sites in LA County
 - Working with City of Monrovia Clean Monrovia on collaborative efforts – education and more compost stations
- Water Conservation
 - The Garden replaced an area that was previously turf
 - The entire Garden is on an efficient drip system
 - On rain days, the Garden Leadership team turn off the irrigation to conserve water



Our Accomplishments

- *Successfully develop a Pilot Program but had some challenges assessing what the community is looking for in a Community Garden due to the pandemic. May need more assessment.*
- *Created a beautiful space for the community to gather and enjoy both communal and private gardens*
- *Exceeded our expectations on the desire and interest from the community related to educational workshops on various garden topics*
- *Created community for many residents who now feel a part of Monrovia*



Community Services Commission Feedback

- On April 12, staff presented a similar presentation for the Community Services Commission
 - Overall pleased with the program and its accomplishments
 - Support for more educational workshops
 - Study possible future expansions of Compost Bins and Community Gardens
 - More promotion of the Community Garden may be needed



Options for your Consideration

Staff Recommends Option 1:

- Approve Amendment No. 1 to the Consultant Services Agreement with Mountainside Communion – A Church of the Nazarene dated November 20, 2018, for the ongoing management of the Monrovia Community Garden Program for the Period Ending June 30, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$24,000 annually, and authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents in a form approved by the City Attorney.
 - Additional \$9,000 will support Garden Maintenance and repairs, support a quarterly newsletter for the community, and include 2 educational social media posted per month.





MONROVIA
COMMUNITY GARDEN
AT 303 WEST COLORADO



Questions / Comments