

Hastings Green Gardening Brainstorm Ideas

Here is a list of the ideas generated by two groups in answer to the question, *“In what ways might we better utilize the common garden space at Hastings Green for the health and enjoyment of as many residents as possible?”* Ideas were not restricted to the veggie garden space. I asked the second group to brainstorm about some resources.

Look below the numbered list to see a full list of all the ideas that were generated.

These are 15 of my favorite ideas. What are your favorites?

- 1) One of the most popular ideas coming out of both sessions was, “Have some chickens”
- 2) Build a pizza oven
- 3) Use the Maritime NW Gardeners Guide as a resource, particularly as a garden calendar and guide for what to plant when
- 4) Build some tables from rustic wood and place them in the center greens for al fresco dining and socializing
- 5) Learn about winter crops
- 6) Learn about complimentary planting
- 7) Learn about gardening vertically
- 8) Plant fruit and nut trees and berries
- 9) Have a place for kids to garden
- 10) Have a garden on the south (as well as the north) side of the street
- 11) Create garden space where crops can get more sun
- 12) Have seasonal events to cook or otherwise share the produce from the garden
- 13) Promote participation in community activities organized around the garden project but that don’t require volunteering in the garden itself (such as, “Do you like to eat? Then join us for ... “)
- 14) Stage a play written by our neighbors, using the garden area or center greens
- 15) Share the list of resources that arose out of this brainstorming process

Raw idea list

Permaculture guild is a resource

Tryon Creek Farm is a good place to go to talk to people/observe

Talk to local farmers at the Farmers’ Market

Talk to a CSA

Contact the Home Orchard Society

Use OneGreenWorld.com as a resource

Use book “Maritime Gardening in the Pacific NW” from Seattle Tilth as a source of ideas

Use the gardening calendar in “Maritime Gardening in the Pacific NW”

Visit Livingscapes Nursery

Contact the Hardy Plant Society: Kitchen Garden Group for advice

Visit the demonstration garden in Washington County

Contact City Parks & Rec Community Garden program for speakers, resources

Research Victory Gardens

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Document the cost of fresh fruit and veggies at New Seasons - show people how they can save money

Talk to people about the joy and pleasure of gardening

Visit Foster Farm

Go on the "chicken tour" in late summer

Establish guidelines about the use of herbicides/pesticides

Figure out a way to pay the cost of constructing new gardens

Contact City Repair to do something with the streetscape

Use the Metro website to scope out sustainable alternatives

Create a green space

Have a berry patch

Have a small orchard

Have a veggie space with a herb garden and culinary garden

Have a pumpkin patch

Have a pizza oven

Have a place to play bocce ball

Have a fire pit

Have chickens and take turns caring for them

Have a talking/sharing place

Have a play structure

Have a harvest party

Have seasonal gatherings in the garden space associated with solstice/equinox

Use space for solar power generation

Check out rainwater catchment

Grow figs

Plant more fruit, berries in common areas

Create a 2nd or 3rd vegetable garden with at least one on both sides of the street in the development

Set aside space for the kids to garden

Have a garden area for children

Herbs can be grown with plants like blueberries amongst ornamentals

Plant trees around the center green

Have some permanent wood tables built for the center greens, in summer people can take their dinner over and sit and eat outdoors. Use for informal evening gatherings

Dine al fresco with veggies from the garden at the wood tables

Expand edibles to areas beyond the current veggie garden

Expand "gardening" tasks to include canning, cooking and planning for the garden for those that don't want to garden

Do gardening year around

Take the stone borders out of the current garden to make more space

Have less lawn - convert to gardens with better use of center greens

Have theme beds -- plant 1 type of vegetable in different varieties in each bed

Have cooking parties/demonstrations tied to the vegetables planted

Teams or several units working together to plant and harvest a bed

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Planning meeting to choose what to plant so there is more variety
Monthly and/or bi-weekly exchange of vegetables. Those who don't plant a garden can offer a service or meal in exchange for veggies.
Rotation during growing season so we get different yields in spring, summer, fall
Donate portion to food bank in name of Hastings Green
Gardeners w/ knowledge, work with those who don't have much knowledge, to plant.
Have a Fall harvest barbecue using veggies from the garden.
Create clear guidelines about where, when, who can plant
Have a vision for the gardens
Decide who weeds and when
Have a grouping of plants based on sun/shade preference
Have coordinators
Grow what is used the most
Allocate more space to the gardens
Announce what's ready/ripe to all neighbors
Make it clear which plants have been labeled "do not plant" (ie, invasives, etc)
Use other spaces for the gardens - not currently enough space for big plants
Use varieties that have smaller growth habit
Do more publicity in the neighborhood about the garden
Have speakers that are gardening experts
Plant all tomatoes to the back, shorter plants to the side
Have a cooking class
Plan a food preservation activity in the fall
Coordinate the food grown for more variety (not all tomatoes, more beans, etc)
Plan food for Harvesting in all seasons
Create more space at the end of the garages
Have an area for hens, take care of them together
Have work groups to focus on a volunteer home in HG where help is needed to improve the garden
Have a yearly "plant swap" in late summer of cuttings and divided plants
Once a stage a play, 2 - 15 minutes acts written in story form by authors in HG
Expand the veggie bed, remove green area of grass & add in blueberry bushes, potted berries and herbs
Volunteer teams to assist with garden planning with involvement of homeowner if they need brainstorming help (but homeowner must be actively involved)
Plant more small trees on center green
Involve more owners who aren't currently participating
Expand gardens to "south side" of street
Grow more perennials and fruit
Get "experts" in to talk on different topics, such as crop rotation, companion planting, cover crops
Create an additional food garden in each center green where we can put plants that need more sunshine
Have a winter garden (get expert advice about what to plant)
Go off and buy a bunch of starts and seeds together and then all plant together.
Investigate more "vertical" gardening (make better use of space)

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Diversify the crops we currently grow

Meet to plan/design the garden to provide maximum efficiency use of space

Rotate maintenance chores (insuring proper moisture, food, etc)

Have routine e-mails regarding needs of group and when veggies should be harvested

Rotate crops during season