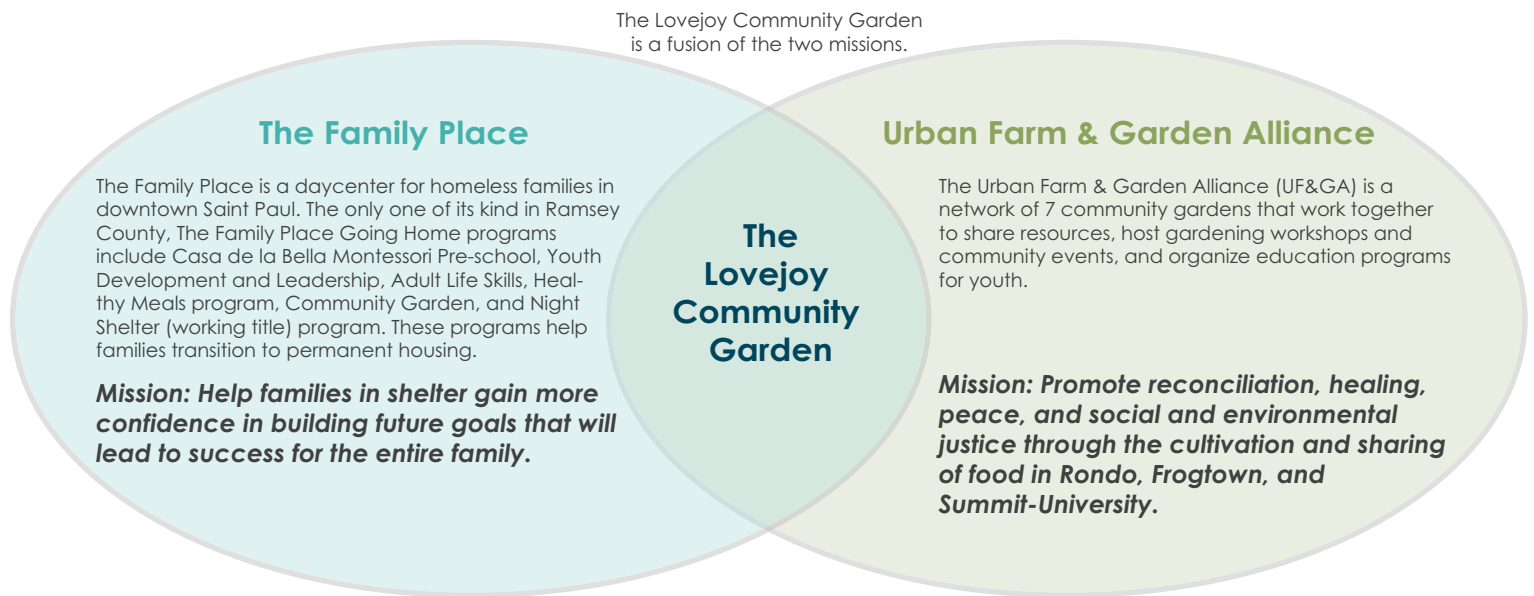


The Lovejoy Community Garden

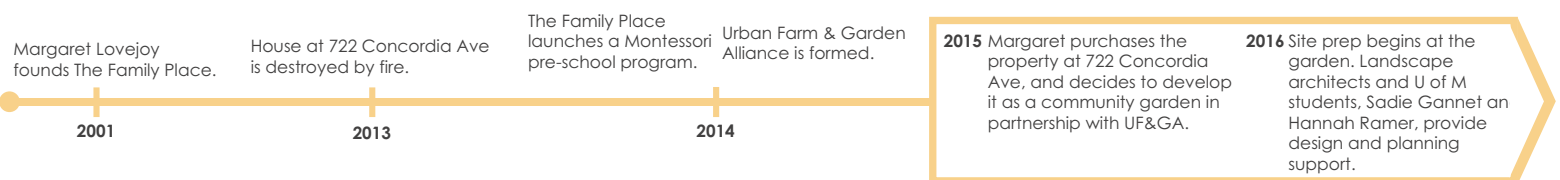
A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

Rethinking Community Gardens: From Physical to Human Development

Our environment impacts our physical and mental wellbeing, and both reflects and shapes social relations in our communities. Community gardens have the potential to transform the physical and social landscape in our neighborhoods. Given these initial considerations, this project explores the following questions: How can the physical development of a site support human development? How can a garden build capacity for all, including homeless families, through programming and design? We explore these questions through the visioning process of The Lovejoy Community Garden, a proposed new green space, located in the heart of the historic Rondo Neighborhood at 722 Concordia Ave.



Timeline of Project Evolution



Vision for the Lovejoy Community Garden

- Provide **garden and food education** to enrich The Family Place programming for youth and adults.
- Serve as an urban oasis with opportunities for **reflection and healing** for all community members.
- Offer opportunities where homeless families and neighbors can work together **and build community**.
- **Grow fresh and nourishing food** for The Family Place's meal program, shelters, and other organizations.

Our Project Scope

First, we examine the neighborhood history and current context as well as the characteristics of The Lovejoy Community Garden site. Next, by highlighting case studies of farms and gardens with social missions, we explore a range of programming and garden design elements that may support Margaret Lovejoy's vision. Then, we consider partnerships to support and nourish the garden. We conclude by considering the local and regional policies that may support or limit the possible design and programming options of the garden.

The Lovejoy Community Garden

A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

In this poster we consider the history of the Rondo Neighborhood and how that history is still evident today through disparities in education, income, access to green space, and exposure to noise and air pollution.

Minnesota Saint Paul



Rondo & I-94: Historical Trauma & Resilience

In the early 20th century, Rondo was a **thriving Black community** with schools, churches, social clubs, and businesses, many of them Black-owned. From 1956-64 the construction of **I-94 cut through the core of the neighborhood**, demolishing 400 homes, displacing 1/7 of Saint Paul's Black population, and separating the north from south of the neighborhood.

Despite the dramatic alteration of the neighborhood's physical and social landscape, the **resilience of Rondo's spirit** is evident in the ongoing community activism and events that define the neighborhood's social life. A commemorative plaza is being developed on Concordia/Old Rondo Ave, facing I-94. **The Lovejoy Community Garden builds on these efforts to build community, and provide space for healing and honoring the neighborhood's rich history.**



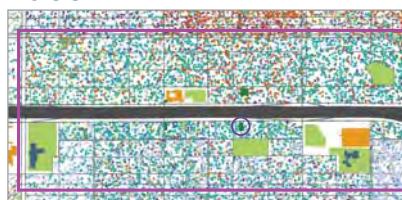
Pilgrim Baptist Church, founded in the 1840s, is Minnesota's oldest Black church. Left: After escaping slavery in Ohio, Robert Hickman was Pilgrim's first Reverend. Right: members of Minnesota Federation on the steps of the church.
 The Creditmen Social Club, formed in 1928 is one of the oldest Black social clubs in the Twin Cities. In addition to organizing social & recreational activities, Creditmen established a scholarship fund, a credit union to provide low interest home & college loans to African Americans, as well as a cooperative food outlet at 478 Rondo Ave, shown above.
 Booker T. Cafe & Tavern at 381-383 Rondo Ave.
 Rondo Ave Trolley Line.
 Members of the Steffing Club of St. Albans Street & Canal circa 1950-59.
 WW Post 8854 at First & Rondo Ave circa 1950-59.
 Demolition on Rondo Ave, ahead of construction of I-94. View from St. Anthony Dale Street.
 View of I-94 Construction looking west from Dale Street.
 Originally, Margaret Lovejoy's childhood home faced bustling Rondo Ave.
 View of I-94 from Midway, looking east.
 In 1982 community members organized the first annual Poster for "Remember Rondo Avenue Day" to honor the neighborhood's history.
 The Half Pintz Drill Team performing in the Rondo Days Parade in 2009. (Photo credit: Pioneer Press, Ben Garvin).
 The Seby Avenue Jazzfest.
 The Rondo Community Outreach Library, opened in 2006 on Dale Ave & University Ave.
 (Left) Concordia Ave was renamed Old Rondo Ave (Image credit: NPR News). (Center) At the dedication of the Rondo Plaza in 2015, Mayor Chris Coleman offered a formal apology for the destruction of the once vibrant community. (Right) Plans for the plaza include green space, a contemplation spiral, & a place to capture & share stories of Rondo. The Plaza is 2 blocks west of the Lovejoy Community Garden (Image credit: Rondo Ave Inc.).

Map of Rondo, from Lexington Ave to Arundel St

- Rondo Neighborhood
- The Lovejoy Community Garden
- UF&GA garden Sites
- Parks
- School yards & sports fields
- Schools
- Library
- Community centers
- Churches
- Affordable housing
- Bridges with pedestrian access
- Freeway
- Road centerlines



Race



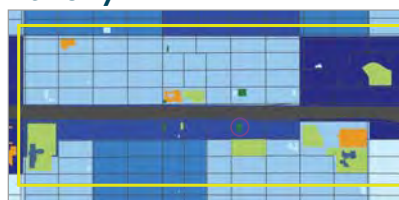
- Black
 - White
 - Asian
 - Latino/a, Hispanic
 - Amer. Indian/ Native Amer.
 - Multiracial
- Findings**
- Predominantly Black, particularly to the north & 1 block south of I-94.
 - Increasing proportion of Whites to the south, & Asians to the north.

Education



- <High school
 - High school
 - Some college
 - Assoc degree
 - Bachelors degree
 - Grad/prof degree
- Findings**
- Lower levels of education achievement to the north & 1 block south of I-94.

Poverty



- Prct. of pop. <150% Fed poverty level**
- 0-20%
 - 20%-40%
 - 40%-60%
 - 60%-80%
 - 80%-100%
- Findings**
- 60-80% of residents in the immediate area have incomes below 150% of the poverty level.
 - There is a wider range of % below the poverty level in the surrounding area.

Median Income



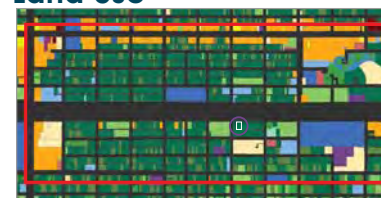
- Household income**
- <\$25,000
 - \$25,000-50,000
 - \$50,000-75,000
 - \$75,000-100,000
 - >\$100,000
- Findings**
- Median household income is between \$25-50,000 immediately around the garden.
 - Median incomes are slightly higher to the north & south.

Active Living



- 5 min walk
 - 10 min walk
 - Light rail
 - Bus routes
 - Bus stops
 - Bike routes
 - Pedestrian bridges
- Findings**
- There are 5 UF&GA gardens within a 10-min walk of The Lovejoy Community Garden.
 - I-94 reduces the connectivity of the garden to the area north of the highway.

Land Use

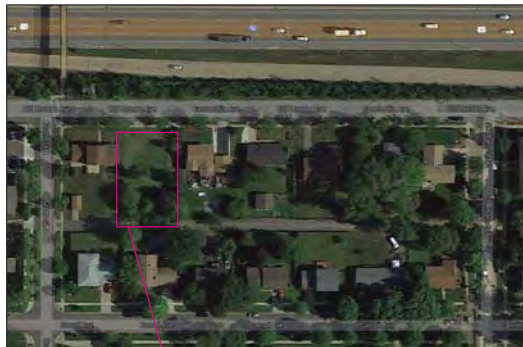


- Single family
- Duplex
- Apartments
- Condo/Townhome
- Other residential
- Churches
- Education
- Civic/Institution
- Retail/commercial/office
- Healthcare
- Publicly owned

The Lovejoy Community Garden

A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

Assets & Opportunities



The Lovejoy Community Garden:
722 Concordia Ave



North View from Alley; Facing Interstate 94
Credit: Hannah Ramer



South Facing View from Concordia Ave
Credit: Hannah Ramer

Location:

The lot sits between the Grotto St and Dale St pedestrian bridges, facing Interstate 94. Single family homes border the east, west and south side of this lot

Parcel History:

2013: Single family home destroyed by fire
2014-2015: Home demolished by City of St. Paul
2015: Margaret Lovejoy purchased the lot

Dimensions:

The lot is 85' wide x 145' deep, just under 1/3rd of an acre

Vegetation:

The current vegetation is mostly turf grass with trees on the periphery

Re-Building Bridges; Re-Building Community



The building of I-94 had a **devastating effect** on the **Rondo neighborhood**, displacing people and disrupting community. The freeway has become a **barrier** to creating a cohesive sense of connection within the surrounding community. The Grotto street pedestrian and bike bridge is scheduled to be **rebuilt** and completed by October, 2016. It is a great opportunity to create a sense of investment and acknowledgement of the needs of the community. This bridge is well **connected to the garden** site and literally bridges the gap that was created by the freeway. After construction the bridges will be renamed for different values; The Grotto St bridge will represent the value of social interaction and the Dale St bridge will represent Hope.



The existing Grotto St bridge will be repaired and renamed in honor of the value of social interaction.
Photo Credit: Hannah Ramer



Nature Enables Connection; Connection Leads to Healing

The garden is envisioned as a place where people can **gather on equal ground**. Often the services provided by **The Family Place** create a one-way relationship between the volunteers and the families. The garden will be a place where people from all walks of life can literally **dig in the dirt together**, connecting over a shared experience and real conversations. The garden will not only be an asset for the community, it will enhance the **"Going Home"** program of The Family Place. Often, families that are homeless struggle to find a connection to the greater community; feeling as if they are on the outside looking in. **The Lovejoy Community Garden** will be a space where people in the **community** can **connect** in ways that are often not possible in daily social interactions for homeless individuals.

Challenges: Long Term Vision Meets Perception & Regulation

Neighborhood Perception

The lot is situated between two single-family homes in a **predominantly single-family neighborhood**. Margaret Lovejoy lives on the block, which is where she grew up and knows many of the neighbors. However, a **community engagement** process can ensure long term success of the garden. The **neighbors** directly surrounding the garden are **in support** of the effort. Engagement with the rest of the neighbors is just beginning.

Are Greenhouses Allowed?

There is desire to build a **greenhouse** to increase the functionality of the space. **Planning Policy** on greenhouses is hard to find and may be considered an **accessory dwelling**. The City of St. Paul puts those into the same category as garages and sheds. These dwellings are only allowed in the rear portion of the lot and can't take up more than 35% of the lot space. They cannot exceed 15 feet in height and no more than 3 accessory dwellings are allowed on a residential lot. However, **hoophouses** are allowed as a **temporary structure**.

Noisy Location

The proximity to the **freeway** makes this a very **noisy** location, which could negatively affect the intended peaceful nature of the garden. This could also impact the **desirability** of visiting the garden. Options for buffering the sound are being discussed, but creating too much of a **barrier** between the street and the garden may pose **safety concerns** and make it feel too **closed off**.

Gaining Momentum

This site has many positive attributes that lend themselves to building a successful, dynamic greenspace that truly is an asset to the community. The fact that it is a privately owned lot influences the design process. However, the owner has spoken with and obtained positive feedback from the direct surrounding neighbors and the momentum of support is building.

The Lovejoy Community Garden

A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

How Policy Takes Shape on the Ground

This poster board explores the policy language in the Minnesota Food Charter, the City of Saint Paul's Ordinances & Zoning and Ramsey County's Active Living Framework and Property Tax Laws. What is outlined here can support the vision and mission of The Lovejoy Community Garden.

Minnesota Food Charter

- Establish a **Food Skills Baseline**, dedicate staff and provide training around healthy food choices
- Offer incentive programs for consumers, such as **'market bucks'** and **'veggie prescription'** programs to promote healthy food choices.
- Strengthen **community food assets**, including community gardens, seed banks, community kitchens, and community-supported agriculture farms.
- Change zoning policies to encourage more **small-scale food** production in communities.
- Establish viable mechanisms for **healthy food** and farm-related enterprise development, such as angel investor **tax credits**, and start-up funding aggregated from public and private sources.
- **Invest** in development and implementation of **effective food systems planning** for communities and regions across Minnesota.

City of Saint Paul: Urban Agriculture Zoning Study

- Propose an agricultural amendment to zoning regulations that reconsiders allowing yards to be used for income generating home occupations.
- Changes have been made to city policy language to **"facilitate** a network of resources to support the production, distribution, and consumption of **healthy and locally grown food"**.
- The city allows **hoophouses** and coldframes as temporary structures, but requires a site plan and a building permit if the structure exceeds 120 square feet.
- The city is currently reviewing regulations on **greenhouses**.
- The language on composting is outdated. The Department of Safety and Inspections is recommending changes allowing a **proportional size limit for outside compost**.

Lovejoy Community Garden Alignments



Active Living Framework: Ramsey County



What Is It?

Active Living looks at how **changes** made in the **built environment** encourage behavioral modifications that increase **physical activity** in ways that are practical and enjoyable. The Active Living Framework of Ramsey County aims to increase peoples' ability to meet the physical activity recommendations of being active at least **5 times a week**. This is accomplished by bringing together various design processes, partnerships, programs, policies and physical projects that will **encourage walking**, taking the stairs, and using recreational facilities.

What are the Strategies?

- **Transform Systems:** Improve bike and pedestrian systems as well as work to reduce physical activity health disparities in target populations.
- **Influence Policy:** Advocate for a multimodal transportation system as well as biking & walking facilities.
- **Enhance Built Environment:** Re-envision how the transportation infrastructure, land use, zoning and community design can work together to increase physical activity.
- **Engage Communities:** Involve leaders, practitioners, ALRC advocates and municipalities. ALRC Coalition will hold quarterly meetings.

Bench Initiative

The Be Active! Be Green! Bench Initiative strives to **encourage people to walk more**. Seniors, people with disabilities and families with small children often are discouraged from walking. The hope of the Bench Initiative is that if people are able to **see the next bench**, they will **feel** more able and encouraged to walk, knowing that they will be able to have a place to rest. **The Lovejoy Community Garden** would be an ideal spot for a **bench**, especially with its proximity to the Grotto Street Pedestrian & Bike bridge. Pilot projects are currently underway in the City of Saint Paul.

Ramsey County Property Tax Exemptions

Ramsey County does exempt certain property from having to pay property tax. If the Lovejoy Community Garden qualifies for property tax exemptions, it could increase the **long-term viability of the garden**. In the Minnesota Statute 272.02 of Exempt Property, the closest category that could apply to this space is Subdivision 7: **Institutions of Public Charity**. In determining whether property is exempt, the following factors must be considered:

- (1) whether the stated purpose of the undertaking is to be **helpful to others without** immediate expectation of **material reward**;
- (2) whether the institution of public charity is supported by material donations, gifts, or government **grants for services** to the **public** in whole or in part;
- (3) whether a material number of the recipients of the charity **receive benefits or services at reduced or no cost**, or whether the organization provides services to the public that **alleviate burdens** or responsibilities that would otherwise be **borne by the government**;
- (4) whether the income received, including material gifts and donations, produces a profit to the charitable institution that is not distributed to private interests;
- (5) whether the **beneficiaries of the charity** are restricted or unrestricted, and, if restricted, whether the class of persons to whom the charity is made available is one having a reasonable **relationship to the charitable objectives**; and
- (6) whether **dividends**, in form or substance, or assets upon dissolution, are **not available to private interests**.

Implications

The existing initiatives, policies, regulations and guidelines at the State, County and City level support the vision of The Lovejoy Community Garden. This level of support is crucial for the long-term success of the land.

The Lovejoy Community Garden

A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

Case Studies: Urban Gardens have been used for building and strengthening communities around the country. From youth, to women, to homeless individuals, gardens can be spaces where different individuals can transform themselves as well as the physical and the social landscape of a community.



Youth Farm: Twin Cities, MN



Connecting youth to food is a way to **create justice** by "meeting the wellness needs of our community and recognizing **historical narratives** and **current exploitation in the food system**. In this program, the students split their time between farm activities, lunch and cooking activities, and other community based projects. During the school year, students continue a variety of after school **farm classes**, **cooking classes**, monthly **community meals**, as well as greenhouse classes.



Programs

There are four 8-week long programs that run throughout the school year and over the summer. The summer program works with 50 to 60 students for 6 hours a day, 3 days a week. The groups are divided into four categories based on age:

- Youth Farmers:** Ages 9-11
- All-Stars:** Ages 12-13
- Project LEAD:** Ages 14-18
- Farm Stewards:** Ages 19-24



Gardens Connect Youth to Food



Homeless Garden Project: Santa Cruz, CA



Located on a 3-acre plot of land in Santa Cruz, the Homeless Garden Project offers **support services** to **homeless** individuals in addition to **job training** and transitional employment. The programs blend formal, experiential and service-learning in their mission: "In the soil of our urban farm and garden, people **find the tools** they need to build a home in the world." The programs offered through the garden are a mix of services, work training as well as **revenue generating** activities to support those services.



Programs

- Women's Organic Flower Enterprise:** Offers the trainees transitional employment and job skills while raising self-esteem and works to replace the isolation that homelessness families experience. All proceeds go back to the program.
- Community Supported Agriculture:** Food grown at the farm is sold for revenue.
- Connecting With Community:** Trainees work with social work interns, connect with resources, and work towards short & long-term goals.
- Cultivating Community:** An educational program that is open to anyone wanting to learn about environmental issues or sustainable agriculture techniques.

Urban Gardens Provide Fresh Food and Training for Homeless



ReVision Urban Farm: Boston, MA



ReVision Urban Farm is a non-profit that, with the help of **volunteers and partners**, turned more than an acre of abandoned lots into a **productive farm**. The food grown on the farm is distributed to the community of Dorchester, which has limited access to fresh, **locally grown food**. They also provide job training for youth and Boston's homeless. A significant portion of their operating expenses are earned through market-rate and reduced-rate **produce sales**. They work in conjunction with a **family-oriented homeless shelter** to provide culturally appropriate food to shelter residents and community members.



Programs

- Community Supported Agriculture:** Generates revenue for the farm through individually purchased garden shares.
- Farm Stand and Farmers Market:** They operate a stand at the local market and take farmers' market coupons, WIC coupons, and SNAP/EBT.
- Job Training & Education:** They teach shelter residents basic job skills, small-scale organic farming, greenhouse management, seedling production, marketing, and community outreach.
- Seedlings:** Revenue generating activity.

Greenhouses Extend the Growing Season



The Power of Gardens

These farms provide examples of how community gardens can be assets to their communities. Relying on volunteers, partners and revenue generating activities, these urban farms and gardens become self-sustaining. These gardens are enterprises that have created a ripple effect in their communities.

The Lovejoy Community Garden

A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

Design ↔ Goals

One of the most important aspects of the design process involves determining programmatic uses of the space. How can The Lovejoy Community Garden foster food and garden education, provide a space for reflection and healing, build community, and grow fresh and nourishing food in a single space? What garden design features could support each goal? In this poster, we explore a menu of options that offer possible alternatives.

Education



Commons

Open common areas allow for workshops, formal instruction, discussions, games, and activities.



Experiential Learning

Themed garden beds can highlight the multiple benefits of garden plants, and offer distinct learning opportunities. Themes might include pollinators, medicinal plants, or the five senses.



Investments

Tools for garden work (like shovels and watering cans) and garden exploration (like magnifying glasses and bug boxes) support experiential learning. Many-sized and adaptive tools help make the garden accessible for all ages and abilities.



Exploration and Discovery

Garden elements that offer opportunities for discovery, like worm bins and 'root view' boxes that allow the gardener see what's growing underground spark creativity & excitement.



Interpretive Information

Signage with plant names and information on use, cultural significance, or ecological role of garden plants can facilitate self-guided learning.

Community



Welcoming Design

Direct sight lines from the street, signage, and lack of fencing contribute to an open and welcoming feeling.



Resting Places

Seating and shade structures invite people to gather, rest, and linger in the garden.



Commons

Communal spaces, such as open grassy areas or a stage, promote community events.



Art

Public interactive art, such as community chalkboards, offer an easy way for anyone to contribute to the space.

Beauty and Healing



Layout

An open layout fosters a sense of freedom and safety, while shelter and differentiation between areas of the garden provide a sense of depth and refuge.



Natural Materials

Stone, wood, organic shapes and curving paths create a natural oasis in the urban environment.



Proclaiming Peace

Peace poles proclaim a spirit of peace and healing in multiple languages. This would offer a visual connection between The Lovejoy Community Garden with the Victoria Garden, a few blocks west on the same street.



Botanical Variety

Plants with a wide variety of colors and textures are opportunities for observation and quiet reflection. Selecting a mix of early-, mid-, and late-season plants will offer new experiences with each visit to the garden as the landscape evolves throughout the season.

Nourishing Food



Edibles

Planting a wide variety of foods including fruits, vegetables, and herbs with successional planting can provide steady harvests throughout the year. Flowers can support food harvests by attracting beneficial insects.



Season Extension

There are a variety of practices and strategies that can extend the harvest season in Minnesota, including planting early and late crops, or installing cold frames, hoop houses, or greenhouses.



Perennials

Plants such as asparagus, fruit trees, raspberries, strawberries, take several seasons to bear fruit, but once established expand the variety of foods grown and provide on-going harvests far into the future.



Agricultural Heritage

With careful selection of crops and varieties, the garden can increase access to culturally-appropriate foods, and preserve heritage varieties and agro-biodiversity.

Programming the Garden

Many of the garden elements that we explore here are complementary, while others involve trade-offs. Each requires a different balance of upfront and on-going investment, in terms of both dollars and labor. All of these factors should be weighed carefully with the four core goals in mind.

The Lovejoy Community Garden

A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

Going Home to the Garden: Enriching The Family Place Curriculum

The Lovejoy Community Garden will enrich the “Going Home” curriculum offered at The Family Place. The 16-week, Adult Life Skills program, empowers the participants to address the root causes of their homelessness. The participants acquire advanced skills to assure success in housing stability and personal wellness.

Garden Elements

Beauty & Healing



Community



Education



Nourishing Food



“Going Home” Curriculum Core Values

Personal Wellbeing

- What is green space? Why do I need it?
- What's good about relaxation?
- How can gardening help with relaxation?
- Why journaling?
- How can you feel good about yourself?
- Mindfulness and getting past your anger: how can it be obtained through daily activities?

Finding Connection

- The meaning of conflict: what is your conflict story?
- How do you obtain character & strength?
- Defining values
- Community of concentric circles
- What happens when we miss love?
- Identify your personal support network
- How can gardening be a family event?

Health & Nutrition

- Can we eat what we grow?
- What do you do when you get sick?
- Healthcare for the homeless
- Cooking matters: emotions and the effect of food
- Gardening and agriculture as employment: ways to work in the food industry

The Garden As Classroom

The garden is a dynamic classroom that enables personal transformation. Each element supports and enhances multiple aspects of the curriculum. The garden has a role to play in showing these connections; through healing yourself, you heal your community, through healing your community, you heal the land, through healing the land, you heal the world!

The Lovejoy Community Garden

A Space for Community, Healing, and Learning

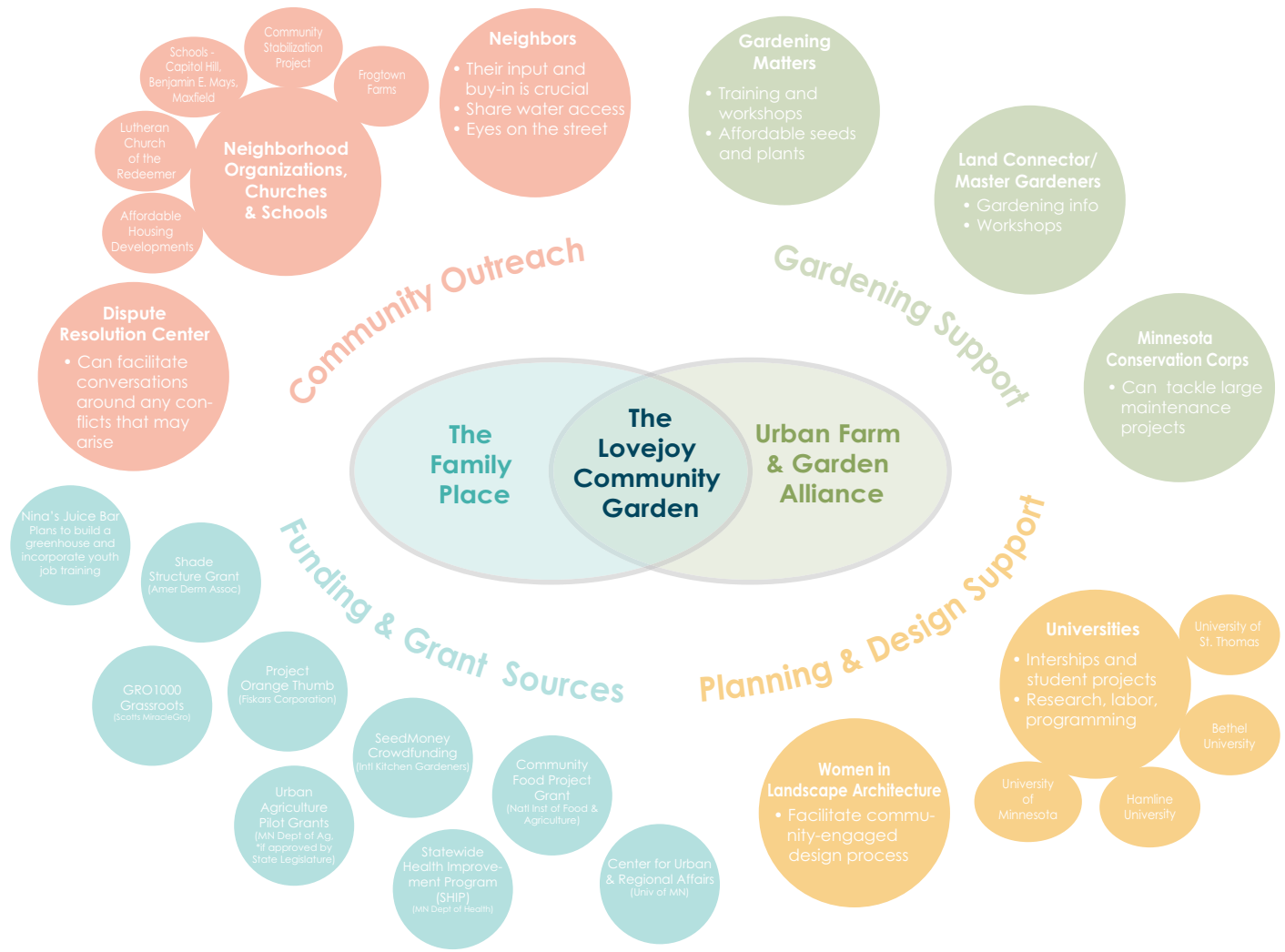
Sustaining the Garden

*If you want to go quickly, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.*
- African Proverb

The physical transformation of the lot into a space that nourishes human development will require a substantial investment of financial and material resources, as well as human and social capital. The proverb to the left reminds us that building a web of partnerships can help muster the resources necessary for the planning and design, building and planting, on-going maintenance, and programming of the garden. Though this takes time, cultivating authentic partnerships is essential to make The Lovejoy Community Garden a vibrant community

Cultivating Partnerships

Below we highlight partnerships that could be useful to mobilize the vision for The Lovejoy Community Garden. Many of these partnerships have already been initiated, while others are opportunities we see on the horizon, recognizing that new opportunities for partnerships will emerge as the project continues to grow and evolve.



Looking to the Future

The seeds of The Lovejoy Community Garden have already been sown. Engaging neighbors in the design and care of the garden will feed the garden's roots, and cultivating partnerships with a wide variety of organizations will provide cross-pollination. As the garden grows, the fruits of The Lovejoy Community Garden - healthier individuals, families, communities, and land - can be shared by all.