

DETERMINATION OF ATTITUDES OF COMMUNITY LEADERS IN ALACHUA  
COUNTY TOWARDS COMMUNITY GARDENS

BY

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To my wife and cats, and their unending support

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|      |   |
|------|---|
| CBR  | Community Based Research                          |
| CG   | Community Garden.                                 |
| COG  | City of Gainesville.                              |
| ECSC | Energy Conservation Strategies Commission         |
| FOG  | Florida Organic Growers                           |
| IFAS | Institute of Food and Agricultural Science        |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats |
| VLCA | Vacant Lot Cultivation Associations               |

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School  
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DETERMINATION OF ATTITUDES OF COMMUNITY LEADERS IN ALACHUA  
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By

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Community gardens were a defining point in homo-sapiens transition from a hunter-gatherer society to one that could establish cities, and what we would consider modern day societies. As humanity has continued to evolve community gardens have transitioned along with mankind serving different roles based upon our needs.

This project was a qualitative, cross-sectional, non-experimental holistic case study based on using primary and secondary data to determine attitudes of community leaders in Alachua County towards community gardens. This study primarily entailed conducting interviews of identified community leaders, and reviewing and analyzing published information concerning community gardens. Case studies and information on implemented community gardens across the United States were reviewed to provide background information for this case study.

The research done here while valid for Alachua County may be of use in suggesting further research in other areas as a comparative between locations.

Alternatively, performing the same research at a later date in Alachua County would allow for a comparison of potential changes over time.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

The first true hallmark of modern day civilization involved the domestication of plants and the development of agriculture. This pivotal shift away from being hunter gatherers to one where a community of people began relying on communal gardens for sustenance paved the way to the spread of modern agriculture and our current day civilization. In effect our civilization would not have been possible if it were not for community gardening. Just as our civilization has transformed over time, so has our view concerning community gardens. The view on community gardens has changed in regards to external stimuli, typically in response to wars or national/worldwide economic depressions. While some people don't support gardening spaces being provided for those who do not own land, others believe that community gardens can be a true benefit for society as they bring together a community's residents. The goal of this project is to identify attitudes of current community leaders and decision makers in Alachua County towards community gardens.

### **Community Gardens Defined**

According to John Ferris, "What distinguishes a community garden from a private garden is the fact that it is in some sense a public garden in terms of ownership, access, and degree of democratic control," (Ferris, Norman, & Sempik, 2001). The key part of this definition is that it involves a gardening area that is available for more than just the owners of the land to benefit from its production, while allowing members of the community to benefit from gardening on the land.

## **Historical Attitudes to Community Gardens in the United States**

According to Laura Lawson, community gardening in the United States dates back to New England town commons (Lawson, 2004). Hazen Pingree, Detroit's mayor during the 1893-1897 depression started gardening as a means for unemployed workers to grow their own food instead of being forced to rely on charity. Vacant Lot Cultivation Associations (VLCA) or unofficially as Pingree's Potato Patches, were the names given to these community gardening initiatives (Lawson, 2004). This initial project proved so successful that according to county commissioner Mr. S.L. Holzman, "The people have raised a large amount of garden stuff, even though it was put in a month late, including corn, potatoes, cabbage, beets, beans, squash, and other vegetables... Many have stored away a supply for the winter, and just so much of a burden will be lifted from the shoulders of the charity organizations," (Sociological notes.1895). The program proved to be so successful that the program in short order became a requirement for anyone receiving assistance from Detroit's poor commission. Additionally, other major cities in 1895 such as New York and Boston put in place similar garden-based programs to assist the poor (Lawson, 2004). These programs were kept in place until the economy pulled out of a depression. The end of poor economic times meant that employment was easier to find, and as land values improved gardens were forced to relocate or closed permanently (Lawson, 2004).

World War I saw Europe starving, with its able bodied men fighting and dying on the fronts instead of growing food. The United States entered the war in 1917, and the Herbert Hoover administration strongly promoted community gardens, called at the time Liberty Gardens, across the United States. All available land was utilized in this gardening effort with even golf courses being sacrificed for food production (Lawson,

2004). In fact across the country nearly five percent of urban dwellers started gardens during this time, based on the United States population of approximately 105 million people with more than 5 million gardeners taking part (Historical National Population, 2016; McClintock, 2010). All income groups were urged to participate by the government and “local food production was envisioned as ammunition to win the war,” (Maltz, 2015). The resultant surplus in food due to the community gardens allowed the United States to ensure that the allies, especially Britain, did not starve during the war (Maltz, 2015). At the conclusion of World War I, despite advocates arguing for continued community gardens, governmental support was cut off and the organizations and gardens withered away (Lawson, 2004).

As the Roaring Twenties gave way to the Great Depression with the simultaneous strike of the Dust Bowl in the 1930's, the United States government turned again to community gardens as one of the efforts to break the despair and unemployment of the time (Lawson, 2004; Worster, 1982). This effort was different from past effort in that the government prohibited the sale of any surplus, so as to not to make matters worse for the struggling agricultural industry. The government ended its support of this program in 1937 with the advent of food stamps in combination with employment programs in public works and park systems (Lawson, 2004). This loss of federal support led to a decline in community gardening.

World War II led to a renewed impetus by the Allied governments to promote community gardens, which were rebranded as Victory Gardens. These community gardens were not driven by concerns of food scarcity, but instead to promote consumption of healthier food, exercise, recreation, to give relatives of people away at

war something productive to focus their energies on, and to promote a more beautiful environment (Lawson, 2004). The Victory Gardens were successful on all accounts and produced a large percentage of the annually consumed vegetables during the war (National victory garden conference. 1943; Lawson, 2004). This time, after the war ended, a few of the gardens survived, such as Fenway Community Garden in Boston (Lawson, 2004). In general federal support for community gardens once again waned as their purpose had been fulfilled, and the community gardening movement fell to the wayside.

An attempted revival was given to community gardens when President Obama took office and his wife Michelle Obama opened the White House garden in 2009 with the help of students from a local elementary school. With Michelle Obama and White House support, community gardens were once again strongly advocated with top down support and over 700 organizations being brought on board to support gardeners in efforts to start new gardens (Let's Move Gardening Guide, Accessed Jan 26th, 2016).

Community garden history in the United States shows that federal, state, and local governmental support has been cyclical in nature. The community gardens truly thrived in the United States with federal government advocacy; when the federal government was not strongly advocating community gardens their popularity declined substantially. The gardens have been recognized as providing numerous benefits to the participants and the community. Some of the benefits of community gardens include: making healthy food available, beautification of the environment, community involvement and resiliency, cross generational and cultural integration, educational opportunities, exercise, improved health of participants and their families, improved

property values, reclamation of derelict properties, reduced crime, reducing food miles from garden to table, and reduction in participants stress (Allison, Fontaine, Manson, Stevens, & VanItallie, 1999; Brown, 2015; Corrigan, 2011; Deparle & Gebeloff, 2010; Draper & Freedman, 2010; Ferris et al., 2001; Hale et al., 2011; Keihner et al., 2013; Lawson, 2004; Lawson, 2005a; Let's Move Gardening Guide, Accessed Jan 26th, 2016; Malnick. & Knobler, 2006; Maltz, 2015; Obama, 2012; Schmelzkopf, 1995; Smith, 2010; Tan & Neo, 2009; Teig et al., 2009; Voicu & Been, 2008; Weber & Matthews, 2008; Zick, Smith, Kowaleski-Jones, Uno, & Merrill, 2013)

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine the current attitudes of community leaders in Alachua County, Florida, USA towards community gardens. Alachua County is a large county comprised of several municipalities the largest of which, Gainesville, Florida, is home to the University of Florida. The majority of the county is rural in nature, but development and expansion of its lands is rapidly occurring. Alachua County has historically been an agricultural county, but increasing urbanization is changing its character. With a higher percentage of people living in an urban environment, more and more people no longer have the option of growing their own food. The benefits of community gardens are numerous, and it is important to determine if Alachua County's leaders are supporting community garden programs. History has shown that top down support from the federal level towards community gardens plays a large role in determining whether community gardens are able to prosper. Perhaps equally important as national level support is local leadership that provides the same level of support and opportunity for growth of community gardens. An understanding of the community

leaders' attitudes towards the community gardens is a key requirement in determining the local support level for community gardens.

### **Scope and Limitations**

This project focuses on Alachua County, Florida, and as such the conclusions drawn, while valid for the members of the community, may not be applicable without comparable research in other locations. The focus on this research will be descriptive in nature and will draw upon original research conducted within Alachua County. Alachua County has the University of Florida at the heart of its largest municipality, Gainesville. The University of Florida was originally formed as a land grant University and was focused on agricultural research. While the University of Florida still has a major agricultural program it has evolved over time and now has 16 colleges offering over 100 undergraduate majors and over 200 graduate programs. The effects of the University on the community could influence the results into being more progressive than many other comparative areas where a major university is not established and a driving force in the community.

It is possible that some of the respondents are not aware of community gardens; the attempt to assess their attitude towards community gardens could pique their curiosity and allow them to learn more.

### **Summary**

Underpinning modern society is the ability to provide food for its people. This began when mankind transitioned to an agrarian society and planted the very first community gardens. Utilization of community gardens in the United States has been cyclical, typically, in response to wars and depressions with an uptick in community gardens

typically right after entry, and a downswing in community gardens upon the conclusion of the event. Some United States citizens still suffer from poverty and insufficient food resources, but what tends to be overlooked is the War on Poverty first declared by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964,

“Unfortunately, many Americans live on the outskirts of hope—some because of their poverty, and some because of their color, and all too many because of both. Our task is to help replace their despair with opportunity. This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America. I urge this Congress and all Americans to join with me in that effort.” (Whitehouse, 2014)

Alachua County has 22.9 percent of its residents, not including college students who change the rate to 15 percent, living below the poverty level as of 2013 (Alachua County, 2013). These numbers show that the war on poverty has not been won.

Community gardens have been used in the past to help win wars indirectly, perhaps this is the time that they can be used to directly win a war. Currently, the Obama administration is advocating community gardens with the First Lady’s support. The federal initiatives depend on local support, and ultimately the attitudes of local leaders towards community gardens.

This master’s research project research determines what the county leaders’ attitudes are towards community gardens. Additionally, if the results indicate a positive attitude towards community gardens in the community, but a lack of implementation then this report may serve as the impetus to encourage future development of community gardens within Alachua County.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Introduction**

What sparks change? Change can be brought about for a variety of reasons from new technology to changing attitudes towards a subject. Community gardens have played a strong role in sparking change in our society.

To understand where we are today, it is important to recognize just how recently we have achieved our civilization. Our genus of modern homo-sapiens developed between 110,000 and 200,000 thousand years ago in Africa (Wurz, Lombard, & Dusseldorp, 2013). Our species as all the others in our family tree were initially hunter gatherers. Approximately 10,000 years ago humanity transitioned from hunter gatherers to community gardens, which were the forbearers of modern agriculture. This revolution has led to mankind becoming an ultrasociety. An ultrasociety is one whereby a small percentage of the population is able to provide food for everyone else. This allows for the society to focus on endeavors besides working towards just sustenance to maintain the population (Gowdy & Krall, 2014). Our civilization could not exist without the development of community gardens as surviving solely by hunting meat or foraging for food would never have allowed our society to reach the level of civilization we have achieved.

Our current state of civilization through the implementation of technology and due to increasing economic inequalities can put in place impediments to peoples' interactions with each other. Researcher Ichiro Kawachi has studied income inequality, and its relationship to social disorganization. His research indicates that the higher the level of income inequalities the weaker the social bonds are that exist between people.

This can lead directly to higher crime rates and further inequalities between people (Kawachi, Kennedy, & Wilkinson, 1999).

### **Community Gardens as a Means of Improved Social Cohesion**

Community gardens were the medium for change in enabling mankind's ascendance to civilization. They can also be the means to bring people together by enabling social structures to form. Sarah Wakefield along with her colleagues Yeudall, Taron, Reynolds, and Skinner (2007) addressed part of this in her study, *Growing Urban Health: Community Gardening in South-East Toronto*. This study utilized Community-Based Research (CBR), which is defined as "research with a substantial level of community participation for the purposes of community improvement and social change," (p. 93). This research involved direct observation of community gardeners, focus groups, and in depth interviews. The research, in addition to showing that people appreciated having better access to healthier organic food, added that they valued additional social opportunities. According to Wakefield and her colleagues research (2007) one participant said, "I give away tomato... I enjoy it because when I reap, my friends come and share ... they give me warm reception," (p. 97). Another gardener commented, "In the process of organizing this garden in the community, it helps people, it helps us to organize other programmes that will be able to help us encourage each other..." (p.98) (Wakefield, Yeudall., Taron., Reynolds., & Skinner, 2007). As these two individuals and the research has shown, the community gardens allow for social interactions beyond just the gardens themselves. This additional social interaction is important especially in lower income areas where social organizations may not exist or be beyond the means of those struggling to survive. If community gardens can empower the individuals involved to develop positive social interactions and connect

within their community, then they enable those individuals to become a part of the greater community and improve the very social fabric that we all live in.

## **Changing Attitudes in America Towards Community Gardens**

### **Federal Government**

The United States Federal government's changing attitudes towards community gardens has had the most direct impact on them since the inception of our country. As mentioned in the introduction community gardens have been used for several purposes by the United States federal government from producing large percentages of the United State's food production to serving as a means to employ people, take their minds off of loved ones at war, beautification, and to provide employment for the populace to name a few purposes (National victory garden conference. 1943; Burdett, 1943; Lawson, 2004; Lawson, 2005b; Maltz, 2015; Worster, 1982). It is a fact that without the federal government's strong positive attitudes and support towards community gardens they cannot fully prosper to the benefit of not just the individual taking part, but to the nation as a whole.

### **State Government**

The fifty states comprising the Republic of the United States of America have varying attitudes and thus levels of support towards community gardens ranging from none to strongly supportive. A valid means to determine a state's level of support is by determining if the state has ordinances or statutes, which directly support community gardens. Currently, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Tennessee, and the District of Colombia have statutes in place concerning community gardens (Shinkle, 2014). This equates out to ten percent of the states having codified policies towards community gardens.

Where government is an extension of the will of the people, these states have shown that their leadership has a positive view of community gardens. That said there is a wide variance in what the codes call out. Illinois has a single mention of community gardens as part of a nutrition program funded by a federal block grant (State of Illinois, 2016). Thus the State of Illinois program recognizes the importance of receiving federal funds towards assisting with community gardens, but does not directly support through legislature action community gardens beyond that. The District of Columbia, while not a state, has a fairly developed code in place. While California and New York have the most detailed codes in place concerning community gardens.

The District of Columbia leadership has made evident their positive attitude and support of community gardens through statute 48-002 food production and urban gardens program. This statute has three primary components. The first component is developing a continually updated list of vacant lots. Secondly, ensuring the public has access to the updated list with updates made at least quarterly. Third, developing and advocating policies that lead to the usage of the vacant lots for food production. To facilitate this standard forms are made available, which release owners from maintenance and insurance responsibilities in exchange for allowing urban gardeners to use the property. The statute also has provisions instructing the University of the District of Columbia to assist in providing guidance for the gardening efforts. Recognizing that one of community gardening's' benefits is educational, the statute instructs coordination of educational programs to assist students for careers related to gardening. The final aspect of the statute is to provide incentives promoting citizens to become gardeners on the vacant lots through the Food Production and Urban Gardens Program (District of

Columbia, 2016). By readily providing information to the public as to the status of both private and public available land, and having the University providing guidance to the gardeners the District of Columbia is actively supporting and promoting the development of community gardens. This shows that the District of Columbia's leaders firmly believe that community gardens are a valuable resource for its citizens.

The State of California has several statutes that assist in the development of community gardens. California's Code 12804.5 instructs the State of California's Secretary and its Consumer Services Agency to assist organizations that wish to develop community gardens. Under statute 14670 the State's Director of General Services is allowed to lease properties owned by the state to other public entities to be used as community vegetable gardens for up to five years per lease period. This statute does restrict the size to no more than five acres and prevents contiguous parcels from being leased for the same use. California code 104.7(a) allows its Department of Transportation to lease undeveloped property held for future road projects to local municipal governments for a dollar per year for a minimum lease period of one year. The first priority for this property is agricultural and community gardens, and only if that is not possible then it can be used for recreational uses. California government code 66477(f) legally allows for municipal groups to commit land and facilities for community gardening (Shinkle, 2014).

New York State has within its Agriculture and Markets Law 31-f concerning community gardening the following:

The legislature hereby finds and declares that community gardens provide significant health, educational and social benefits to the general public, especially for those who reside in urban and suburban areas of this state. Furthermore, it is the articulated public policy of this state to promote and

foster growth in the number of community gardens and the acreage of such gardens. The community garden movement continues to provide low cost food that is fresh and nutritious for those who may be unable to readily afford fresh fruits and vegetables for themselves or their families, promotes public health and healthier individual lifestyles by encouraging better eating habits and increased physical activity by growing their own food, fosters the retention and expansion of open spaces, particularly in urban environments, enhances urban and suburban environmental quality and community beautification, provides inexpensive community building activities, recreation and physical exercise for all age groups, establishes a safe place for community involvement and helps to reduce the incidence of crime, engenders a closer relationship between urban residents, nature and their local environment, and fosters green job training and ecological education at all levels. It is therefore the intent of the legislature and the purpose of this article to foster growth in the number, size and scope of community gardens in this state by encouraging state agencies, municipalities and private parties in their efforts to promote community gardens (State of New York, 2016)

The State of New York's Article 2-C Agriculture and Markets Law created an office of community gardens to help in developing community gardens upon vacant public lands. This office is meant to help prospective community gardeners identify and apply to develop community gardens on the vacant lands. Grant programs are also coordinated by the office of community gardens and are funded through the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Environmental Protection Fund as well as the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. New York's General Municipal Law Article 5, section 96 specifically allows for municipalities to establish agreements, contracts, leases, or fees for community gardens to be established on public land. The law does provide for requiring the gardeners to either possess liability insurance or hold the state without liability for any damages that may occur to the gardeners for using the land as a community garden. The law further provides that the municipality can contribute or provide at cost to the community garden resources necessary to establish or maintain the garden. Under the State of New York Agriculture

and Market Law 31-J, the commissioner can assemble a community gardens task force to encourage both private and public concerns to establish and continue to develop community gardens (Shinkle, 2014).

### **Alachua County, FL**

Owing to the influence of the University of Florida within Alachua County both the City of Gainesville and Alachua County can be progressive on some issues. Alachua County in 2008 assembled its Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC) comprised of members from the community. This commission assembled a 185 page document presented to the Board of County Commissioners with recommendations for improving the sustainability of the county. The group's recommendations concerning community gardens were to encourage their cultivation, produce an inventory of public lands that could be used for community gardens, work with private and nonprofit organizations to help develop community gardens, encourage summer youth employment at community gardens, encourage the local school board to implement community gardens, encourage court services to have community service hour work performed at community gardens, and encourage support of private sector and non-profit foundations towards community gardening (Energy Conservation Strategies Commission, 2009). These and other specific recommendations did not make a lot of head way after the Energy Conservation Strategies Commission was disbanded after presentation of its report.

Alachua County has under section 404.13.1 of county land development codes the following concerning community gardens:

Community gardens are allowed as a limited use in all zoning districts, in Traditional Neighborhood and Transit Oriented Developments, and in designated secondary open space and common areas within

developments including planned developments, subject to the following standards:

(d) Garden Management

Each community garden shall post a sign at the site with the name and contact information of the person or entity responsible for the garden, and may also include the name of the garden. The sign shall not exceed six square feet in area. If the sign is a freestanding sign it shall be no more than four feet tall.

(e) Site Design

1. Use of the site shall be subject to all standards in this ULDC and to any approved development plan. 2. The following accessory buildings or structures may be permitted on site in conjunction with a community garden:

- a. Greenhouses used for plant cultivation;
- b. Sheds used for tool and materials storage; and
- c. Seasonal farm stands if approved by the Director in accordance with Chapter 402, Article 25, Temporary Use Permits.

(f) Sustainable Practices Encouraged Site users are encouraged to use sustainable gardening practices, such as organic techniques, and the use of non-organic pesticides is discouraged (Board of Alachua County Commissioners, 2011).

This is the extent of the Alachua County's ordinances towards community gardens, but Alachua County has contained within its 2011-2030 comprehensive plan additional support for community gardens. The following policies apply:

Under Rural and Agricultural Policies

**Policy 6.1.4** The County shall support the development of markets and programs that promote the sale of locally produced agricultural goods, including but not limited to farmers markets, community gardens, farm to institution programs, and agritourism opportunities. The County shall partner with local community groups and organizations and other local governments to pursue funding sources for the development of a sustainable local food system.

**Policy 6.1.5.2** Community gardens shall be allowed in the Urban Cluster in areas with an urban residential land use designation, mixed-use areas or in Activity Centers as permitted uses subject to the standards provided in the land development regulations and administrative approval by the Growth Management Department.

**Policy 6.2.12** Open Space Area in Clustered Subdivision subsection c1 Permitted uses in the open space area are natural resource conservation

areas, non-intensive agriculture including community gardens, silviculture, and common open space, resource-based recreation uses which maintain the undeveloped area in a natural state, permeable stormwater facilities consistent with Stormwater Element.

Under Human-Related Resources Objective 5.2 Open Space

**Policy 5.2.2** Pervious open space shall be provided on at least 20% of the development site through a variety of features such as: (a) Open spaces dedicated primarily to public, recreation, or pedestrian use, such as community gardens, community fields, greens, plazas, and squares.

Community Health Element Objective 1.3 Promote a healthy community by providing for obesity prevention and prevention of other chronic illnesses.

**Policy 1.3.1.2** Alachua County shall consider programs to encourage property owners to make use of vacant properties as community gardens.

**Policy 1.3.1.3** Continue to offer support for home and community gardening through programs

offered by USDA Farm to School Programs and the Alachua County Extension Office and target low-income and populations at high-risk for health disparity for programs promoting gardening, healthy food access and nutrition improvement. Under Energy Element Objective 6.3 Encourage the use of community gardens, green roofs and edible landscapes by Alachua County residents.

**Policy 6.3.1** Identify potential sites for community gardens on appropriate county-owned lands considering areas such as parks, libraries, recreation and senior centers, public easements, rights-of-way and surplus lands.

**Policy 6.3.2** In cooperation with the Alachua County Library District, explore the feasibility of a county-sponsored community garden program at District library sites.

**Policy 6.3.3** Explore opportunities to incorporate community gardens, perennial edible landscaping and green roofs at county-owned facilities and rights-of-way. Evaluation shall include an audit of all available public spaces on County properties where such uses may be appropriately located.

**Policy 6.3.4** The land development regulations shall encourage the use of perennial edible plants in landscaped areas.

**Policy 6.3.5** The land development regulations shall address the use of open space areas for community gardens and allow portions of green roofs to count toward the open space required for new developments in accordance with Objective 5.2 of the Conservation and Open Space Element, and Policy 5.2.3 specifically

**Policy 8.1.4** The County shall use a portion of the waste stream, such as food waste and brush cuttings, for composting and work with other local groups to make it available for use by community gardens and local farms (Board of Alachua County Commissioners, 2012).

These policies put forward a strong level of written commitment by Alachua County towards community gardens. A strong level of stated commitment is one thing though, and actually having a thriving community garden program is another. Alachua County itself has currently no community gardens that have been implemented following the above. Meanwhile both of the other major institutions being the City of Gainesville and the University of Florida have their own community garden programs.

In 2015, the new County Manager Doctor Lee Niblock formed the Alachua County Sustainability Council. The goal of the Sustainability Council, whose membership was drawn from each county department, was to re-examine the ECSC report and report back to the Board of County Commissioners what recommendations had been completed and what were in progress. County staff initially began drawing up plans for implementation of two community garden style projects located within Chestnut Park and Jonesville Park. These would have been the first two community parks implemented by Alachua County. Since that time the county's plan has evolved into establishing fruiting orchards in Jonesville Parks, and instead of regular shade trees being used for new plantings to use fruiting trees.

### **New York City, NY**

The smallest level of government that people interact with are cities. Right now 54 percent of the world's population lives in cities as of 2014 and that proportion is expected to increase to 66 percent by 2050. It is important to look at cities' attitudes of community gardens (United Nations, 2014). New York City has long been one of the United States leading cities. The city has long been comprised of a melting pot of not just people but ideas. These ideas become over time ideals that can be both embraced and challenged. Christopher Smith and Hilda Kurtz as part of their case study examined

New York City's Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's attitudes towards community gardens in regards to the city's effort to auction off 114 community gardens in May of 1999 (Smith & Kurtz, 2003). Smith's article details the current crop of community gardens in New York City as having their beginnings in the 1970's as a means to fight urban decay and abandonment. These guerilla gardeners utilized a bottom up approach to establish their community gardens without any governmental assistance, and indeed at the time New York City was in the throes of bankruptcy. Many of these gardens were started without the permission of the land owners with so called green guerillas even resorting to throwing water balloons with seeds over fences to propagate the gardens (Schmelzkopf, 1995; Smith & Kurtz, 2003).

In 1978, the garden activists achieved city recognition for their activities when the city implemented Operation Green Thumb (GreenThumb, 2016; Smith & Kurtz, 2003). This program gave official recognition to the community gardeners and set in place community resources to make them successful. The caveat contained with this recognition was that the leases all contained language allowing the city to close the garden with 30 day notice (Smith, 2000; Smith & Kurtz, 2003). This form of revert clause is not an uncommon clause used by public entities in regards to community gardens. These revocation clauses can cause stress on those that utilize the gardens because they do not know at what point their garden plot might be terminated.

New York City's election of Mayor Giuliani in 1994 saw community gardens become imperiled. Sixty-seven of the community gardens were dismantled over four years and 114 more were placed for public auction and due to be liquidated in May 1999 (Honiman, 1999; Smith & Kurtz, 2003). This is a perfect example of how leadership's

attitudes towards community gardens can fluctuate. Mayor Giuliani, as the duly elected mayor of New York City, viewed the gardens as little more than surplus land that the city could reap a windfall from, if sold for development. The mayor slurred the community gardeners and activists as little more than communists (Raver, 1999; Smith & Kurtz, 2003), these were the same people that toiled to make the land better. By attempting to link the gardeners who were growing produce to 'evil' communists, he showed the contempt that a multi-millionaire mayor had towards people that had worked laboriously to grow their own food on what had been vacant lots. An offer of 2 million dollars was made on behalf of the gardeners to keep the gardens, but Mayor Giuliani refused this offer (Raver, 1999). In the end, a deal was struck whereby some of the gardens were 'sold' to the Trust for Public Land for 4.2 million dollars. This purchase of the community gardens' lands ensured that these gardens would not be sold out from under the gardeners in the interests of redevelopment. With that said, is it right for private citizens to have to raise money or pray for a white knight to purchase public land to ensure that public land stays public, and is not sold to another entity that prohibits the public from being able to utilize the land? As of 2016, the parks department of New York City is currently a strong advocate of community gardens and the city has over 600 community gardens (GreenThumb, 2016) New York City in this manner has served as a microcosm for community gardens where support from the leadership has been supportive to destructive in nature, thus showing how the attitudes of the community leaders play a large part in community gardens existence.

### **Gainesville, FL**

Searching on municode.com where the City of Gainesville stores its codes and ordinances provided no information concerning community garden codification.

Speaking to John Weber, who runs the City of Gainesville community garden program through the parks department, confirmed that no codes or city ordinances exist concerning community gardens (Weber, 2016). That said the City of Gainesville has seven active community gardens, with two new ones in development, run through its park department. The oldest was started in 1997. The City has a well-developed application process for applying to use city property for development of new parks (see [Appendix A Welcome to the City of Gainesville's Community Garden Program](#) and [Appendix B City of Gainesville Community Garden License Agreement](#)). By having operational community gardens and an established means by which new community gardens can be developed the City of Gainesville has shown that it is actively involved in the community gardening movement. Additionally, the City of Gainesville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department has developed its own 2020 master plan in conjunction with AECOM that performed data acquisition and analysis. This analysis showed that even with the active community gardens there is both an unmet need and opportunities for improvement with regards to community gardens (City of Gainesville & AECOM, 2012). By continuing to support on paper the active and developing community parks, the City of Gainesville's leadership has shown that they have faith in the fact that community parks are providing a valuable service to the community.

### **Literature Review Analysis**

As evidenced by the myriad of city, state, and federal levels of support towards community gardens shown in both the introduction and the literature review, the attitudes of leaders plays a large part in how well community gardens are able to prosper. Mayor Giuliani is a prime example of what can happen when a leader chooses to go to war with community gardens, and attempts to eradicate them. On the one hand,

it shows that people can band together to attempt to stop the eradication, and yet even with a white knight providing multiple millions of dollar not all of the community gardens were saved. A different leadership example attempting to inspire more community gardens is Michele Obama who has been an outspoken proponent of them. Yet, when President Obama's presidency is over will the incoming President have the White House garden removed much as Eleanor Roosevelt's Victory Garden was removed when President Roosevelt's tenure ended (Schumm, 2014)?

A small minority of states have attempted to codify community gardens in their laws and statutes. Codification can formally recognize community gardens and provide a base level of service that the communities can then choose to expand upon. Given the small number of states that have chosen to go this route, it is even more important to determine the attitudes of local community leaders in both the county and city level towards community gardens as they, much like Mayor Giuliani, are the ones that truly control the fate of community gardens. Codes, laws, and statutes in the end can only go so far, assuming they are written in the first place, with 90 percent of the states not having any codification on the books. In the end, it comes down to leaderships' attitudes towards community gardens as to how they are treated.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### **Background**

The goal of this research was to understand what the attitudes of Alachua County leaders are towards community gardens following a case study methodology approach. To accomplish this goal Alachua County and its major municipality the City of Gainesville, Florida have been examined in regards to instituted policies with attention paid to codes, ordinances, and other literature published by the two entities.

Additionally, interviews were conducted on people in leadership positions for both municipalities. Leadership positions as referred to here are elected government officials and individuals that have been involved in the development or promotion of community gardens. The examination time frame for this project was between January and July of 2016.

Examining the existing literature it was evident that little research had been undertaken directly examining the attitudes of people in leadership roles towards community gardens, with no discovery of any research previously directly examining leaderships' attitudes towards community gardens in Alachua County. Restricting the examined attitudes to leaderships' attitudes within Alachua County was chosen to make the project manageable as attempting to expand the project into state and federal government leadership or opening it to the general public would be impractical under time constraints. As fellow University of Florida Master's student Sarah (Perch, 2011) points out, "... those involved in studying community gardens concentrated on the benefits of community gardening," (p. 34). Her research into community gardens used a grounded theory approach to help fill the gap in understanding of barriers to community

gardens. Much as the research she performed identified barriers, the research in this project focused on identifying attitudes and beliefs of community leaders towards community gardens.

### **Defining the Study Approach**

This project was a qualitative cross-sectional, non-experimental holistic case study basis using primary and secondary data. Qualitative Research according to Kumar (2014),

“This is embedded in the philosophy of empiricism; follows an open, flexible and unstructured approach to enquiry; aims to explore diversity rather than to quantify; emphasizes description and narration of feelings, perceptions and experiences rather than their measurement; and communicates findings in a descriptive and narrative rather than analytical manner, placing no or less emphasis on generalizations,” (p. 379).

A cross-sectional study means that the research is done at a particular point in time.

According to Yin (2014), a case study is “a study that investigates contemporary phenomenon in depth and in its real-world context,” (p. 237). Case studies are the preferred research method when relevant behaviors can be observed, but typically not manipulated.

As this study concerns the relationship of the attitudes of community leaders in Alachua County towards community gardens, it is important to define the major municipalities within Alachua County, being Alachua County and the City of Gainesville. As of 2014, the City of Gainesville has an estimated population of 128,000 people or 50 percent of the population in Alachua County, while the unincorporated areas of Alachua County comprised of approximately 102,000 people or 40 percent of the population of Alachua County. None of the other cities within Alachua County had over 10,000 residents (US Census, May, 2016).

## Research Questions and their Development

For the purposes of this research it was important to determine at the onset an operational definition of what a community garden is.

A community garden is an area of land where community residents are able to grow plants in order to feed themselves and others. The location for the community garden is typically a previously unused or underutilized piece of land. Permission to garden on the land is typically asked for by the gardeners prior to gardening activities commencing. A community garden does not limit who can become members, but may prevent new members from joining if all of the plots are being used.

A key point behind this definition of community gardens is that membership is not restrictive to any particular group of people. This definition of a community garden would not count school gardens as they typically only allow people related to the school to use them.

Case study research should make strong use of “how” and “why” questions to provide quality qualitative information (Yin, 2014). The reasoning behind this is to provide a descriptive answer. Qualitative research when compared to quantitative research seeks to discover the how and why of a matter. An example of the difference would be in quantitative research “Is the sky blue today?” Yes or No? Where as in qualitative research the question might be “Why is the sky blue?” This type of question is known as an open ended question and has to be answered in a descriptive manner as “yes” or “no” answers do not provide any significant meaning.

The specific research objectives were:

1. Determine if community leaders are aware of what community gardens are
  - a) Sample question: Can you please describe as best you can what a community garden is?
2. Determine what community leaders views are as to the benefits of community gardens

- a) Sample question: Can you please describe the benefits of a community garden as you see it?
- 3. Determine what community leaders view as the drawbacks of community gardens
  - a) Sample question: Can you please describe any of the drawbacks of a community garden as you see it?
- 4. Determine if community leaders' institutions supports community gardens
  - a) Sample question: How does (insert name of organization the person is with) support community gardens?
- 5. Determine community leaders' direct support of community gardens
  - a) Sample question: How have you supported community gardens?
- 6. Learn about community leaders' past attitude towards community gardens
  - a) Sample question: How would you describe your past attitudes towards community gardens?
- 7. Determining community leaders current attitudes towards community gardens
  - a) Sample question: How would you describe your attitude towards community gardens?
- 8. Determination if interview has affected interviewee's attitude towards community gardens
  - a) Sample question: Do you feel that this interview has changed your view towards community gardens?
    - i) If so, in what way?

(See [Appendix C](#) for the complete set of interview questions relating to research objectives)

### **Overview of Data Collection Methodology**

An understanding of the methods used in the data collection is important to show that quality data could be uncovered in this case study. Two primary means of data

collection were used in this case study; examination of existing documentation and interviews of leaders within Alachua County.

Documentation consisted of codes, ordinances, published policies, previous studies, transcripts of meetings, and video presentations of board meetings. To discover codes and ordinances the [municode.com](http://municode.com) website was examined. This website is a service that both Alachua County and the City of Gainesville utilize for publishing their codes and ordinances. Examining the websites of [alachuacounty.us](http://alachuacounty.us) and [cityofgainesville.org](http://cityofgainesville.org) allowed for discovery of published policies, transcripts of meetings, and video presentations of board meetings. Additional research was performed through google scholar and the University of Florida's online George A. Smather's library system to research previous studies. Examining previously generated documents has both strengths and weaknesses. The strengths being that they can be viewed repeatedly, they were not created directly for this case study, they can include specific details, and they can cover a wide span of time and information. The weaknesses in using previously generated documentation includes being difficult to find information being sought, bias can be introduced if information is intentionally left out, the documentation itself may reflect intentional or unintentional bias by the author, and information may be intentionally held back (Yin, 2014).

According to Yin (2014), "One of the most important sources of case study evidence is the interview (p.110). In this case study, the interviews performed are of a semi-structured basis, in that a set of questions have been developed to ask the interviewees, but the interviewer was able to ask additional questions in guiding the conversation to discover relevant information. The pre-written questions assists in

keeping the interview on track and ensure that specific questions are asked, while leaving the interviewer with the flexibility to ask other relevant questions that come up (Russell, 2011). An initial list of potential interviewees was established from the elected leadership of the City of Gainesville and Alachua County. In addition, individuals that through appointment by elected leaders to oversee community garden efforts, and those that have demonstrated leadership in the community in regards to community gardens were asked to participate. Using a snowball sampling method the initial participants were asked to provide contact information for other individuals that they believe would be able to contribute to the research. In this manner a functional set of interviews were conducted to provide responses for examination.

These research objectives and the associated questions are designed to elicit quality open ended answers so that the primary goal of determining what the attitudes of community leaders in Alachua County are towards community gardens can be accomplished. The strengths of interviews are that they allow for focused information to be gathered concerning the case study, they can allow for the interviewee to detail answers in their own words, as well as reveal attitudes of the interviewee towards the subject matter. Interviews do have potential drawbacks in that they may be biased if poorly worded questions are posed, inaccuracies may be caused by poor recall if a recording is not performed, reflexivity may occur- where the interviewee provides information that the interviewer wants to hear, and miscommunication may occur due to poor articulation where what is interpreted as being said is not what is meant (Yin, 2014).

## **Data Collection Storage**

A data collection database was produced to store all of the data collected and information generated. Generated information can include field notes and narrative compilations as examples. Storing the data allows for independent analysis of the information, and is a means by which external validity of the analysis can be conducted (Yin, 2014). Interviewees are given the option to not have their responses personally attributed to themselves. For those interviewees who do not wish personal attribution their responses will not be associated with their names in the publishing of the case study or its related documentation.

## **Analysis Methods**

The analysis technique of choice for case studies is called pattern matching. Pattern matching compares predicted results to the case study findings. When empirical and predicted patterns appear similar, the results can help strengthen the internal validity of the case study, (Trochim, 1989; Yin, 2014).

### **Pattern Matching Predicted Results**

1. Determine if community leaders are aware of what community gardens are
  - a) Sample question: Can you please describe as best you can what a community garden is?
    - i) *I posit that community leaders are aware of what community gardens are. I expect that the community leaders will describe a community garden as being a place where community members can farm on some land that they do not own.*
2. Determine what community leaders views are as to the benefits of community gardens
  - a) Sample question: Can you please describe the benefits of a community garden as you see it?
    - i) *I expect that community leaders will be able to list between three to four benefits of community gardens. Expected answers would include: access to*

*fresh vegetables, being able to enjoy nature, being able to socialize, and perhaps exercise. I do not expect most of the community leaders will include on their list of benefits: beautification, beneficial microclimate, improved greenspace, raising of property values, reduction of crime, reduction of costs to acquire food, serving to increase commingling between generations, and wider food variety to name a few.*

3. Determine what community leaders view as to the drawbacks of community gardens
  - a) Sample question: Can you please describe any of the drawbacks of a community garden as you see it?
    - i) *Expected answers as to drawbacks of community gardens include: community gardens preventing land from being used for higher value functions, costs to establish, insurance, liability, maintenance, management of the community garden, paying for water, potential for crime, and not in my backyard NIMBY.*
4. Determine if community leaders' institution supports community gardens
  - a) Sample question 1: How does (insert name of organization the person is with) support community gardens?
  - b) Sample question 2: Can you think of any roadblocks that are in place in your organization that might be preventing community gardens from being able to prosper?
    - i) *Possibility number one the community leader's organization supports community gardens in words and actions*
    - ii) *Possibility number two community leader's organization does not support community gardens*
5. Determination if interview has affected interviewee's attitude towards community gardens
  - a) Sample question: Do you feel that this interview has changed your view towards community gardens?
    - i) If so, in what way?
      - (1) *I posit that the interview process may cause an introspection into the benefits that community gardens provide the community. This introspection could very well lead to them becoming more proactive in supporting community gardens.*

## Scope and Limitations

One of cross sectional studies strengths and weaknesses lay in the fact that they are comprised of a snapshot in time. While looking at information acquired for a set point in time can be informative, externalities could be at play that could cause distortions in the exhibited information. It is up to the researcher to attempt to identify and document any of these externalities that may be have had an effect on the research. This can prove useful should another researcher attempt to repeat the research in allowing them to account for changes that have occurred.

Another potential issue that arises with qualitative research is that the research could become biased. Several means to mitigate biases can be implemented. The first and foremost is the awareness that bias can happen. Understanding this can occur can assist the researcher in being careful to avoid introducing biases. Ensuring that the questions themselves do not promote bias is an important aspect, and to assist in preventing investigator induced bias the questions were vetted through UF faculty and fellow master level students. Another means to limit bias is to use open ended questions, these questions allow interviewees to freely express themselves and in so doing help to prevent investigator induced bias (Kumar, 2014). Another potential weakness of relying on interviews is that informative information may be missed if people are unwilling to take part in the interview process. It is hoped that the individuals selected to be interviewed are willing to assist in the research, and that by having a number of leaders take part actionable information will be acquired. This leads into whether enough interviews were completed. The most important realization in this regard is that one will reach a point of diminishing returns where more interviews will no

longer provide further useful information, this is also referred to as theoretical saturation (Flick, Metzler, & Scott, 2014).

### **Summary**

This was a qualitative research design using a cross sectional case study approach to analyze the attitudes of Alachua County leaders towards community gardens. The study area was Alachua County and the City of Gainesville, Florida, and involved reviewing and analyzing policies, in addition to interviews with leadership. The resulting information was primarily analyzed using pattern matching.

CHAPTER 4  
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

**Interview Participation**

The intent of the interviews was to determine leadership in Alachua County’s attitudes towards community gardens. A total of 24 people of various ages and sexes were asked to take part in these interviews. Of these interview requests sixteen people consented to be interviewees towards this project, three of the sixteen agreed to participate under the condition that no direct attribution be made to them of their responses.

Table 1 Tabulation of Participants and their Agencies

|                                    | Alachua County Elected Officials | Alachua County Staff | City of Gainesville Elected Officials | City of Gainesville Staff | University of Florida Staff | Community Gardner Organizer | Not For Profit-Florida Organic Growers (FOG) |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Number of Interviewee participants | 5                                | 3                    | 4                                     | 1                         | 1                           | 1                           | 1  |

The interviews took approximately 30 minutes each, and the interview format was semi-structured in that the same prewritten set of questions were taken to each interview, but the questions could be altered dependent on the interviewer identifying relevant new additional questions during the course of the interview.

**Interview Question Thematics**

Questions 1 through 4 were asked to gauge an initial understanding of the interviewees’ involvement in local food initiatives. Question 5 was to determine accessibility of nearby green space, and if a community garden existed near them. Questions 6 through 18 were to provide information to assist in determining their

attitudes towards community gardens, and question 19 was to determine if they could recommend any additional potential interviewees to take part in this case study. The entire set of interview questions can be found in [Appendix C](#). The results of the interviews can be found in [Appendix D](#) (as a note three of the participants' interviews are included but per their wishes their names have been removed from the record).

### **Pattern Matching Results**

Initial analysis using pattern matching as described in the methodology section compares if the posited outcomes match with the observed interview results.

Many of the interviewees when asked to describe what a community garden is proceeded to list benefits of community gardens as part of their description. Therefore, the answer to both the first and second posited outcomes even though they are intertwined still provide valid information. The first predicated outcome was in response to asking the interviewees to as best they can describe what a community garden is. The posited prediction was that community leaders would describe a community garden as being a place where community members can farm on some land they do not own. This prediction was confirmed as fifteen of the sixteen respondents identified a community garden as a place to grow food or a derivative of growing things. The sole respondent that did not describe it as a place to grow food was an Alachua County commissioner.

The second predicated outcome was in regards to asking the community leaders to describe the benefits of a community garden as they see it. The posited outcome was that community leaders would be able to list between three to four benefits of community gardens. The actual results exceeded the posited outcome in that three of

the respondents met the minimum number of three benefits, while the average number of benefits listed were six.

Some examples of the answers provided to what is a community garden and what are their benefits are listed below:

Alachua County Commissioner Charles Chestnut defined a community garden as:

“That’s a good question it’s a vacant lot where folks look I’m not a gardener so, they build, what I would call a box to grow their vegetables in and to water and to nurture and they use a compost I think. The ones I’ve been to they’ve been using an all-natural compost or garbage from their home and they would take it to use to mix with the soil um so it’s another way to save the landfill to some degree, but it’s to grow the fruit and vegetables to have um and to talk about how their plants are doing and stuff like that, and everybody gets involved because if one is out there watering one is watering all of it so that’s what I’ve noticed that they work together and someone is there constantly seeing to it. So it’s a piece of land that’s set aside in the urban area to grow fruit and produce, so it’s something great I think. I wish we could do it on the rooftops,” Chestnut, C. (2016, June 27th) personal interview.

While John Weber of the City of Gainesville Parks department defines community gardens as:

“I think a community garden is multi-faceted it’s a place where people can grow vegetables and flowers, that is the obvious answer but I think it’s a lot more than that. It’s a place for networking, for outreach, socialization, communities can come together and give them some common ground for them to unite around. It’s good for education because you educate children and adults about food production, organic food production. You talk about pest management. It’s a congregation place nearby it’s obviously a place for food. You are growing food and can consume it or the community helping those that are less fortunate then you.

I approach, being I’m the one that has to set things up you see a lot of different looks from people. We often tend to focus on the obvious in life. I think community garden provide a whole lot of recreational activity outside of gardening. You and I could meet up every week and hang out and that’s our thing we show up and work together, garden together be outdoors, asides from the obvious of growing vegetables. So it’s

something I think provides more benefits than just food production,”  
Weber, J. (2016, June 27th) personal interview.

City of Gainesville Mayor Lauren Poe had the following to say about the benefits of community gardens:

“I believe they bring community together and allow people to get to know each other and understand more about one another. I believe they can have nutritional benefits. I believe they have environmental benefits and I believe they can have emotional or spiritual benefits as well,” Poe, L. (2016, July 5th) personal interview.

The third predicated outcome was in response to determining what community leaders' views are as to the drawbacks of community gardens as they see it. The posited outcome is that likely drawbacks to be provided include: community gardens preventing land from being used for higher value functions, costs to establish, insurance, liability, maintenance, management of the community garden, paying for water, potential for crime, and not in my backyard (NIMBY). Three of the interviewees provided no drawbacks whatsoever of community gardens. One of the responses was the community gardens might prove to be too popular and run out of plots. On average across all sixteen interviewees two drawbacks were provided per person. Drawbacks given by the respondents matching the predicted drawbacks were: community gardeners preventing land from being used for higher value functions, costs to establish, maintenance, management, crime, and NIMBY. Not identified as drawbacks were insurance, liability, or supplying water. Additional drawbacks listed by the interviewees included becoming a weed field, lack of participation from the community, and pollution contaminants from vehicular emissions. Six of the predicted nine drawbacks were mentioned by the interviewees, while an additional three were called out beyond what was anticipated. It is worth noting that crime was a predicted drawback

and the interviewees listed many forms of potential crime from vandalism, theft, and battery. A potential drawback listed was that people might be unwilling to garden in the heat, but weather considerations are not a drawback to community gardening in that the community garden does not negatively influence the weather. In actuality as one of the interviewees noted, under potential benefits community gardens and green spaces in general help to alleviate heat island effects of cities. Ken Cornell an Alachua County Commissioner had this to say.

“A lot of effort to get it started and no one taking care of it, or it dies on the vine, or it becomes an eyesore because of no participation from the community. Becomes a community weed patch. We spend resources and we sink our cost into something that is then not taken care of by the community.”

*Special Question: “Do you think the benefits of a community garden outweigh the potential drawbacks?”*

“Yes, I don’t think there are drawbacks to a community garden. There are drawbacks to having a community garden if no one takes care of, it goes away it becomes just part of the natural environment again which there is nothing wrong with that, but if you’ve spent time and effort to get something started and then it dies it’s just a lost/sunk cost. So that potential drawback is minimal compared to the potential upside,” Cornell, K. (2016, June 23<sup>rd</sup>) personal interview.

Based on the above, the interview participants provided on average a 3 to 1 advantage in listing of benefits to drawbacks of community gardens. This reinforces the fact that overall the interviewees had a very positive view of community gardens.

The fourth predicated outcome involved determining if the community leaders’ institution supported community gardens. As shown in [Table 1](#) the majority of the interviewees belong to one of the major municipalities within Alachua County, be it Alachua County itself, the City of Gainesville, or even the University of Florida. It is important to determine what these individuals know about how their organizations

support community gardens, what they believe the organization could be doing to further support community gardens, and if they see any roadblocks preventing community gardens from being able to prosper. The two predicted possibilities were that the leaders' organizations would either support in words and actions, or not support community gardens. One of the interviewees was not applicable to this question as they did not belong to one of the appropriate organizations. To be able to make this determination two different questions were asked with the first being, *How does (insert name of organization the person is with) support community gardens?* The follow up question was, *Can you think of any roadblocks that are in place in your organization that might be preventing community gardens from being able to prosper?* What was not expected was that three of the interviewees, who were elected officials, did not know whether their organization had any programs in place regarding community gardens. This left a pool of twelve others from the initial sixteen that had an awareness of some level of support in regards to their institution supporting community gardens. A lack of knowledge plays a part here as well, when one of the Alachua County respondents listed as a possible roadblock land use codes, despite land use codes for Alachua County being expressly designed to allow for community gardens. One of the City of Gainesville commissioners mentioned as a roadblock "... it is very hard to deal with local government to get anything accomplished. Of course you've got to have an ordinance you know that covers that kind of thing..." this despite the fact that the City of Gainesville has active community gardens run by the city, and yet no ordinances governing them. Neither of the two posited outcomes correctly predicted the results indicated, in that Alachua County has support for community gardens instituted in its

codes and policy documents, but has no community gardens in place. While the City of Gainesville has active community gardens, but no policy documents in place in its codes or ordinances. A more accurate outcome would have been a more generalized prediction such as, *The community leaders' organization supports community gardens.* The combined information above shows that a communication issue exists within the organizations in disseminating information to its members, let alone the public.

The final pattern matching predicted result involves the determination as to whether this interview affected the interviewees view towards community gardens, and if so in what way? The posited outcome was, *that the interview process may cause an introspection into the benefits that community gardens provide the community. This introspection could very well lead to them becoming more proactive in supporting community gardens.* To answer this question interview questions 17 and 17a were respectively: "Do you feel that this interview has changed your view towards community gardens?" and "If so in what way?" This led to an interesting dichotomy of answers that proved how useful using open ended 'why' questions can be in qualitative research. Eleven people expressed with a 'no' that their views' had not changed towards community gardens, but in asking as the follow up question "If so in what way?" allowed them to detail the 'why' they felt that way. It should be noted that many of these respondents already had positive views of community gardens as discussed previously. Five of the respondents answered 'yes' their views had changed. One of the negative answers was actually explained in this way,

"Hasn't changed but made me think about we should be doing more in the county in terms of county parks, making it available to citizens who want to do it and of course I don't know the cost of it so, but anyway it shouldn't be that much," Chestnut, C. (2016, June 27<sup>th</sup>) personal interview.

Where even though he is stating that his view hasn't changed, he is showing that the interview has made him think that Alachua County should be doing more. Five of the respondents reflected in their answer that the interview caused them to think, or a derivative or synonym thereof, more about community gardens. Eight of the respondents specified that there were more actions that they would like to see take place, or they would directly take action to start working towards in support of community gardens going forward. If these interviewees had not been interviewed, the likelihood of these actions being considered would have been low to none. The posited outcome reached a 50 percent prediction rate in that introspection caused by the interview process led to them stating they would be more proactive in some means towards community gardens.

### **Examination of Existing Documentation**

#### **Alachua County Documentation**

As discussed in the Literature Review Alachua County has taken actions through its ECSC initiative in 2007 through 2009, its implementation of supportive codes and ordinances, the implementation of its multi-department Sustainability Council, and its 2011-2030 comprehensive plan to make Alachua County fertile ground for community gardens.

#### **City of Gainesville Documentation**

The City of Gainesville as previously discussed in the Literature Review has no codes or ordinances in place to support community gardens within city limits. Despite this, the City of Gainesville Parks department has a growing community garden program, with McRorie, its longest running community garden running since 1997. Currently the City of Gainesville has two new community gardens in the Duval

neighborhood in process of being evaluated and allowed to open. Additionally, the City of Gainesville Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Department has worked with AECOM to develop their 2020 Gainesville master plan, which using a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis has identified community gardens as an opportunity to be further implemented due to an unfulfilled need (City of Gainesville & AECOM, 2012)

### **Implications of Findings**

Alachua County through its actions and implementation of codes and ordinances attempted to start a community gardening movement for its citizens. Alachua County at one point even attempted a pilot community garden outside of its headquarters.



Figure 1 – Failed Alachua County Administration Community Garden (Blumberg, 2016)

That project was never truly utilized by the community, and ended in failure when Alachua County facilities erected an eight foot tall wrought iron fence around the garden preventing access. This was supposedly done to prevent homeless people, who

were downtown, from walking into the garden at night and using it as an outdoor latrine. Erecting this security fence did nothing to solve the problem for a homeless person who had to use a bathroom, but it did effectively prevent the few people who were attempting to maintain the garden from doing so. This attempt at a community garden was described in this way by one of the interviewees,

“I like them in theory however in practical application the one that I look at daily<sup>1</sup> is not successful. The reason I say that is it has an iron fence excluding public access, it’s very over grown, it’s weedy, it seems to provide a food source for rodents that then access the building. I see food that could feed people rotting on the ground. It appears in its official phase it was a great idea, however as people get older or they move away they just lose interest, they have other things that attract their attention and interest so they lose interest in the garden.” Alachua County Staff (2016, July 6<sup>th</sup>)

Alachua County is currently trying to implement a different approach, whereby it will be planting fruiting trees in county parks and possibly along roadways. These will not be true community gardens, but they would serve to provide a low maintenance source of food.

The City of Gainesville, as has been mentioned previously, has an active and growing community gardening movement run through its parks department. This is in spite of the fact that no city ordinances or codes are in place that provide for community gardens, but instead relies on a pair of forms ([Appendix A](#) & [Appendix B](#)) and the

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<sup>1</sup> Word choice modified to comply with interviewees non-attribution request

cooperation of City of Gainesville Parks department personnel to see that it is done.



Figure 2 – McRorie Community Garden (Blumberg, 2016)

Leadership throughout Alachua County, including the City of Gainesville have over the course of this research proven that their attitudes are generally in favor or strongly in favor of community gardens. This holds especially true when comparing that the number of benefits of community gardens were triple the listed drawbacks of community gardens as expressed by the interviewees. Alachua County has gone on record as wanting to fund a new community garden with part of the revenue from a new Wildspaces and Public Spaces sales tax (Warren, 2016). Simply having funding or codes and ordinances in place to promote community gardens is not enough to ensure their success, as is shown by Alachua County's failed attempt at a downtown community garden. What has been made evident is that support for a community garden needs to be institutionalized with systems in place within the institution, and not just by codes to allow for their development.

This leads directly into the next identified issue concerning community gardens in that communication within the municipalities (or institutions), amongst the municipalities (or institutions), and from them to the general public needs to be much improved. If the message is not propagating within the system itself, and it is evident that issues exist in this regard as several elected officials had no idea what their organization was doing in regards to community gardens, then any messages outside of the system are going to be flawed, incomplete, or non-existent. This lack of outreach was noted by several of the interviewees for both Alachua County, the City of Gainesville, and the University of Florida as needing to be improved upon.

### **Proposed Actionable Steps to Address Communication Issue**

I would propose the following actionable items be undertaken by Alachua County (or other counties) and its municipalities, and other major institutions:

- Have a single website dedicated to community gardens across all of the participating groups, and have that website linked to, from each entities' own website. This same information should be made available at county library locations and book mobiles for residents who have no internet connection.
- Compile and publish via the joint website a list of vacant city, county, or state lands that can be used for community gardens and update the list bi-annually. This list should include maps and existing infrastructure, so that the public can easily identify locations they would like to build a community garden.
- Have one set of standardized guidelines and processes that apply for all municipalities and institutions taking part in the community gardening program.
- Ensure that all participating agencies have the same codes or ordinances as relevant.
- Develop with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Science (IFAS) a guidebook on how to start and run a community garden.
- Get the information out both internally to the organization and externally to the public concerning the benefits of community gardens and the means by which they can be created with citizen involvement.

One of the comments by Marty Mesh of FOG was, “I find that community gardens that are community based and not community placed have the higher likelihood of being successful,” Mesh, M. (2016, June 30<sup>th</sup>) personal interview, and this sentiment was echoed by several other of the interviewees. This piece of imparted wisdom holds very true as seen by both the failed Alachua County Farmer’s Garden and the successful City of Gainesville community gardens.

One of this researcher’s evolving beliefs was that a top down led community garden program was a necessity for implementation, and indeed led to several very successful growths in community gardening over the course of the history of the United States, but none of these growth spurts were maintained after the ulterior crisis was resolved. Indeed, after each of the major crises passed community gardens for the most part fell by the wayside. It has become evident that for community gardens to provide lasting long term benefits to the community the manner in which they are grown needs to be a sustainable one.

### **Research Limitations**

This research examines attitudes of Alachua County leaders at a fixed point in time. While this research provides a strong snapshot of the attitudes that exist when it was performed, it may not be as applicable in the future when new leaders are in place or new events transpire that can change observed attitudes. An additional limitation is that worthwhile viewpoints may not have been captured as Alachua County’s elected sheriff was unable to participate, several department heads within Alachua County, and three of the City of Gainesville’s elected leaders chose not to participate. These individuals may have been able to provide additional insights into this research. As the

research performed is by definition qualitative in nature, it is presented as a representation of the researcher's analysis and synthesis of the information acquired. All efforts were taken to keep an objective approach, and the original interview transcripts as well as audio recordings are available for further research. A final research limitation was that this research generated a large amount of information for analysis, while the amount of time to perform the interviews, analyze the information, and present the finding was very limited. One of the means to alleviate this as a limitation was to ensure that all of the generated information was included in the appendices for future researchers.

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

The underpinnings of society rely upon production and distribution of food, and community gardens, as discussed in the literature review, served as the underpinnings to reach where we are today. As our society continues to transition to a more urban based society, it is critically important that community gardens be a valued component of the urban landscape.

In the introduction, it was discussed how Lyndon B Johnson first declared War on Poverty in 1964. To date this war has not been won, as mentioned previously in the introduction Alachua County has over 22.9 percent of its population, not including college students, living below the poverty line (Alachua County, 2013). One of many cases reflecting this reality exists in Gainesville, Florida when it can take residents over a three hour commute by bus to accomplish grocery shopping (Brough, 2016). This issue could be alleviated if the residents knew of community gardening opportunities, and had locations near where they live to start a community garden. These residents could grow some of their own food, and save them not only the cost of food, but the time spent in acquiring it. The best possible outcome would be if a surplus of food was grown, those growing it could sell it to other economically disadvantaged local residents saving them the time of having to take the same commute to the grocery store for food. This would allow for the opportunity of the residents to have high quality food, an avenue for social networking, exercise, and improvements in their health. Implementing this as a solution could help this section of town reach the first rung of the ladder to being able to make not only their lives better, but would enrich the lives of those around them as well.

Communication is the key element to being able to implement successful community gardens. Communication has to begin within the organization that is supporting community gardens; be it city, county, state, or institutional support. Ensuring the message is communicated and received correctly internally will allow for the correct message to be given to people external to the organization whom are interested in beginning a community garden.

To have sustainable community gardens, and not boom or bust cycles of growth in community gardens in response solely to external crises community gardens cannot be solely implemented by top down or bottom up development. Sustainable community gardens are community based with the support of leadership in the community. It is by these means that community gardens will be able to flourish and improve the lives of everyone around them.

### **Future Research Avenues**

This research project may have been the first of its kind in studying current attitudes of active leadership towards community gardens, but it should not be the last. Further studies both in Alachua County and other locations should be undertaken to continue to understand how leaders' attitudes play a role in determining community garden implementation. If another study is done in Alachua County with this one as a basis it would allow for a comparative over time to see how attitudes have changed, and if implementation of community gardens has increased or decreased as a result. Interviewees in this study and other research has made clear that some leaders do not view a community garden as the best use on a dollar for dollar basis of a piece of land. Additional, quantitative research should be performed to calculate how much direct and indirect value a community garden brings to an urban society. This would allow for

leaders who insist on making decisions based upon the highest best use of land to be able to correctly value a community garden's benefits to society.

**WELCOME TO  
THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE'S  
COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM**

*The Gainesville Community Garden Program I administered by the Recreation and Parks Department and is open to any resident of the City of Gainesville. The City provides basics such as the garden site, water, initial tillage, and fencing materials if needed. Each participating gardener agrees to abide by established procedures as set forth below (see Community Garden Rules, pages 7 & 8 ).*

*To protect public health, animals, and the environment, all gardens will adhere to basic organic gardening methods (no dangerous pesticides, herbicides, or synthetic fertilizers). More detailed information on organic gardening may be obtained from the Alachua County Cooperative Extension Service, 280 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL, and from the Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Inc., (FOG) P.O. Box 12311, Gainesville, FL 32604, 352-377-6345. Fax 352-377-8363.*

*If you would be interested in beginning a new Community Garden or joining an existing one, please call the City of Gainesville's Parks Division at 334-2171.*

**BACKGROUND**

*A Community Garden is a neighborhood green space set aside for local residents to grow their own fresh vegetables, herbs, fruits, and flowers.*

*Since the beginning of agriculture thousands of years ago, families and communities all over the world have relied on*

***small gardens close to their homes and villages to provide fresh food. Today, although refrigeration has made it possible to store and transport large quantities of produce, in many countries small family and neighborhood gardens continue to provide a major portion of the fresh fruits and vegetables that people eat..***

***According to the American Community Gardens Association, community garden programs in the United States have proliferated over the past twenty-five years: from fewer than 20 such programs in the early 1970's there are now more than 550!***

***A number of important benefits account for this astounding increase in popularity. Among these are:***

- ***fresh, wholesome and nutritious food at low cost to neighborhood residents;***
- ***neighborhood beautification and environmental enhancement;***
- ***healthful outdoor recreation;***
- ***educational opportunities relating to gardening and the environment; and***
- ***building and strengthening communities through positive social interaction and shared activities.***

***Community gardening revitalizes neighborhoods, promotes social and economic self-empowerment, and can serve as the basis for new local entrepreneurship or "micro-enterprises". Community gardening also widely recognized for its significant therapeutic value in the rehabilitation of individuals suffering from a variety of conditions including physical, mental, and psychological illnesses or disabilities as well as substance abuse problems. Perhaps most important in today's increasingly hurried and urbanized environment, community gardens are places where people can share their love of nature and help care for a small part of "mother earth".***

## **COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM MISSION**

***The mission of the Gainesville Community Gardens Program is to assist neighborhoods and community organizations in the creation, operation, and maintenance of community gardens, to:***

- ***Improve public nutrition and the neighborhood environment;***
  - ***Increase opportunities for healthful outdoor recreation, practical education, and positive social interaction; and***
    - ***Build community self-reliance and sustainability***

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE  
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS  
COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOT APPLICATION**

*For New Participants: Gardener cooperation is very important to the success of the City of Gainesville's Community Gardens Program. As a gardener, you must be physically capable of working your plot or know someone who will work it with you. It is also important that each gardener follow all the rules and regulations regarding garden plots. Each new member will be required to attend an orientation meeting and sign a liability waiver.*

*This application is valid from October 1, \_\_\_\_ through September 30, \_\_\_\_\_. If a plot is not available, your application will be placed on a waiting list. All plots are assigned on a first come, first serve basis. Waiting list applicants will be notified in the event a plot becomes available.*

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION  
(Please Print)**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_ **CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**HOME PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_ **WORK PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, CONTACT:**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b>GARDEN SITE</b>                          | <b>PLOT ALLOCATION #</b> |
| _____                                       | _____                    |
| <b>SITE COORDINATOR</b>                     |                          |
| _____                                       |                          |
| <i>To be completed by site coordinator.</i> |                          |

**PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

*I agree to hold harmless the City of Gainesville, its agents, officers, and employees from suits, actions, damages, liability and expense in conjunction with the loss of life, bodily or personal injury or property damage arising from or occasioned by any act of negligence or intentional wrongdoing on the part of Applicant/Participant. Nothing in*

*this Agreement shall be interpreted as a waiver of the City's sovereign immunity as granted under Section 768.28, Florida Statutes.*

**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE LOCATION OF THE CITY'S COMMUNITY GARDENS, PLEASE CALL THE CITY'S PARKS DIVISION AT 352-334-2171.**

INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THIS FORM IS SUBJECT TO THE STATE OF FLORIDA PUBLIC RECORDS LAW (CH. 119.07, FLA. STAT.). UNDER THIS LAW, THE CITY IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO AND COPIES OF NON-EXEMPT PUBLIC RECORD UPON PROPER REQUEST FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC.

THIS FORM DOCUMENT NO. P98-0068 IS A LEGAL INSTRUMENT APPROVED BY THE CITY ATTORNEY. ANY DEVIATIONS FROM ITS USE SHOULD BE AUTHORIZED BY THE CITY ATTORNEY.

### **CITY OF GAINESVILLE'S COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM**

*The Community Garden Program is a working partnership between neighborhood gardens and the City of Gainesville. Each Community Garden must have a site coordinator and two assistants before formal application can be made. Once that has been established then the process of signing individuals to garden plots begins. The following provides the guidelines for both the coordinators and the gardeners.*

#### **THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE WILL:**

- *Provide the available City owned property, if applicable.*
- *Provide the appropriate review and notify all property owners within 400 feet of the proposed garden for neighborhood input and approval.*
- *Provide initial tilling of the site.*
- *Provide water and one spigot for every four garden plots.*
- *Provide fencing materials if requested. Materials will consist of metal or recycled plastic posts and pressure treated pickets. Pressure treated pickets must not come in contact with the ground.*
- *Provide five compost bins to each garden site if requested.*
- *Periodically evaluate each garden site to determine if it is fulfilling the criteria established and to assist in addressing any problems or needs that may have arisen including the construction of additional facilities.*

#### **SITE COORDINATOR WILL:**

- *Complete the Community Garden Lease Agreement form and coordinate the completion of each Garden Plot Application. All completed forms must be submitted*

*to the City of Gainesville's Parks Division.*

- *Act a liaison with the City of Gainesville's Recreation and Parks Department's Parks Division.*
- *Develop and submit the site plan and plot layouts (in conjunction with other core gardeners) for approval by the City.*
- *Settle any disputes among gardeners when and if necessary. The Site Coordinator can consult with the Alachua County Extension Service or the Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Inc. (FOG) to resolve garden problems.*
- *Assign all plots on a first come, first serve basis. In addition, specify how individual garden plots are separated and identified as well as determining the size of plots.*
- *Insure that all gardeners' assigned plots fill out and sign garden rules and indemnification agreements.*
- *Keep and maintain all records relating to the garden.*
- *Insure general oversight, including a well kept site with proper maintenance.*
- *Organize work parties*
- *Insure that no fixed permanent seating or tables is installed on garden site.*

**GARDENERS WILL:**

- *Complete the Community Garden Plot Application Form and submit to the Garden Site Coordinator.*
- *Attend one garden orientation once assigned a plot.*
- *To begin work on plots within 10 days after garden has been tilled, if applicable.*
- *Not use any synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides or insecticides.*
- *Agree to install fencing supplied by the City of Gainesville in a manner required by the City, if requested.*
- *Not work on gardens only between dawn and dusk.*
- *Not use mechanized equipment any earlier than 9:00 AM.*
- *Keep gardens free from weeds, rotten produce, and plant debris.*

- ***Dispose of stakes, plastics, and any garbage in a timely manner.***
- ***Maintain the shared paths adjacent to their garden plot, without digging into the main paths and keep pathways free of toxic materials and rocks.***
- ***Closely supervise children.***
- ***Use headphones when listening to radios or other portable sound equipment.***
- ***Not grow any illegal crops.***
- ***Not damage or harvest from another garden plot.***
- ***Not profit by selling produce unless proceeds are to benefit the garden as a whole. The selling of produce at the garden site is strictly prohibited.***
- ***Not bring any tires to the garden site.***
- ***Not bring any pets to the garden.***
- ***Not smoke or use tobacco products on site.***
- ***Not bring or consume any alcoholic beverages on the garden site.***

APPENDIX B

**CITY OF GAINESVILLE COMMUNITY GARDEN  
LICENSE AGREEMENT**

This agreement is made between the City of Gainesville, Florida and the \_\_\_\_\_ for the express purpose of a Community Garden. The City hereby agrees to provide to the neighborhood the use of the unimproved property in the vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ Gainesville, Florida and which is more particularly described as follows: Tax Parcel# \_\_\_\_\_. The use by the neighborhood of the above described area for a Community Garden will commence on \_\_\_\_\_ and terminate on \_\_\_\_\_. This agreement will automatically renew each year for five years and a new agreement may be entered into at the end of the five years. This Agreement can be terminated by the City or the Site Coordinator with 60-days written notice.

**SITE COORDINATOR AND ASSISTANTS:**

Each Community Garden site is required to have one Site Coordinator and one assistant. The Site Coordinator or assistant will be responsible for assuring that the garden is kept running smoothly. They will be responsible for organizing work parties, watching over the site while coordinating the assignment of garden plots on a first come first serve basis. Each Site Coordinator will act as liaison to the City of Gainesville's Nature Operations Division. Disputes, disagreements, and non-compliance with the rules of the Community Garden, will be handled by the Site Coordinator or his/her assistants. The Site Coordinator shall provide an annual report to Nature Operations on October 1<sup>st</sup> that will list the gardeners currently working on the Community Garden as well as the successes and challenges encountered during the year.

|                         |            |       |
|-------------------------|------------|-------|
| <b>SITE COORDINATOR</b> |            |       |
| <hr/>                   |            |       |
| Name (Print)            | Address    | Phone |
| <hr/>                   |            |       |
| Signature _____         | Date _____ |       |

|                          |            |       |
|--------------------------|------------|-------|
| <b>SITE ASSISTANT(S)</b> |            |       |
| <hr/>                    |            |       |
| Name (Print)             | Address    | Phone |
| <hr/>                    |            |       |
| Signature _____          | Date _____ |       |
| <hr/>                    |            |       |
| Name (Print)             | Address    | Phone |
| <hr/>                    |            |       |
| Signature _____          | Date _____ |       |

USE:

The premises shall be used as a garden to be cultivated in connection the City of Gainesville's Community Garden Program and the gardeners agree that produce grown on the premises shall not be used for commercial purposes.

THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE WILL:

- Provide the available City owned property, if available.
- Provide the appropriate review and notify all property owners within 400 feet of the proposed garden for neighborhood input and approval.
- Provide initial tilling of the site.
- Provide limited water and several spigots.
- Provide fencing materials when the garden is initially built, if requested.
- Provide tree mulch if requested.
- Periodically evaluate each garden site to determine if it is fulfilling established criteria and to assist in addressing any problems or needs that may have arisen, including the construction of additional facilities.
- Provide a sign with the garden agreement on it and contact information.

SITE COORDINATOR WILL:

- Complete the Community Garden Lease Agreement form and coordinate the completion of each Garden Plot Application. All completed forms must be submitted to the City of Gainesville's Nature Operations Division.
- Act as liaison with the City of Gainesville's Nature Operations Division.
- Develop and submit the site plan and plot layouts (in conjunction with other core gardeners) for approval by the City.
- Settle any disputes among gardeners, when and if necessary. The Site Coordinator can consult with the Alachua County Extension Service or the Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Inc. (FOG) to resolve garden problems.
- Assign all plots on a first come, first serve basis. In addition, specify how individual garden plots are separated and identified as well as determining the size of plots. No fees may be

charged.

- Insure that all gardeners' assigned plots fill out and sign garden rules and indemnification agreements.
- Keep and maintain all records relating to the garden.
- Insure general oversight, including a well kept site with proper maintenance.
- Insure that good gardening practices are utilized that promote safety and conservation of resources.
- Insure that water use does not exceed the gardens allotment and that conservation measures are practiced at all times. Insure that water is only used when it is needed, comply with watering ordinances, and that no automatic watering devices are used. If they are found to be in use, they are to be removed.
- Organize work parties.
- Insure that no fixed permanent seating or tables are installed on the garden site.
- Insure that no trees are planted without prior approval from Nature Operations.

#### GARDENERS WILL:

- Complete the Community Garden Plot Application Form and submit to the Garden Site Coordinator.
- Attend one garden orientation meeting once assigned a plot.
- Begin work on plots within 10 days after garden has been tilled, if applicable.
- Not use any synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides or insecticides.
- Agree to install fencing supplied by the City of Gainesville in a manner required by the City, if requested.
- Work on gardens only between dawn and dusk.
- Practice safety at all times.
- Abide by water restrictions
- Not use mechanized equipment any earlier than 9:00 AM.
- Not use concrete or other impervious material for pathway.
- Plant only annual and perennial species in garden.
- Any plants other than annual and perennial species, including trees, shall have prior approval of the City's Nature Operations representative.

- Keep gardens free from weeds, rotten produce, and plant debris.
- Dispose of stakes, plastics, and any garbage in a timely manner.
- Maintain the shared paths adjacent to their garden plot, without digging into the main paths and keep pathways free of toxic materials and rocks.
- Closely supervise children.
- Use headphones when listening to radios or other portable sound equipment.
- Not grow any illegal crops.
- Not damage or harvest from another garden plot.
- Not profit by selling produce unless proceeds are to benefit the garden as a whole. The selling of produce at the garden site is strictly prohibited.
- Not bring any tires to the garden site.
- Not bring any pets to the garden.
- Not smoke or use tobacco products on site.
- Not bring or consume any alcoholic beverages on the garden site.

Water use restrictions:

Water use is limited per month to:

5000 gallons for small gardens under .25 acre

10,000 gallons for medium size .25 - .50 acre gardens

15,000 gallons for large .50 acre or more gardens.

Usage exceeding this amount may result in the water being disconnected. Gardens may only be hand watered while the gardener is present at the garden. No automatic watering devices are allowed and will be removed. No water may be left on when the gardener is not present.

## APPENDIX C – Interview Questions

### Interview guideline for Determining attitudes towards community gardens by Alachua County leaders

Thank you (insert name/title here), for agreeing to meet with me today. I understand that your time is valuable, but before we start I would like to see if you have any questions for me?

#### Initial gauging of involvement in local food

- 1) Have you ever been to a farmer's market in Alachua County?
  - a. If so which farmer's market(s)?
  - b. What did you like best about this/these farmers market(s)?
  - c. Did you feel a bond between yourself and the farmers at the market?
    - i. Can you elaborate?
- 2) Have you participated in any other local food initiatives?
  - a. If so what type of local food projects have you participated in?
- 3) Have you ever grown your own food?
  - a. What type of food have you grown?
- 4) Do you think food from the supermarket or food grown locally is healthier to eat?
  - a. Why do you feel this way?

#### Accessibility of nearby green space

- 5) Can you easily walk to a park or other nearby accessible green space?
  - a. If so which one do you like best?
  - b. What activities do you like to do there?
  - c. What activities would you like to be able to do there that you cannot currently do?
  - d. If you cannot easily access the park or greenspace what prevents you from being able to do so?

- e. Does this accessible green space have a community garden that you can participate in?

**Primary Study Questions:**

- 6) How would you describe your attitude towards community gardens?
- 7) Can you please describe as best you can what a community garden is?
  - a. If they are unable to answer or draw a blank provide the following definition of a community garden: “A community garden is an area of land where community residents are able to grow plants in order to feed themselves and others. The location for the community garden is typically a previously unused or underutilized piece of land. Permission to garden on the land is typically asked for by the gardeners prior to gardening activities commencing. A community garden does not limit who can become members, but may prevent new members from joining if all of the plots are being used”
- 8) Can you please describe the benefits of a community garden as you see it?
- 9) Should people who do not own their own land have the opportunity to be able to grow themselves food in a community garden?
  - a. Why or why not?
- 10) Should local governments encourage the development of community gardens on public lands by designating locations that community gardens can be established?
  - a. Why or why not?
    - i. (If yes) What resources should the local government provide to help the community garden succeed?
- 11) Should local governments allow in their land development code for citizens to be able to request community garden locations on public land?
  - a. Why or why not?
    - i. (If yes) What resources should the local government provide to help the community garden succeed?
- 12) Can you please describe any of the drawbacks of a community garden as you see it?
- 13) How does (insert name of organization the person is with) support community gardens?

- a. What do you believe your organization could be doing to further support community gardens?
  - b. Can you think of any roadblocks that are in place in your organization that might be preventing community gardens from being able to prosper?
- 14) Given the benefits of community gardens in what ways should local governments work together to promote them? (benefits include: access to fresh food, community beautification & ownership, exercise, social networking, to name a few)
- 15) How have you supported community gardens?
- 16) How would you describe your past attitudes towards community gardens?
- 17) Do you feel that this interview has changed your view towards community gardens?
- a. If so, in what way?
- 18) Do you have anything you wish to share in regards to community gardens that have not been addressed by these questions?
- a. If so what do you wish to share?
- 19) This research seeks to identify potential additional interviewees using a snowball methodology, where you as the interviewee can contribute by suggesting additional potential interviewees. To whom would you recommend that I speak about community gardens?

Thank you for taking the time today to take part in this interview. I appreciate your participation, and if you have any questions concerning this interview please feel free to contact me.

## APPENDIX D – Interview Responses

City of Gainesville Commissioner Adrian Hayes-Santos

Q1

A1 Yes

A1A Haile, downtown, 441

A1b Able to get local food

A1c Yes

A1ci some of the bonds you are buying from those creating the food, a full circle bond and very friendly too

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a donated to local food banks, served food to homeless, brought food to St. Francis House. Participate in amazon smile program that donates a portion of the payment to Bread of the Mighty food bank

Q3

A3 Yes

A3a Many different types, veggies, chickens, cattle

Q4

A4 Depends

A4a Sometimes food you buy locally, could have pesticides used to grow. I don't think food grown locally is always better, but I think generally it probably is you know source and who has created it. A lot of times at least it tastes better as well, doesn't mean it's healthier but taste for grocery store food is created to travel well not necessarily for taste, just so it doesn't bruise on transportation or so it can last months in a freezer. Generally I think food grown locally is healthier both for the environment and the travel costs as well

Q5

A5 Yes

A5a I'm not really a fan of some of the ones that I can walk to, but I think Depot Park will be a nice one when it is finished up.

A5b walk around, relax, people watching, seeing people interact with the park and what we can do to make it better

A5c An amphitheater there, for outdoor concerts and plays a larger one say 3 or 4,000 people that can be a regional draw for Gainesville.

A5d NA

A5e No, not right now

Q6

A6 I think they are great, every neighborhood should have one, definitely neighborhoods that are more densely populated where it is more difficult to be able to have a garden space.

Q7

A7 Sure, for me it is a place where you can rent or are given a parcel or piece of that land that you can use to grow food, and do what you want with it. A lot of times there is cooperation of people working with each other and helping each other

Q8

A8 I think there are a few benefits of community garden for one it allows people to connect to their environment and their food in places a lot of properties don't have an area or place you can grow food. Definitely, in Gainesville there is a lot of tree cover, which makes it not really the best place for a vegetable garden or something like that. I think it allows people to have their own food. I think it's a great place for kids to kind of understand where their food is coming from too and it also kind of allows for a community aspect to where people who garden to kind of talk to each other and have more connections to with your neighbors.

Q9

A9 Yes

A9a I think it's one of the things about a COMMUNITY GARDEN in that it allows people who don't have the space necessary to grow gardens, I think it's an opportunity I think as a community that's important people. It's pretty much they are renting land or a space that they can grow their own food and I think it's important that having those opportunities some people want to bike a trail, some people want to grow a garden and grow their own food. It's almost like a park amenity

Q10

A10 Yes

A10a One of the reasons I think, in a sense, a government is supposed to be collectively making the community better you probably wouldn't see as many private land owners turning in their property into COMMUNITY GARDEN it's probably not the most economically. You aren't going to make a ton of money from a COMMUNITY GARDEN. So, I think that's the place where a city can come in and designate areas to help bring the communities together and providing local food options as well

A10ai I think one of those is designated land areas. I think that's probably the best thing we can do I also think they can help in helping to get some resources for it to be started. Maybe here are a few tools that can be used by everyone as well, and maybe some guidelines for some operation of it

Q11

A11 Yes

A11A I think they should be able to request whatever they want on community land I don't know if it should always be granted, but they should be able to request it.

A11ai see above

Q12

A12 Once kind of all the spaces are designated then any new people might be left out of the gardens. It's kind of like a clique in a sense like that where new people aren't able to join that and be a part of that, and if that's supported by government than.. Government should be providing services to everyone and not just these people. Maybe they had this place for 30 years and new people who are still paying taxes aren't able to get the benefits out of it.

(Interviewer- UF example of large plot that everyone works in and everyone is able to get a share/percentage of production from it.)

Yea, one of the times I was trying to get a spot at a UF garden and there was like a 1-1/2 to 2 year wait. So yes I think that is definitely an interesting way to do that. I took a gardening class at UF and that's pretty much we did. We had a plot and our class planned it and developed it and at the end we kind of divided up the shares of it, so I kind of think that is an interesting way to go. I guess there is a point when those shares might get filled up

(Interviewer-then we'd need more gardens)

Q13

A13 So I know we have a few community garden on public land and most of those by my understanding are kind of run mostly by the neighborhoods. I know we have some that are on city land.

A13a I think we can work to help create more community gardens in areas that are higher density, areas that need them, areas that maybe um there aren't as many grocery stores, there aren't as many places to get higher quality food or there's lower income areas to where being able to get fresh vegetables is prohibitively expensive, and being able to grow your own garden area may allow people to get higher quality food than they would normally be able to afford.

A13b I'm not sure, I guess actually one of them may be. Definitely there are areas where a community garden, could a space be used in more productively if you want to build a building there that could be a concern of some people.

Q14

A14 I think we should be. One of the things I'd like the city to do is look towards finding areas that a community garden could be most successful and could provide the most benefit. I think that's one of the, finding areas that community garden could be and then taking steps to provide city land that the city owns or county owns in different areas and then setting up these community gardens.

A14- clarified answer ... Gainesville and Alachua county what lands do we have collectively that could be looked at together, because I know one of the county's main focuses is social services, but I think the city should also be stepping into that area as well, but how can finding, getting together and saying hey we want to focus on community gardens and what are the areas thinking collaboratively areas that can be the most effective.

Q15

A15 As a city official? (in any facility) I guess in that one class it was kind of a community garden I worked in it. When I was younger my mother used to have a plot in

a community garden in Austin, TX and I used to weed in that one when I was a few years old

Q16

A16 Supportive

Q17

A17 I don't think it's changed my view

A17a I think its helped maybe move to a higher priority thinking about it more. I haven't really thought about it for a little while.

Q18

A18 Not that I can think of

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, [avince@ufl.edu](mailto:avince@ufl.edu), [susan\\_vince2002@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_vince2002@yahoo.com); Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

University of Florida Employee - Requested no direct attribution of their name

Q1

A1 yes

A1a 441 market, Haile Market, Downtown Market, Tioga Marks

A1b I like that I can buy things directly from farmers and I can talk to them about their production practices and I can talk to them about their products and I know after those conversations I'm buying something that's local and sustainably raised.

A1c Yes

A1ci I've been working with many of those farmers for years so my bond comes not just from shopping with them at the market but also in other ways but I would say that even those that I don't interact with through my work I do feel a bond with because I can tell that they have pride in the products that they end up selling me and I have excitement

to use them and eat them. So I feel like in some way that we are sharing a celebration of their work.

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a I work in local food that's what my job is both here at the University and as the cofounder of Forage Farm which is a nonprofit here in town prior to that I founded and worked with Slow Food Gainesville and I'm also on the board of the Living Kitchen which is a certified kitchen incubator here, so I work in a lot of ways in the local food system primarily currently at my UF job my role is trying to help connect the resources that we have at IFAS into our local food system a little better and also hopefully over time as the program matures connecting students with opportunities for learning and career paths in our local food system. With my work in the community my role and my efforts in local food have been primarily around the promotion of local food and gardening and producing your own food and then in seed diversity. Like seed saving and the importance of heirloom and open pollinated varieties to our food.

Q3

A3 yes

A3A I've grown pretty much everything I operate a farm and a community garden at UF and Forage also operates a small farm 1 acre or so and I've had gardens at home many many times, so I've grown primarily what you would call specialty crops vegetables and fruits. Things like tomatoes and beans and cucumbers and melons in the summer and things like Kale and broccoli and lettuce and carrots and radishes in the winter.

Q4

A4 there could be local food at the supermarket so I think that's a hard question to answer.

A4a I think in general food that hasn't been shipped long distances is healthier because the longer it sits on the shelf the more it deteriorates or the longer it's on a truck or in a warehouse the more the minerals and the natural croponoids and flavors and things that are there start to deteriorate so um I think the sooner you can get the food to your plate the healthier it is. I also think that you have to be careful not to compare apples to pineapples, so a small organic farm growing vegetables here in really rich and healthy soil is probably going to have a lot more nutrients and minerals than an industrially grown tomato even if it was still grown in Florida with sandy soil and fertilizer those 2 things are very very different and the nutrient analysis is really different. So they were both grown locally but they were grown in really different conditions. So I think the health and nutrition of our food depends on distance or not necessarily where you buy it but depends on the production values behind it.

Q5

A: yes

A5a I'm a little bias I happen to like the Food and Fork gardens best right across from Lake Alice because its where I work and I spend a lot of my time.

Q5b

A5b garden, read, walk around and look at nature I like it because not only does it have the view of Lake Alice but its right here at work so I can walk through it or bike to it really easy and just be out in a natural setting but I also like it because there is such a diversity of both food and nature in that area. I can see bugs and birds and animals and

beautiful plants all in the same place and I'm right in the middle of our urban campus so that's probably what I like the best.

Q5c

A5c More learning like without I wish we had information for others to be able to learn there. More interpretation so they can learn and possibly more exercise opportunities. Maybe little stations or something so I can do recreational exercise.

Q5d

A5d NA

Q5e

A5e yes

Q6

A6 Positive, but I would say that I am also often concerned about people starting them. Like skeptical because community garden's take a lot of work and a lot of leadership and oftentimes charismatic leaders will start them and if they're not prepared for the long haul of managing that space or coordinating the efforts of the garden the gardens fail. Um, or if they don't have a group of charismatic people that are interested in keeping it afloat. It doesn't have to be a single individual but there has to be strong leadership and often times I think there is an interest in starting a community garden because people want a garden but they're not necessarily interested in coordinating or leading or managing or supporting it because they just want a garden, and when you have that then often times they fail. So I really like community garden and I think that they need some strong support and leadership in order to be successful.

Q7

A7 A community garden is any space where people are growing things whether they be fruit or vegetables or flowers sometimes animals communally and that may be individual plots that are all located together and they are sharing collective resources or it might be one large garden where everyone shares in the labor but I think the common denominator is they are sharing space and resources. Both human resources and physical resources I guess in order to be able to grow usually food for themselves.

Q8

A8 Well I think the benefits are the sharing of resources makes it less expensive to grow because you don't have to buy every single thing that is necessary and you don't have to have a plot of land so regardless of where you live or what your situation is you have access to land. I think that the benefits are the possibility of learning from each other and the comradery and relationships that you can build in a community garden. The opportunity to build friendships and to learn from others who have more experience than you, the mentorship and I would say the other benefits are probably that you can often times um I don't want to say you can get away with less work because a garden always takes a lot of work, but in our community garden context it's a big space that we all share the labor in, so if we had an individual plot and we were all growing our own things in that garden we would probably have to work 10-15 hours a week in the garden to be able to keep it successful, but because we are all working on it together everyone can contribute 2 hours a week of work and still receive the same amount of bounty out of the garden so depending on the structure of the garden it can be a benefit of decreased labor for your own production of food.

**SQ: So even in community garden you get benefits from larger work spaces of people working together as opposed to just smaller plots.**

**SA: Right, potentially, some of them have that, some of them don't. Some are individual plots, but even in those cases you'll have workdays where everyone is working together and you're getting the benefit of that space right, so your mowing the walkways, and their tending the water mains and their cleaning up the compost, and everyone is sharing in that labor so on some level your benefiting from a reduced amount of labor you have to do for the same amount of resources. You might do things differently in your garden. You might not compost, but buy bags of compost to reduce that labor, so maybe in this case it's just reducing the costs. You know because instead of doing the labor you're spending the money, but regardless there is some transfer where you are getting a reduction in some sort of resource in your life be it labor or money in exchange for the fact that you are sharing that work and those resources with others.**

Q9

A9 Yes

Q9a

A9a I think everyone should have the opportunity to grow their own food not only does it promote self-reliance and understanding of what it takes, subsistence and self-reliance, but it also helps people to understand what it takes to grow our food and even if they are only doing it as a past time or supplemental to what they are purchasing they begin to 'grow' no pun intended for our agricultural systems and the amount of energy, time, water, waste, all those things natural resources, human and economic resources that go into growing our food.

Q10

A10 I'm going to answer that as yes, with a caveat

Q10A

A10a I think that if they are going to do that and have lands like City of Gainesville (COG) does where you can create a community garden they need to also have some sort of expectation, and I'm not sure how that expectation would manifest itself whether regulation, but I feel like they need somebody that's actually going to manage those places. Whose job it is to oversee them and to have the expectation that there is strong leadership in those gardens and that they are being well maintained and that they have a structure and a plan for how to support the gardeners that are using them. I don't think that they should dictate what that structure is. I think the community should be the ones to define what their management plans and leadership are going to be like, but regardless of what they choose they need something to ensure its sustainable, otherwise you have a lot of city and government owned properties that are just sitting vacant or are just growing a bunch of weeds and instead of becoming an amenity to the community they can become, well at least they are not an amenity anymore they are just sitting there. They are a waste of tax payers' dollars I guess.

(Interviewer- mentions COG to establish community garden guidelines)

I have, and I know there isn't a lot of follow up or follow through. Like they have the application and if it's approved they'll put in some basic infrastructure and that's it.

There is nobody that is visiting those gardens on a regular basis to see how they are doing. There is not even a really good website, just a random list of garden, but there is

like no information about the gardens, how they are managed so you can choose which garden you are interested in if you are shopping for a community garden if you will. I just think it's a good thing that they are doing it and that they are doing it at all is great and yea for Gainesville for doing it, but I think that sometimes what happens there is this goal of creating a plan and doing something good, but they don't get 100% of the way to what they needed in order to make that really successful so they've got it and its working ok and there are gardens like McRorie garden that are going really really well and there are other gardens that basically don't really exist even though on paper their application was approved and they should exist, because the people that filled it out just wanted it for themselves and maybe they gardened there for a season and then they got busy and then they are gone, so then you just have some land with a fence and some hoses, and a lot of weeds.

(Interviewer mentions visiting McRorie)

I don't know if you've been to the garden down on SW 23<sup>rd</sup> but it's really amazing community garden that's been running for at least 20 years and it's affiliated with UF, it's on UF land, but it's managed by private folks and they'd be great in interviews for you.

Q10ai

A10ai Coordination

Q11

A11 Yes

Q11 a why

A11A for previously mentioned reasons. I think that if they are going to do that and have lands like COG does where you can create a community garden they need to also have some sort of expectation, and I'm not sure how that expectation would manifest itself whether regulation, but I feel like they need somebody that's actually going to manage those places. Whose job it is to oversee them and to have the expectation that there is strong leadership in those gardens and that they are being well maintained and that they have a structure and a plan for how to support the gardeners that are using them. I don't think that they should dictate what that structure is. I think the community should be the ones to define what their management plans and leadership are going to be like, but regardless of what they choose they need something to ensure its sustainable, otherwise you have a lot of city and government owned properties that are just sitting vacant or are just growing a bunch of weeds and instead of becoming an amenity to the community they can become, well at least they are not an amenity anymore they are just sitting there. They are a waste of tax payers' dollars I guess.

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what they needed in order to make that really successful so they've got it and its working ok and there are gardens like McRorie garden that are going really really well and there are other gardens that basically don't really exist even though on paper their application was approved and they should exist, because the people that filled it out just wanted it for themselves and maybe they gardened there for a season and then they got busy and then they are gone, so then you just have some land with a fence and some hoses, and a lot of weeds.

Q11ai

A11ai coordination, land, water, protection

**SQ Protection from what?**

**SA: SO well if you are going to put a garden in often times there is the challenge of adjacent land uses and so a fence maybe. It maybe there is a park that is full of deer and they are going to enter the garden and no one will ever be successful, or maybe that the adjacent land use is really urban and people might just decide that they are going to go into the garden and take the food thinking it is a form of public garden. So I think that signage and fencing is what I mean by protection and I think that's for the gardeners to define. For me I think that a community garden is really about the governance by the gardeners and their decision by what it means matters in regardless to what participation means and I think that they should feel like it is there garden and they are safe in the space.**

Q12

A12 Um, well if there is the possibility of poor management and lack of coordination. There is the possibility of a lack of accountability because it doesn't belong to anyone person so you know you can make the decision to do things there that you might not do on your own property. Potentially that is a potential problem. I don't really see any specific drawbacks like there is a drawback and I wouldn't do it. I just think that there are potential problems that need to be overcome. Yea I guess there is also potential for conflict between gardeners who don't agree with management decisions of other members of the garden. So those are kind of the things I see really, has to do with governance issues.

Q13

A13 Well we have 2 technically the organic gardens on southwest 23<sup>rd</sup> and those are individual plots for people, and that is managed by some community members and folks from the university that are participating in the garden and we also have the Field and Fork garden which is a community garden located in the center of campus by the bat houses and that one is managed as a community farm so everyone participates in growing one large area of production and gets a share of the produce so I would say UF is very supportive of community garden's the other way I would say we support community garden's is through our extension service and we have an extension office in almost every county in Florida and those extension offices often times are sort of the go to for both technical information on production practices and ways in which people can manage the gardens but also that many times the leadership of the gardens of municipalities might go to to get information on how to start or manage community gardens.

**SQ: You mentioned the Field and Fork Garden. How is that advertised to students so they know that it exists? Let's say they are hungry and they have a choice**

between working and studying and eating. How do they know that that is an opportunity for them to be able to take part in.

**SQA: Well we've done a lot of promotion and outreach on the Field and Fork program as a whole and we also have a pantry that is part of that system. They should never be going hungry at UF because we have food for them anytime they wanted, but we do promotion through the Dean of Students Office and student affairs, the center for leadership and service. We try to make sure that everyone is aware, even HR & Infogator and some of the training/preview program we try to get the word out that the community garden exists and we have a website where people can get more information. We also teach classes in the garden and try to get students aware by giving tours and programs to those that want to come out to the garden. So we try to get them the information in a lot of different ways. I think we can do a better job of promotion, we are fairly new. We've always been a community garden, but for a long time it was individual plot rentals and it was failing in that regard. So this new model is only 1-1/2 years old 2 years in Oct. it is a fairly young program and I think promotion is one of those things that will come with time and maturity. But we are working on it just we have a very small staff.**

Q13a

A13A Well we are literally running one, so I don't know if we could do more, but I think I guess what we can do is try to make sure we are doing the best job that we can in managing the one that we are managing and doing a better job in promotion and recruitment of the members and ensure that we are developing strong leadership and governance structures for the garden so that it can be successful long term.

Q13b

A13b No, I don't think so you know the only thing is that UF is just so darn big. Some people don't even know who won the football game which is the biggest thing that happens in this town. So, I think we are such a big institution that one of the roadblocks is that even if we did a really great job of promotion people may not know about the community garden and so there is a challenge, I don't know if it's a roadblock really, as it is more of a challenge with how we promote and recruit and ensure that everyone knows that they have this opportunity.

Q14 tightening of questions wording– has there been any interaction between UF and Santa Fe

A14 I would say I do think that what they could and should do is collaborate and support each other in developing better support for community garden's and I think that there is something that we have been wanting to do for a long time in extension side of IFAS is to develop a community gardening manual that offers a lot of information for people that are thinking about starting a community garden and I also think there could be opportunities through those collaborations to support that coordinator role I talked about that I think it's important that UF is supporting me and my program to be a community leader for the Field and Fork Garden and we have folks that are doing the work and supporting the other community garden that UF has, but beyond that the community garden we have no really support mechanism that is dedicated or specific to them. They have to go seek out resources when they need them. So I think a more clear and defined support system is something that our communities could use to better support community garden & school gardens for that matter

Q15

A15 I think that I've supported community garden by redeveloping the one that exists on campus and preventing it from having the potential of being closed. Instead I developed a new garden and a new life where it could still survive as a student community garden and be a vibrant place on campus and I've supported community gardens by being just one of those support people that people call when they have questions and ideas and need information. I don't always have the right information but I can always point them in the right direction, and then through the work that I've done in the community we've held a lot of workshops and programs through forage that are specific for gardeners to get the technical information that they need on seed starting, gardening, and help managing a garden, and seed saving and we host the seed library, so we actually provide locally saved and reputedly sourced open pollinated seed sources for gardeners.

Q16

A16 I think I've always had a really positive attitude towards community gardens but I think I do. Whenever I hear about someone starting up a community garden I often approach it with a little bit of skepticism for all the reasons that I've already talked about.

Q17

A17 No

Q18

A18 no

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, avince@ufl.edu, susan\_vince2002@yahoo.com; Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

Alachua County Commissioner Commissioner Charles Chestnut

Q1

A1 Yes

A1A I've been to both the one downtown on Wed. and the one on 441 on Saturdays.

A1b You see people interact and basically get fresh produce. Where I think a lot of folks are trying to get away from processed food and have more natural foods to eat which are better have better nutrients than processed foods so, anyway that's just my opinion.

A1c Yea, cause they are looking ya know for fresh produce and they are talking and I think the cost is a factor in that it's not that expensive so. You see a lot of people interact cause they are looking at the same produce and things and they are talking about recipes that kind of stuff so

Q2

A2 No,

A2a I served recently on a committee to end poverty a nutritional alliance and we talked about food deserts and stuff like that and, but its just that my time is short during the course of the day and a meeting that goes 2 hours I can't do it. That just doesn't work for me, I'll give you an hour, I can't give you 2 hours. The meeting was like 2 hours and then it started interfering with board meetings and workshops that we had and I asked not as we reorganized in November of last year, I asked not to serve on the committee because I don't think I was doing it justice. They need somebody there for 2 hours. I don't know any commissioner that can, I also work full time plus the county commission. My day is hectic. I do serve with the strikeout hunger that raises food baskets for the holidays, like Thanksgiving. I've been participating there and doing that I became sort of the person on the commission to address those issues, at least the Thanksgiving baskets, so folks have food for the holidays and hopefully they'll be expanding it more.

Q3

A3 No,

A3a but I try to buy. Ya, know organic food is expensive but I try to buy some I do the vegetables more than the meat. I don't eat much red meat anymore, I try to stay away from it. Chicken, turkey, and fish is what I eat so, but anyway yea I would love to.

Q4

A4

A4a I think food grown locally is healthier, because it doesn't have all the pesticides, the chemicals to mass produce it and get it on the market quick and also while it's on the market they inject it with something to make the fruit last longer. I forget what it's called, but anyway I don't like that to make the produce last longer, because naturally it's not supposed to last that long. I've sort of laid off of dairy products, I recently got the flu and I wasn't around anyone who had a cold, it wasn't from a restaurant. So it was probably from the milk or ice cream. I remember hearing from somewhere about the dairy products can cause colds of flus.

(Interviewer- careful dairy industry might go after you)

Laugh, I stopped dairy, I don't eat ice cream or that stuff. Almond milk is what I've been buying.

Q5

A5- I think so in Alachua

A5a Westwood

(Interviewer- is that Westwood or Westside?)

They probably changed the name to Westside, 8<sup>th</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup>. The other one is NorthEast Park across from St Pat's catholic church

A5b I walk there and watch some of the softball games, when son was younger used the swings. They have tot lot parks, but they aren't really that big.

A5c Basketball courts,

A5d NA

A5e No

Q6

A6 I think it's great the 5<sup>th</sup> avenue area did one closer to 10<sup>th</sup> street I think it was there to look at. They had a program one Fri or Sat morning to show off the garden and show what people were growing like tomatoes, something like that and then the Porter's area they started a community garden across from the SS and cleaners which brought folks together to plan it and folks took time watering but it brought more of a sense of community with the gardens but I never knew what happened after the fruit or produce were grown. I don't know if it was distributed in the community or not, but the concept was that I mean more so bringing the people together and the community to talk nutrition and eating healthy I guess. Cause you eat what you grow so, which I'd like to see more of that for the homeless population where they grow their own food. I mean it's a way of eliminating hunger at least if you have vegetables I'm just saying my personal opinion. Cause if they grow their own food they'll know they'll always have something to eat so.

Q7

A7 That's a good question it's a vacant lot where folks look I'm not a gardener so, they build, what I would call a box to grow their vegetables in and to water and to nurture and they use a compost I think. The ones I've been to they've been using an all natural compost or garbage from their home and they would take it to use to mix with the soil um so its another way to save the landfill to some degree, but its to grow the fruit and vegetables to have um and to talk about how their plants are doing and stuff like that, and everybody gets involved because if one is out there watering one is watering all of it so that's what I've noticed that they work together and someone is there constantly seeing to it. So it's a piece of land that's set aside in the urban area to grow fruit and produce, so it's something great I think. I wish we could do it on the rooftops

(Interviewer- we can do it on rooftops)

Q8

A8 It's more interaction with people and growing different vegetables and talking about the nutritional value of them and its more to me it's considered more organic food then commercial food because it doesn't have much pesticides. I've never seen anyone using pesticides in community garden so ya know I've just seen the natural compost. I've never seen anyone spraying anything so the food is much better no pesticides or herbicides or stuff on the food.

Q9

A9 I think so yea

A9a I think it would make them more conscious of what they are putting in their bodies and they'll probably taste the difference of commercial food versus the organic food. The flavor has more flavor and more nutritional value in them and it has the experts say a lot of free radicals to help fight cancer because all of the processed food I really believe is one of the causes of cancer because of all these chemicals to preserve them and all of that stuff

Q10

A10 Yup we did it when I was a city commissioner. The county, we can promote it, but harder to promote when you have a lot of farmland and stuff so we the county I guess it can but the county doesn't have as much say so as like a city, like the tot lots they had and they converted them into community garden. It also helped bring the community together and stemmed from that where other activities where neighborhood meetings and talked about the gardens and stuff it brought people together. It gave the folks in the neighborhood something to talk about.

A10a and A10ai I think that the COG gave the lots, made the lots available to be gardened and made sure the water was available for them to use. That and the folks bought their own seeds and stuff and created their own gardens and it gave them the opportunity to have a place to do that because the city those lots that the city donated were sort of like substandard lots where you couldn't develop nothing on it anyway and it was more of what I consider an overgrown lot

Q11

A11 Yea sure I don't see anything wrong with that

A11a above reasons -- I think that the COG gave the lots, made the lots available to be gardened and made sure the water was available for them to use. That and the folks bought their own seeds and stuff and created their own gardens and it gave them the opportunity to have a place to do that because the city those lots that the city donated were sort of like substandard lots where you couldn't develop nothing on it anyway and it was more of what I consider an overgrown lot

A11ai see above reasons-- I think that the COG gave the lots, made the lots available to be gardened and made sure the water was available for them to use. That and the folks bought their own seeds and stuff and created their own gardens and it gave them the opportunity to have a place to do that because the city those lots that the city donated were sort of like substandard lots where you couldn't develop nothing on it anyway and it was more of what I consider an overgrown lot

Q12

A12 I don't see any I've always seen positive things come from it. I've never seen anything negative from it.

Q13

A13 That's a good question, I really don't know I'd have to find out from the parks, but I haven't heard anything so I doubt seriously that its being done. I think one of the parks they did plant pear trees or some type of edible fruit tree I want to say at Kanapaha Park because that's the only talk I've heard about it that they were going to plant fruit trees.

A13A Making it available in our parks we could do that like they are doing with the fruit trees and I think it's more beneficial to have the fruit trees plus a garden but and also to make it available to give away free

A13b No, other than there is no champion or advocate for it. When you have a champion or advocate and that's somebody's passionate and someone that will be in our face to make sure it happens

Q14

A14 bringing the community together to talk about eating healthy.

(Interviewer- clarified that this is relating to interlocal governments)

A14 cont- We should be working together, right absolutely, even the small municipalities in Alachua County should be working together to do this. We should be working together

Q15

A15 In the past as a city commissioner I did that, making sure the land participated in the actual ground breaking of it. Trying to think of the neighborhood, the area where Mack's Burgers is and the Publix on Main Street it's a neighborhood behind that, they have a community garden right there next to the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank, right across from that on 4<sup>th</sup> street I think it is

Q16

A16 Very supportive of them

Q17

A17 and A17a Hasn't changed but made me think about we should be doing more in the county in terms of county parks, making it available to citizens who want to do it and of course I don't know the cost of it so, but anyway it shouldn't be that much

Q18

A18 I think everything has been covered, also a great way to meet your neighbors

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, avince@ufl.edu, susan\_vince2002@yahoo.com; Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

City of Gainesville Commissioner Craig Carter

Q1

A1 Yes

A1a 441, and 121, downtown market here @ Bo Diddley, and probably other ones

A1B Diversity of Product and local aspect of it also

A1c Don't know

A1ci An appreciation perhaps for their dedication. They are not getting wealthy by doing this but they have a passion and they have a lot of knowledge about the product they are selling, which I really enjoyed getting information about.

Q2 No

Q2a NA

A3 a little

A3a a garden and squirrels likes the beans more than us. 4 acres and a little garden, but not used it in a few years

Q4

A4 My assumption would be locally is healthier

A4a because I assume that when it's from the supermarket it is picked early and ripened in transit versus vine ripened. I would only imagine the vine ripened would be better for you. Son in law is a produce manager at Publix and his grandfather is a farmer

Q5

A5 From work definitely, from home would be a long walk, but could easily bike

A5a San Felasco, Sweetwater Branch, and 10 more pieces of paper, Silver River, Silver Springs, Paynes Prairie

A5b Camping, hike, and bike, break rules and feed the birds, canoe

A5c camp as in RV camping

A5d NA

A5e not that aware of

Q6

A6 Open, we have community garden here in Gainesville, and the city like the McRorie Garden. Where it's City property and we can do it, but as they are looking at developing, 'no we were told we could have all this,' and ya know that's a million dollars worth of land and so it makes me hesitant to say yes again, because be careful of what you do, because people will say you can't develop because it's our garden, and there's nothing, and all I've asked for is show me where we've said that. Ya know if we made a commitment we'll stick to it. So where I like the idea, and I think it's a great idea I'm also nervous because sometimes and it's only one or two people will say 'no' we are entitled to all this and it's not. So that makes me nervous, and that's why I'm hoping. I think when the city does something like that when they say ok you can have a community garden make sure it's land you don't want back, and put it in writing. And like I said in all fairness because now there is a community garden there people might say we don't want a road by our community garden we want this, but yea, ok it's the city's property. So you've got to be careful, there is nothing wrong with having a community garden in downtown NYC either that's cool, but so the city says you can build a garden there, but they are putting rules on us and trying to prevent our development that is counterproductive. I think it would be cool if the buildings were built up and I actually said lets make it a permanent garden but that wasn't good enough they wanted another acre or two acres, and I'm like you're going to kill yourself I mean you are going to lose support by doing that. I'm open to it, but don't want to be held hostage by it either.

Q7

A7 My interpretation is it would be a group of citizens that live within walking vicinity of the parcel and they jointly you know planted and reap the rewards from the garden they

planted together. I think the benefit of that would be really bringing the community together. It would be bonding and it would be also relying on each other for different skill sets, because we are not all good at one thing.

Q8

A8 I think I answered that already a little bit, but bonding the community together quite frankly and not too mention getting good products for a reasonable or little cost. I think also bringing up the next generation to let them know that not everything comes from the shelf.

Q9

A9 Yes and no

A9a, not as simple as you'd think. It's not a yes because then they would think we should provide them the land, you know what I mean? And that's not always the case. If the city has available land and it's appropriate to do it then I think we should step up. We have a lot of parcels of land that are ½ or ¼ acre say in the middle of a community that are doing nothing, zero zilch. I think we should offer that to the community, but also put some rules on it. Don't let it become a weed bed, ya know if you're enthusiastic in the beginning and now it just looks like crap and you don't care about it there should be recourse, it should then come back. So it's not as simple as yes.

Q10

A10 Yes and no answer

A10a it's a great opportunity

A10ai To help them succeed, none, and what I mean by that is if they don't have that going into the community garden they'll never succeed. I don't think we as a public entity could do a community garden, cause I think we'd screw up enough on our own, so I think the best thing for a community garden is to leave us out of it, and that will probably give it the best chance. I would say provide land when appropriate, but to help it succeed throughout the process you'd want us to stay out of it, because pretty soon then we would tell you what to grow and when to grow it. Leave gov't out of the community garden, provide the land, and let us walk away is how it's going to succeed.

Q11

A11 Yes

A11a I always answer with would I want it next door to me, and the answer is yes, and I think one of the things that is attractive about Gainesville is we think outside the box. So, if you had a row of houses and you know you always wind up with a community garden or anything it's always in a poorer or blighted area because that's where the free land is going to be. If you are in a \$300,000 neighborhood no one is going to give up a \$100,000 lot for a community garden typically. That being said I think it should be allowed anywhere the community wants it to be. So, you are on the street and there are 10 neighbors and they want a community garden, god bless them. But I also want tiny houses in the code.

A11ai see 10ai

***SQ What if the open space requirement for the rich neighborhoods allowed for community garden?***

***SA Allowed versus mandate yes. I don't want to be mandating a community garden. I think that would probably be. I think it would be very naïve or stupid if we didn't allow to have a community garden, but I don't want to get to the point***

***where we are saying every 300 houses should have a community garden. The citizens should be allowed to do what they want to do***

Q12

A12 A lot of enthusiasm in the beginning, but not the reality of it's a lot of work and it becomes a weed field and it could actually have an adverse affect on future community garden. So I think people should have a business plan. We'll try it, if it doesn't work we'll put it back to neutral and not have it. I mean look McRorie garden sometimes looks like it's a, things are falling over it doesn't look well maintained. So it could have an adverse impact when someone is trying to say I'd like to do a community garden, someone else could say 'well we don't want that in our neighborhood,' So be careful because you are the next 'no' or the next 'yes' to a garden, so it's a big responsibility quite frankly.

***SQ You mentioned they should have a business plan to start. Does that mean you would be in favor or not in favor of them not being able to sell produce that they grow there?***

***SA Personally, I'm a barterer so I believe they should be able to sell the produce to help pay for the thing. This country was built on bartering and that's as far as I'm concerned would be a part of bartering even though they would actually be getting cash for it I'm cool with that.***

Q13

A13 If we had excess land and we had a clear understanding of how that land was going to be used that would be the way we would support it. That and also make sure the codes allowed it. There are a lot of ways we could support as long as we don't try to do the day to days with them, because we'd ruin them.

Q13a

A13a I would say have just a clear open mind. One of the things about codes and rules is they don't apply in every area. Tiny houses, accessory housing, I'm just thinking land lord permitting, ya know everything we say you can only do this, well that doesn't make sense over here. We said it because we had a knee jerk reaction over here, and we are trying to apply it through the whole city. It's like I try to explain to people we have a downtown Gainesville and then we have essentially suburbs. We are trying to apply rules out in the suburbs that are applied downtown and they just don't blend. I think we need to be smart enough to understand there is no cookie cutter anything. Just look at it and say it applies here and be willing to take that step.

A13b I would say one we already touched on it becoming the center meaning, we can have a community garden and then all of a sudden we are going to do a development and someone's going to build a 3 story house which they are entitled to right next to it. The gardener's might say 'we don't want that right next to our garden.' Believe it or not we are actually getting sort of the odd and people are saying well hell we just won't let you do anymore gardens. I just think that the roadblocks would be having gardens that are in poor condition, mandating that you don't do anything next to the garden. Ya know pretty soon it's the tail wagging the dog. Instead of saying this is cool we can all work together, which was the sales pitch to put the garden in now it's like cool we can't work with you though. You've got to be careful. Just understand we only have one situation that I'm aware of where that's happening, and one person that I'm aware of. So, it's not like it's rampant, but you just want to be very careful when you say we can all work together, that we all work together.

Q14

A14 not sure work to promote them, I think we should work to not inhibit them. I don't, I mean I know there is a benefit, but I'm not sure we are the promoting entity of that. I think that is going to come from the community to the gov't. I just think we should not be the obstacle in the way.

A14 Continue (clarified intent of question)... I don't think we are equipped to do that because it's sort of like tiny housing we aren't even equipped to do that. So, something has to come first, it's going to have to be the gardening community, the community that comes to us with a scenario. We don't know what the scenario or obstacles are yet, so for us to forecast or foresee that is going to be difficult. I say let's not be the obstacle so that's I think the best way to do it. Yea, that's a hard one because let's say its close to a creek, be careful what you fertilize with because high nitrates. Each scenario is going to have to be independent.

Q15

A15 I wouldn't say that I have to be honest with you, but I haven't gotten in their way. I haven't gone out of my way to say yea, I think it's cool, but I haven't been the driving force on it, but I also haven't been the obstacle.

Q16

A16 How far past? (Interviewer, say prior to becoming a commissioner). I would say it was better then than it is now. Because I didn't know there was any negative to a community garden, and now I know there could be an obstacle. Then again it just ya know I'm familiar there is a garden on 10<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, a friend of mine made a deal with Bread of the Mighty, and that garden has always looked nice

Q17

A17 No

A17a Like I said I'm for community garden, I am a lot more educated now. If I were to do a community garden I would almost say 'we are not going to hold this over your head, but don't hold it over ours either.' If there is going to be a community garden then our intentions are to hold the land, put it in writing. If our intentions are for you to have the community garden until we develop the land put that in writing with a clear understanding that you are going to get a 90 day notice, and don't hate us because we are doing exactly what we said we are going to do. That's the resistance right now to community gardens, that's the resistance to anything even us letting someone put something in an empty warehouse. If it's land that we don't need now and we think it would be great for community garden let's put it into parks and rec somehow that way so it's held by the city and yet it will never be anything but a garden, and if they abandon it we plant a big beautiful live oak and say. Yea. I think I've learned a lot more that we need to be cautious cause you are screwing with people's passion and you hear a whole bunch of commissioners say that's a great idea I think you should do that and there is nothing in writing 5 commissions from now we're going to say we never said that. If it isn't in writing they could say anything. Like Commission said I could have GRU, I want it. We don't operate like that that's why I think we would be poor stewards if we didn't put it in writing, that's all.

Q18

A18 No

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Alachua County employee requested no direct attribution of their name

Q1

A1 No

A1a NA

A1b NA

A1c NA

A1ci NA

Q2

A2 Local to where I live or local to Alachua County? (Interviewer assumed you lived in Alachua County) I live in Marion County. yes

A2a I have participated in Marion County's Farmer's Markets and as far as other food initiatives we have relatives with fruit trees and whenever they have oranges for example we'll take bags of those. Is that considered an initiative?

(Interviewer- It's what you consider it is, I'm not filling in words for you)

Ok

Q3

A3 Yes

A3a Squash, tomato, carrot

Q4

A4 grown locally

A4a Because it is fresher with less chemicals to keep it fresh

Q5

A5 Yes

A5a At home we live on 220 acres so I like that best

A5b walk

A5c none

A5d NA

A5e NA

Q6

A6 I like them in theory however in practical application the one that I look at daily<sup>2</sup> is not successful. The reason I say that is it has an iron fence excluding public access, it's very over grown, it's weedy, it seems to provide a food source for rodents that then access the building. I see food that could feed people rotting on the ground. It appears in its official phase it was a great idea, however as people get older or they move away they just lose interest, they have other things that attract their attention and interest so they lose interest in the garden.

Q7

A7 A greenspace with areas available to the nearby community to plant and grow and eat their own food.

**SQ: So based on what you just said when you look outside your window is that a community garden?**

**SA: No**

**SQ: So if that's not a community garden than what would you define your attitudes towards community garden as being?**

**SA: Again initial interest over time other things deter people from continuing to upkeep and maintain the garden**

Q8

A8 Feeding hungry people. Teaching livable skills

Q9

A9 Yes

A9a Why same as a8: Feeding hungry people. Teaching livable skills

Q10 Yes

A10 yes

A10a with the understanding that it is a community initiated, fostered, maintained initiative that they don't then in the future expect the government to maintain it and upkeep it and produce their food for them. I'm probably more a proponent of the fruit bush and fruit tree, because it seems that once that is initially established then it does well on its own rather than tomatoes where every season you have to replant you know. (Interviewer perennials vs annuals)

A10ai Implementing the appropriate ordinances to allow for this type of activity, to designate areas for this type of activity and laissez faire from there, hands off

Q11 Yes

A11a To allow citizens flexibility. They have have a really great location in mind and that it's their government so if the citizens see a need I think that their government should assist them in making their community what they envision it to be. Not being so restrictive and bureaucratic about it

Q12

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<sup>2</sup> Word choice modified to comply with interviewees non-attribution request

A12 Maintenance and I guess going back to the prior question as well. If at some point in the future the citizens aren't maintaining it that they do understand that the local government can repurpose the land for some other public benefit. So as long as it is being actively maintained and used yes it is a community garden whenever it becomes overgrown and it is obviously not being used then the citizens understand that we can and will use it for some other community purpose

Q13

A13 We have one at our county administration building, however it is a very poor example of one. I would rather talk about our initiatives in parks which would include installation of olive trees and other fruit trees. We are working with IFAS to determine what varieties grow well here in this soil and in this climate and kind of a one and done type of thing. So we would make sure say instead of planting live oak tree we'll plant an orange tree instead. It will also provide shade and habitat and food for hungry people. So we are adding just one additional benefit of installing a fruit tree versus just a shade tree and that's something that's in partnership again with IFAS Parks, extension. We have a lady in Public Works who is kind of our tree lady. So at least 4 departments that I can think of are spearheading the initiative.

Q13a

A13a If it's a citizen led initiative that we will help guide them through the process and make it as easy and unbureaucratic as possible.

A13b Maybe some land use codes, maybe some nearby citizens some think it's a great idea while others think it's a terrible idea. So with government no matter what the decision there are always people that love it and hate it

Q14

A14 I guess collaboration makes sense no matter what the initiative is and the same holds true for community gardens. That if some of our sister municipalities are embracing community gardens and if there is some way we can join with them it just kind of makes sense because their citizens are our citizens.

Q15

A15 Probably more on the administrative end, understand the vision of our four plus departments who are working to implement the tree, fruit, bush project in our parks. Trying to suggest some creative alternative funding sources for them. We have tree mitigation money and if it's an allowable funding source than that might help expedite the process. Trying to encourage them not to prepurchase them and have our own nursery at our Hague facility until they can get planted and installed. Just buy them from the nursery and have the nursery install them where we want them so we are not in the nursery business.

Q16

A16 Past as in I guess I've been aware of community gardens for maybe 10 years or so. My prior employer working for the county we had more rural areas so that wasn't as big a focus as our big sister municipality where they did have people living close together and their wasn't this great expanse of land. So I think it's probably more of city initiatives rather than county initiatives but I do like that in Alachua County they have tried to be a good steward and show people that it can be done.

Q17

A17 No

Q18

A18 No

A18a NA

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City of Gainesville Commissioner Harvey Budd

Q1

A1 yes

A1a The one by highway patrol station 441, downtown, and we tried to have one at Thornebrook village but it was not very successful. It's hard to get the dates because of the way things work in the community.

A1b At first I thought they were fun, because I liked fresh things but after a while it got to be boring because some had the requirement where you had to grow the stuff yourself and I thought that was a bad requirement. I thought that they should be able to bring in stuff that other people grow not to stuff they grew themselves. Does that make sense? It was a restriction and I didn't think that was a good idea. I come from England from a place called Lee Yorkshire and there was a big market there and I loved going to the market and going to all the fruit stands and buying a variety of stuff and haggling with everybody about the prices of what they had and I thought to have the full ranged of things you could bring your own stuff and should be allowed to bring other people's stuff. Like a co-op or something

A1c no

A1ci Sometimes I knew them and sometimes I didn't

Q2 Yes

A2 The Thornebrook thing where I was trying to make it happen and I think we've tried to raise money for a Food Coop for poor people that Misses Voyle had it. It had religious overtones and so I wasn't a fan.

(Interviewer- Not like St Francis House?)

No it was more evangelistic type of thing. Now B'Nai Israel did have some kind of produce that they sold one time they had something going but that was the only time with the synagogue.

Q3

A3 Yes

A3a Tomatoes, about the easiest thing to grow, but I've picked oranges, and S. Carolina I had friends who were farmers and picked melons

Q4

A4 Grown Locally

A4a It's fresher, and had a chance to mature most everything you buy comes as green and then ripens as it travels. I think buying local it's naturally ripened. Does that make sense? It's a shorter trip to my refrigerator

Q5

A5 Absolutely

A5a I live right behind Westside Park and Loblolly Park is behind my house.

A5b walking and occasionally a function that may occur at the Westside park main building. I don't do any of the sports at the parks

A5c I haven't really thought about it I just think they are underutilized for certain sports probably if they had croquet tournaments it would be fun to have. I think there needs to be more adult recreation. So even a little putting range like a little golf thing where you could hit the ball around. Anything where you can get out there in the green

A5d NA

A5e No

Q6

A6 Indifferent

Q7

A7 Well it's usually lots divided up where you have a certain amount of the space of whatever the property is to plant or grow whatever you want in that space for your needs. It could be organic that's usually I think the preferred method so you get fruit that's quality whatever you're going to grow

Q8

A8 Fresh vegetables during a season and fresh and quality and you can get them without pesticides for those people that like that.

Q9

A9 absolutely

A9a A right to be able to do what you want. If it's not being used, it's fallow why not utilize it for some other purpose, repurpose it.

Q10

A10 Yes, and I have a few that I can suggest. I know exactly where they can go, big ones too.

**SQ What locations would you suggest?**

**SA Under power lines**

**SQ Under the power lines?**

**SA Yes under the power lines that run all over Gainesville especially in the NE and we have tons of property under the power lines and they seem like the greatest opportunity to grow. I can think of one particular one comes to mind**

right near where I go to work everyday 43<sup>rd</sup> Street you ever see before it goes to 441 from Hunter's Crossing. You know how much land there is along the right hand side there? Talk about a wonderful community garden and you have power lines over all of NW Gainesville and of course if you go over to the airport and you go near Ironwood there is a road that connects you to 53<sup>rd</sup> there is tons of land all along there that could easily be converted into community garden and there are several power lines along it and I see them all over the place, cause what are you going to do with the land its fallow and they grow grass under it and I'm sure it would be easier just to grow food. Self-sustaining, it would be self-sustaining

Q10ai

A10Ai Aha that's another story, very limited because we have other things we need to do.

**SQ Very limited would imply some support?**

**SA Some but not very much**

**SQ So What type?**

**SA I don't know I can suggest fertilizer because we have plenty of fertilizer. I don't know we have very limited resources I see a problem there. Who pays for the seed, who pays for getting water to the site? Water and the seeds are the critical problem. Cause you supposedly are taking care of most of the labor.**

Q11

A11 Yes,

A11a I think they should it's a great idea if it's not being used for other purposes. You could repurpose it

Q12

A12 I think it will how can I say it? I don't trust people to not steal from other people. I see a problem. That's the only problem I see that honesty. Let's say you have a successful person and is very successful and does all the right things next to someone that is unsuccessful now you are competing with him and they could get very jealous so I think it creates competition rather than cooperation. Rather than helping each other to grow the best garden people would tend to compete with each other and I hate to see people competing in order to grow that process. So I think that's the only downside. It's the only downside I can think about, and vandalism that can occur from outside people. You have the internal vandalism jealousy and external of vandalism. So how do you secure the area. I think in New York they have fences, then you have to spend more money. It's going to cost capital

**SQ So do you think the benefits of community gardens would outweigh the drawbacks of community garden?**

**SA Yea, I think the benefits would but again who picks up the ticket for security?**

Q13

A13 I have not a clue, no idea. I never researched it, I know they exist. I don't know if it's under Parks Recreation or which department it even comes under. I'd assume it was Parks and Recreation. See one of the problems we have is it is our responsibility to have social programs inside the city? To what degree should we be doing social programs? Or is it the responsibility of the county to be doing social programs? What constitutes a social program? Is growing foods, housing, food a requirement, if you want

to help yourself to food? The question then becomes what is the role of government and what level of government? When I look at the different things I found the State of Florida has the agriculture people that like the department in the State of Florida who handles you know farming stuff. You can take bugs to them and they can tell you what kind of bug you have and how to get rid of it. So, they have the expertise, so if you create if you want to help somebody do something it isn't about throwing money at them and having them succeed. So, I see the State of Florida as having a more active role than the city of county government. Now you might have a county agent but the city is an urban thing so I don't see us having the staff or creating the staff to have to be the consultants for that. You see what I'm saying? It becomes a whole issue of how do you help the people, and what kinds of issues and disease and all kinds of things, is that really a role of city government? Do we provide the land and let somebody else provide the services? What part of government provides the services and to whom? Hope this all makes sense.

Q13a

A13a If we could find somebody to underwrite the process, get a sponsor a financial sponsor and then find a way to find the land through GRU because I think that's where we have a lot of surplus land. That they can lease to a community garden and find some kind of legal ramifications where they could enhance it a combination of GRU and city government.

Q13b

A13b That's a tough one. I guess I'm not that familiar with the organization so I do not know a specific one. I just know it is very hard to deal with local government to get anything accomplished. Of course you've got to have an ordinance you know that covers that kind of thing even though agriculture is a kind of thing. So, there is a lot of different steps to make it kosher to be able to use a particular piece of property for a particular function so there are a lot of roadblocks in the fact that gov't is not setup to do it. The county gov't is more likely set up for farms or community gardens then city gov't. So, it's a square peg in a round hole for us. Then it brings up the whole process of who manages it and ensures all these different things. You know what I'm saying? It becomes a whole business.

Q14

A14 Well if you can find a sponsor who can cut through the red tape and have a model to make it work. But, let's say you have a community garden and let's say it's a 1 acre parcel. Somebody has to allocate the spaces, has to monitor the spaces, has to make sure A doesn't kill B over that space. It's a whole bureaucracy so unless you can find a person who's willing to take all that on to manage the big enterprise, and the question is it privately done or is it governmentally done. That's really what the problem is when you say cooperation what do you mean by cooperation? Cause until you have like a person in charge of everything you have like nothing. Unless they do it privately and they do it on private property and then it has nothing to do with government. And that's the way say its on University property where they can manage because they are setup for it. I don't even know who manages their property for their community garden. I'm sure there is some not for profit organization that is setup so that has to be the sponsor. Unless, you can find a sponsor there is no enterprise to contract with.

Q15

A15 I've looked at them, they are very nice. I haven't supported them in any way shape or form. I haven't done anything. It's not high on my radar of stuff that I want to get involved in, things I want to get involved in.

Q16

A16 is that empathetic, empathetic would be better- - I like to see them occur. I'm just not willing to pay the price to put it in to get it done. You can only champion so many things, and I champion what I can. I'm a financial guy, but I have a green thumb. I personally like to grow things. I don't have time to do it personally. Do I like to see it? Yes, do I like to mess with it? Yea, do you know how many plants I've killed at my house? A lot. So we are very careful with what we bring into the house.

Q17

A17 Yes

A17a because I have had to think it out. I had to think it through, I think there is a great business opportunity for somebody to take care of it. Maybe not a business opportunity, but a great opportunity. As I said before I'm the last guy you should be interviewing for this

(Interviewer- Honestly, everyone's opinion and your opinion is definitely valued. As the project is looking at opinions so I can look at them and everyone else's)

Q18

A18 No

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City of Gainesville Parks John Weber

Q1

A1 Yes

A1A Downtown and the one on 441 by the Highway Patrol Station. I went there Saturday as a matter of fact

A1b I like best that they are local goods, a lot of organic products, locally grown and dealing with local community rather than a large grocery store chain

A1c No, not really

Q2

A2 no, aside from the community garden here at work

Q3

A3 vegetables in a garden, we've done watermelon, squash, beans, potatoes, radishes, greens, onions

Q4

A4 Absolutely local

A4a Because you know where it comes from you have better control of what goes into it. From a chain it goes through many different hands its been from place to place, it can be imported from other countries and you're not familiar with how it's been managed, pesticides, herbicides on it. Whether its been sitting in a crate how fresh it really is with local produce it's a safe assumption to believe its relatively fresh from the local community and it's not from a strange place a foreign country.

Q5

A5 The closest park from me would be about a ½ mile a small neighborhood park. My residence I cannot. The park is a tot lot

A5b A small playground for children, peaceful to sit and eat lunch and enjoy the shade, you can sit and read.

A5C I'm ok with what is there

A5e no community garden there

Q6

A6 I think I have a very open approach. I get excited about them. I think it's a great community resource.

Q7

A7 There's lots of. I think a community garden is multi-faceted it's a place where people can grow vegetables and flowers, that is the obvious answer but I think it's a lot more than that. It's a place for networking, for outreach, socialization, communities can come together and give them some common ground for them to unite around. It's good for education because you educate children and adults about food production, organic food production. You talk about pest management. It's a congregation place nearby it's obviously a place for food. You are growing food and can consume it or the community helping those that are less fortunate then you.

I approach, being I'm the one that has to set things up you see a lot of different looks from people. We often tend to focus on the obvious in life. I think community garden provide a whole lot of recreational activity outside of gardening. You and I could meet

up every week and hang out and that's our thing we show up and work together, garden together be outdoors, besides from the obvious of growing vegetables. So it's something I think provides more benefits than just food production.

Q8

A8 I'm gonna use as an example a garden that we have 5<sup>th</sup> avenue is one of the newest ones that we've developed its actually built on a piece of property on 5<sup>th</sup> avenue that was not a buildable lot. There was something years ago wrong with the survey so it was 2 houses that were built on 2 lots each so the space in the middle was kind of devoid. It wasn't large enough to build a house. You'd have to either grant easements to both of them and then you lose that space which was actually city property so the neighborhood and the city worked together and we developed a really nice community garden on that space. I mean it's a great use of a piece of property that has eventually no value or use for anything, but we've essentially turned it into a place that provides value. I think community gardens can provide value in many different ways.

(Interviewer- mentions case studies improve real estate value)

Yes, I think they can because it's a safe activity, its comfortable, who doesn't like gardening it brings the old young and disabled together, and it's a common activity where we can all work together and everybody gets to enjoy the benefits of it. It's not something that's limited to one group of people I mean everybody can do it.

Q9

A9 Yes

A9a Because it provides all of the reasons I talked about before the sense of community and ownership being together the feeling of accomplishment of growing healthier food. I mean the whole gardening thing that's why the garden is there, but there is so much other stuff behind that. You are educating people and they are exercising they are becoming involved with their community they are meeting new people establishing positive relationships.

(Interviewer - so the food is a catalyst for all of the other benefits)

Yes sir that's a great way to say it, I don't think anyone is ever going to say anything bad about a community garden

Q10

A10 Yes

A10a why, see above

A10a1 I can tell you what the City of Gainesville is doing. The City provides if available public lands which can be in a park or a city owned piece of property or a lot that can be developed. We help establish the infrastructure meaning we put the water in, the initial preparation of the soil, put up some perimeter security fencing so it's defined. We'll provide mulch for weed management as part of the initial setup. Our program is pretty much hands off from beyond that unless there is an issue. Our program is volunteer run. They make sure the rules of the garden are enforced meaning no pesticides, herbicides, or synthetic fertilizers, no automated water, to make sure we aren't wasting

water. That we are growing crops that are appropriate that all the gardeners are good neighbors. As far as the city development that's kind of what our program is about.

(Interviewer - all of the gardens are organic gardens?)

We try to encourage that yes, if someone wants to purchase fertilizer from a garden store we don't discourage that, but we do encourage folks not to use pesticides or herbicides in the gardens, and to use as much organic material for fertilization as possible.

Q11

A Yes,

(Interviewer - Do you believe having those in the codes make it easier to establish community garden?)

Yea, I think so because some of the folks aren't aware of how to do it or what does it take. There is often a vague area of how to get one started so I think having some clearly defined guidelines that tells people what they can do, what they can't is beneficial. You have to be careful with any kind of development there has to be some sort of regulation. Can't be carte blanche

A11ai – see above resources provided

Q12

A12 Not enough involvement meaning not enough commitment from the users. We've had some fall by the wayside because they hadn't been kept up with let them for for just one reason or another. People just walked away from them. They've let them go for one reason or another. I think that's the biggest think the management from our. The way our program is set up is finding committed people that stay in it. I think that varies from area to area if you have an area with a lot of renters and there is a lot of turnover I think there is the potential for some drawback there because you aren't going to have people committed to the garden long term, gonna be a lot of short term folks which is going to be a problem for the site coordinators. Then you know if issues with the landscape you can have problems like one problem with deer wildlife issues, or tree canopy shade, preventing some vegetables. In Florida a big problem is the heat we lose a lot of gardeners in the summer because its just too hot. People don't want to do it and don't get out there and community gardens just get run down and have to be brought back are some of the things I see from a maintenance and management perspective.

Q13

A13 COG program is there to facilitate the development of community garden but the city doesn't take we aren't actively searching and seeking out to develop gardens, it's a community based program. If there is an interest in the community garden we go through a process to try to make sure that it's warranted that the neighborhood wants it there. That there is a suitable piece of property to develop on and there is management of the garden once it's developed. We have I think 8-9 gardens in town now and I'm working to develop 2 more in the Duval neighborhood these are all. Every garden that I've ever developed here has been based upon a citizen request. So they've all come from the community and I think the programs have better success if they come from the people that want the garden to be here. Not if the City says we are going to put a

garden here. If it comes from the community first I think it has a better chance to succeed.

(Interviewer - You said the city should have guidelines so they can be established)

It is for the community it's a community entity it's not the city saying we are providing this for you it's the community saying we want this in our community. We want this garden here, we want it to be a part of who we are. I think that is where it needs to start from I think if you take ownership from day 1 you're going to be more vested in it. If the City put it out there you're gonna get some folks who are gonna use it, but I don't know if you'd get the involvement from the community as you would if it came about because of the community. From my experience we've had much better success with the community coming to us then us going to them, and I think that's part of our role we are supposed to listen to what our community wants, what our citizens request and then we can make that happen for them we do. The guidelines and rules come about because we have to do things the proper way.

A13a interesting question, because if you wanted more gardens you'd have to advertise it, you'd have to promote it a sort of outreach campaign, and I think that maybe is what we are lacking. The city would have to say hey, we think this is an important part of society, an important benefit that your community can harvest these fruit and vegetables and meet new friends and neighbors. We aren't doing enough outreach and education of the benefits of community garden or organic gardening or edible gardening, because edible gardens are a big thing now where they aren't just for the people who are part of the garden, but anyone can come eat kind of a big thing. I know we had one downtown that wasn't very successful and I think it's because that it wasn't managed from the group the way it should have been. There weren't committed enough to it to make it successful. So I think it takes outreach to get the word out of the benefits of community garden. That's what cities are good at, outreach, education, identifying those things and letting people know that they are there.

A13b Availability of property or land space. We have to do outreach within 400 feet of a requested community garden to make sure the community members are ok with it being built. We can't do it on private property, so there may not be space to do it in a neighborhood.

Q14

A14 We should network with our coworkers in our industry. I don't know what other communities are doing because there isn't a lot of networking going on. I don't know what statistics are what our neighbors are doing whether they have community garden. I know UF does but that's about the only one, I couldn't tell you if Alachua or High Springs, or Newberry or Jonesville I have no idea.

Q15

A15 I facilitate the program

Q16

A16 Before I came to the city I was indifferent I didn't know much about them. They weren't part of my vocabulary or of interest for me. I grew up on a farm, we farmed all

the time, vegetable farming was a part of my life. I didn't realize the importance of urban gardening in a city like Gainesville and I think it's a very important part of people's lives. So I got educated and I've seen how interested people are in them. They are very active and I think that they are going to become more active today.

Q17

A17 I think it's reinforced. Since I facilitate it I think it's a great program it doesn't take a whole lot of effort to make it happen, and I think you can see the benefits of it.

Q18

A18 no

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Alachua County Commissioner Ken Cornell

(Interviewer - What questions would you like to ask me?)

Q: what's kind of the purpose?

(Interviewer - To identify attitudes of community leaders towards community gardens)

Q1:

A1: Yes

A1a: Haile, the one in Alachua 441, downtown, I was born and raised here

Q1b:

A1b: Local food & people, fresh produce and just the whole vibe kind of shopping, participating in the local economy. I always feel good when I buy something in the farmer's markets. That I'm helping somebody

Q1c bond

A1c Yes

A1ci I feel good that I'm supporting them, but equally important they are supporting our community from the stand point of it takes energy to produce things so to the extent that we can minimize the energy that we expend to produce things and produce it locally and not shipping it across the country just seems to make sense in so many ways. Like taking your foot off the gas pedal when you are going down the hill you just feel good when you see the mileage thing go from 20 MPG to over 100.

Q2: other local food init

A2 and A2a: Broadly I supported from a commissioner stand point. I haven't actively grown or sold food.

A2 and A2a: Broadly I supported from a commissioner stand point. I haven't actively grown or sold food.

Q3 No

Q4:

A4: Food grown locally

Q4a: why

A4a: If it takes less energy to produce it from the source to where you consume it. It just makes sense to me that it's healthier, less preservatives, less storage, less things that could potentially contaminate the food out of the life cycle process of when it comes out of the ground from where its produced to where you consume it

Q5: park

A5: Yes I can easily walk to a park or other greenspace

Q5a:

A5a: I like parks best

**SQ: is there a specific one you like best?**

A5a: I really like Jonesville Park because that's where I spent a lot of time with my kids, but probably my favorite is actually a green space park La Chua Trail.

Q5b: activities

A5b: Walking and getting to the water, if I can get to where I can see or touch the water it's just healing for me. I live on Lake Santa Fe

Q5c: can't do currently

A5c: at Jonesville Park I'd like to see actually a water feature for the kids at the La Chua Trail it's pretty much perfect for me. You can get pretty close to nature out there. To close probably.

Q5d

A5d NA

Q5e: community garden at parks

A5e: Not that I'm aware of

Q6: current attitude

A6: I'm for them I think they are great. From the standpoint of educating young folks from the standpoint of getting out with the community and actually doing things to help sustaining I think they are good. So I'm for the concept. I think they are probably better in neighborhoods vs parks space, personal opinion.

Q7: def

A7: A place that is owned cared for and benefits the community that it serves.

Q8: benefits

A8: bringing folks out of their houses and together. I think as we get to know each other or with each other it provides for opportunities for us to realize that we are much more alike than different. I think that's important in our society right now. I think community garden's help sustain communities and they allow folks that maybe have certain skills to teach folks that don't have skills so they help with improving everybody's skills in the community and they help build community. I think getting back to what I said earlier neighborhood community gardens to me help strengthen the neighborhood and everybody likes it when a neighbor brings them a basket of fruit. It gives them that opportunity kind of daily

Q9: community garden on land they don't own

A9: yes

Q9A

A9a that's what community is

Q10: public lands- designated lands

A10: Yes

Q10a: Why

A10a: They help strengthen and build the community. I'm a larger fan of neighborhood community garden's as opposed to just public place community garden, because I think, for example I live on the Eastern part of the county but I visit parks throughout the county. So I'd be less attuned to participate in a community garden that was an hour or 30 minutes away. Whereas if it was in my neighborhood I would just walk to it. So I think to the extent we can encourage land use decisions to create those types of gardens in our open spaces within our developments that then the neighborhood can take ownership of. I think that's a great model. Or where we have municipal or public parks that serve a handful of neighborhoods having a community garden in those spaces helps bring those neighborhoods together into one place I think that strengthens communities, and we all have to eat.

Q10ai: resources

A10ai: education and kind of getting them started. Helping the local community actually get the garden started and then finding advocates within the community that can then take the lead. I don't think we should continuously take care of it. I think that's counter intuitive to the community doing it, but certainly jump starting it or providing the space or providing the knowledge of what it is all about.

Q11: LDC request

A11: Yes

Q11a: why

A11a: Because they are good for the community in my opinion, to the extent that we have local citizens that want to help with that public purpose we should facilitate that not fight that. If we had any citizens that wanted to help us build roads then we'd certainly allow it I'd hope, part of our infrastructure.

Q11ai: resources to be provided

A11ai: Expertise opportunities for where these gardens may be placed, GIS mapping or connecting to IFAS as sort of a catalyst to connect the right resources and get them going

Q12: drawbacks

A12: A lot of effort to get it started and no one taking care of it, or it dies on the vine, or it becomes an eyesore because of no participation from the community. Becomes a community weed patch. We spend resources and we sink our cost into something that is then not taken care of by the community

**SQ: Do you think the benefits of a community garden outweigh the potential drawbacks?**

**SA: Yes, I don't think there are drawbacks to a community garden. There are drawbacks to having a community garden if no one takes care of, it goes away it becomes just part of the natural environment again which there is nothing wrong with that, but if you've spent time and effort to get something started and then it dies it's just a lost/sunk cost. So that potential drawback is minimal compared to the potential upside.**

Q13: How does Alachua County support Community gardens?

A13: I don't know, I don't know if we do. I think intuitively we all think its good, local food local source but I don't know if Alachua County our staff or our policies facilitate or support the idea I don't know. You could probably tell me when we are done.

Q13a: Could Alachua County do to support community garden

A13a: Looking for folks around our community that want to be advocates or starting them in places where they live

Q13b: Roadblocks in Alachua County to community garden

A13b: lack of knowledge, lack of awareness

Q14: interlocal gov't work

A14: Local governments so municipalities and the county to the extent there are locations within certain cities that the cities have identified as potential opportunities the county should provide staffing and expertise and resources to help facilitate the startup of community garden's in those cities. Whereas the cities may have land and opportunities for placing these gardens, but they don't have the staffing or expertise to kind of get it off the ground the county could provide that.

**SQ: So that would mainly apply to smaller municipalities or cities?**

**SA: Right, Newberry, Alachua, High Springs, Archer**

Q15: Personal support to community gardens

A15: I probably haven't done a good job of supporting them at all. This is probably one of the first conversations that I've had about them since I've been elected.

Q16: past attitudes

A16: always been supportive of them, but I've never been participating, never had one close by in my neighborhood.

**SQ: You mentioned that you have children if you did have a community garden close by would you participate with them?**

**SA: I would have been, my children are now grown men 21 & 23 down at UCF, but I lived in Haile for a long time. If Haile would have had one that would have been a wonderful place to congregate and participate.**

Q17: change of attitudes

A17: Yes

Q17a

A17a More aware of them and glad someone is talking about it. I'm a big advocate for local food for local effort. I think there is huge potential in so many different areas from

helping alleviate the many pockets of poverty that we have in areas like SWAG, east Gainesville, and many of the municipalities that are struggling with their citizens areas in High springs and Newberry where this type of activity could be part of the beginning of the catalyst of improving that local micro community. We all have to eat and to the extent that we can provide food sources and places where communities can congregate and work together for their own benefit. That is the way we can strengthen our own community. So I love what you are doing thank you for doing it.

Q18: any other?'s?

A18: I'd love to know where we have them around Alachua County

(Interviewer - Alachua County has none, COG has ~ 8 including with one about 1-1/2 miles from here, on GRU property. They have a community garden organizer that's liasioned to the COG parks. COG provides water, land, and mulch. The gardeners run it. Porter's Neighborhood Garden is another.)

Side Conversation Ken-I've seen that one

(Interviewer - COG doesn't have much in the way of codes or ordinances, but they have a good setup for establishing them through their parks department. They do a survey to make sure no one in the area is against it.)

Ken- So I see a huge opportunity in perhaps um expanding this concept in places of worship? There are a lot of places of worship where people come together weekly and sometimes 2 or 3 times a week. You don't need a lot of land, you really don't. So that would be an opportunity worth exploring with some of our places of worship.

(Interviewer - County has codes and ordinances in place, but no community garden's setup. I know Jonesville is being worked on to have a perennial edible setup, a community orchard, but not a true community garden.)

That could be an opportunity to set something up. I think it's an opportunity. I think it's great to be doing it.

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City of Gainesville Mayor Lauren Poe

Q1

A1 Yes

A1a 95% of the time downtown, 441, and Haile

A1b Easy and convenient access to local produce, I like many things about them including the

festive environment, fellowship with people maybe I haven't seen in a while, the music, people. Getting a goodie to eat that I otherwise wouldn't get. Definitely walking away with a couple of bags of fresh produce is definitely key

A1c I would say I feel a bond between myself and a couple of the farmers that I frequent the same farms, some of them I had a relationship prior to being at the market. Others I developed while there, but I tend to be a repeat customer and loyalist.

A1ci Outside of that my brother is a farmer who exclusively makes a living selling his produce at a farmer's market outside of Idaho. So I think I have a bond with the farmers in general because I know how difficult it is for what they do and the incredible value they bring right there to your convenient doorstep.

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a Grace marketplace prepared and served food out there a few times. I've participated in food collection with a variety of organizations my church, employment. I've participated from a governmental side in helping get established the blue oven kitchen incubator. I was an early member of the citizens' co-op when they were still in their planning stages and support them as well. I've participated in some community garden activities and also worked with Florida Organic Growers FOG for a period of time to try to help them expand their reach into the city, more from the governmental side than sort of hands on working within the organization.

Q3

A3 yes

A3a mainly vegetables, tomatoes, squashes, lots of hot peppers, potatoes eggplants, beans, tried blueberries, they died, carrots, onions.

Q4

A4 Depends

A4a I think as far as healthy I believe it is how it is produced, not where it is sold.

Q5

A5 Yes

A5a Ring Park

A5b walk trails, and a small children's play area for my 2 young children, mainly we walk the trails and sometimes go down into the creek as well

A5c none

A5d NA

A5e It has a community garden, I suppose I could participate in it. It's not a vegetables or food garden it's a mainly like a butterfly and native species garden. I imagine I could participate if I wanted to but it's one of those kinds of things that almost takes care of itself at this point and probably a couple of times a year some caretakers go in and clean it up a little bit. It's not so much billed as a community garden

Q6

A6 Very positive

Q7

A7 I would say that a community garden is any dedicated space on public or publicly accessible private land where members of the community can use either individually or collectively to grow things.

Q8

A8 I believe they bring community together and allow people to get to know each other and understand more about one another. I believe they can have nutritional benefits. I believe they have environmental benefits and I believe they can have emotional or spiritual benefits as well

Q9

A9 Yes

A9a Connection to the land is very important, it is important to understand who we are and that we are connected to a much larger and complex ecosystem so it allows for that connection to be made that understanding to be sort of developed and explored.

Q10

A10 yes

A10a For above reasons: Connection to the land is very important, it is important to understand who we are and that we are connected to a much larger and complex ecosystem so it allows for that connection to be made that understanding to be sort of developed and explored.

Q10ai Certainly space, technical assistance, material assistance to a point. I think installing things like spigots and maybe durable compost facilities things like that. Spigots refer to a water supply

Q11

A11 Yes

A11a (Interviewer - why is the same reasons as above?) Correct

Q12

A12 It may not be the highest best use of every piece of property in the city. In other words they would need to be appropriately sited.

**SQ: Let's say we are in Gainesville 100 years from now and you have 1 or 2 community garden's left on undeveloped parcels and someone says I want to put a 20 story building there and get rid of the garden. How then should people value a community garden?**

**SA: Well I think you would need to look at the needs of the community do you have an extreme housing shortage where you know have exorbitantly high rents or homelessness problem? Then that may be your priority I also believe that a community garden need not necessarily exist on a plot of land I think there are a lot of new approaches towards community gardens being setup on rooftops sort of adaptive reuse of other infrastructure. I think sort of a symbiosis between building and community gardens that doesn't need to be binary**

Q13

A13 We have several community gardens throughout the city that either we have allowed communities to use city property or they are sort of legacy gardens. We don't offer a lot of technical expertise that's usually done through the University extension or county extension offices but I know on Grove Street, Porters, I forget the name of it near the power district. Those were established long ago by neighborhoods that had the need for a common shared space and the city offered their public property in order to enable that.

A13a I think it is a matter of working alongside the county and university to make sure we provide the resources that people need in order to have successful community gardens. You don't want to duplicate services you want to make sure the most appropriate agency is the one providing assistance to people so in our history that tends to mean the city has provided space and either the county or University extension offices provide the expertise. The city does operate a working farm so it doesn't mean that we aren't totally in that business. We probably aren't the most qualified to get into the direct assistance in helping people with gardens, but there are definitely people that are. So I think it's a partnership that exists and should assist.

A13b Sometimes space, where to site, sometimes public opposition. I've certainly experienced that where members of a neighborhood wanted to create a garden and other members showed up to oppose it. Many times it's just lack of understanding by people that want to do it on how to get started. What do you need to do to successfully grow food or flowers or whatever your goal is and having that support system and the knowledge base to come assist people especially in the early stages. Once gardens get going that knowledge gets passed from neighbor to neighbor and generation to generation and then it becomes a little more self-sustaining but in the beginning it becomes a little more difficult. There are some material road blocks, tools, things like compost bins that may be necessary to successfully have your garden.

Q14

A14 I think that partnership is important. Certainly with a land grant university taking advantage of that expertise is not only important, but makes sense but beyond that I think that you could benefit from the county gov't and the different municipalities in Alachua County doing outreach and finding out what communities might want a community garden that don't have one and finding opportunities to create them. I do

think each community, I'm not saying community gardens need to exist exclusively within municipalities but they are especially needed and valuable in urban areas, so the city trying to find and protect space that would allow that and people that are professionals in the area at like the county and University level that could provide the expertise I think that combines the best skillsets of all those levels of government.

Q15

A15 Through funding mechanisms that have either allowed for preservation of space or purchase of space through dedicated funding mechanisms, Wildspaces Public Spaces is the one that comes to mind. I'm actually working actively right now with a member of the Porter's neighborhood to try to find support to replace FOGs leaving that community garden and I think that there are plenty of people in the neighborhood that want to keep it going, but they don't have the resources to do it so I'm working right now to try to bridge that sort of void that's come up. I tried to help get a community garden started and going. I wasn't the only one people in my mother's neighborhood wanted one and I tried to be an advocate for that but it ultimately failed. Sometimes you try and don't succeed.

(Interviewer - I know FOG is attempting to get funding to get it back going again)

That would be useful for the residents

Q16

A16 I've always been strong advocate for them, I don't think my attitude has changed much over the years. I've never thought they were a bad thing.

Q17

A17 I hope so,

A17a but you'd need to ask me in like a month

Q18 Yes

A18 As a community we need to discuss non-traditional community garden, interior gardens, community gardens that are parts of programming for whether they be schools or after school programs that the city does or rehabilitative programs. I think there are some good case studies out there that show significant value in all those areas. Usually they are done in bigger cities, bigger problems but it's something Gainesville should start to look at whether there are opportunities to start to do some of those new and different approaches towards community gardens.

(Interviewer mentions UF has a group community garden as well now, not just individual plots)

That's neat shared investment and responsibility, that's neat

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, avince@ufl.edu,

susan\_vince2002@yahoo.com; Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

Alachua County Manger Dr. Lee Niblock

Q1

A1 Yes lots

A1a You don't have enough time in the interview, but I've been going to and developing farmers markets so we can put essentially fresh and more importantly locally grown produce and products in the hands of consumers. We had a health happens farmers market in Marion County that we developed. I can tell you that when you grow up in the Midwest although I'm married to a Gainesville girl I grew up in the Midwest and was raised by depression era parents that had Victory Gardens and quite frankly a mother the youngest of 3 children that grew up on a farm just outside of a small town, county seat, in eastern Iowa and a couple of years during the depression they would probably have starved to death had they not had their own livestock and gardens that literally everything they ate they either made themselves, produced themselves or you know grew and canned for later consumption. So I've been heavily involved in farmers markets and farmers markets aren't just fruits and vegetables, anything that is locally produced, but I'm a firm believer that good health comes from the micronutrients that are in the soil in the area that you are basically conceived and raised in so that's a long discussion topic that you might have already done some research on but I think locally grown produce is the healthiest thing you can have certainly it is the antithesis of overly processed food.

A1b I think the freshness of vegetables and the other thing that I like and it's because I've had allergies throughout my life and there is I think some pretty solid evidence that if you consume and this is in a seasonal climate, whereas we don't have a seasonal climate in Florida, but I mean we have pollen year round but I think locally produced honey and a couple of the vegetables that you don't normally see in your typical produce department at your local Publix or Lucky's. I can tell you that when you can get things like locally grown turnips and beets that you just don't normally see I think that is pretty significant and I like locally sourced honey and those are two things that seem to come out at farmers markets. (Interviewer - I've heard the same thing about honey). They say a teaspoon of honey 30 days every day prior of locally sourced honey 30 days prior to the start of when you think is your pollen season is going to lessen allergies

A1c I don't know if a bond or just you know my personality never met a stranger

A1ci When I say never met a stranger, you can converse. I mean I grew up with people that made a living from the land and actually if you go to Epcot Center I want to say Kraft Foods one of their exhibits halls is 'The Land' the song that plays and I haven't been there in years and years but the song 'Listen to the Land' I can tell you right now that if you talk to people that make their livings from the land or they have a hobby of growing specific things I think these are the people that are more engaged and willing to share. So whether it's an instant bond I don't know, but it's an instant affinity for a mutually agreeable topic.

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a I've been involved in a number of food drives and the first food drive 'Bring It Home' when I was a county administrator in Marion County. We did an initiative just before Thanksgiving and we raised 80,000 lbs of food items and that's an enormous amount (Interviewer - that's at least 2 tractor trailer loads). A lot of loading, lots of photo ops, but most importantly getting the food to the people in the community who had the need.

Q3

A3 Yes

A3a Pretty much anything you can imagine a lot of hot pepper and tomato and onion side of things because guess what those are main ingredients in salsa and I used to make my own salsa and can that. But I can tell you that when I first started out I was a park ranger and I lived in a little farm house in Iowa, and I was allowed to have a garden and I had good Iowa soil I raised carrots, tomatoes, peppers, and a lot of the leaf lettuces and beets and I can tell you some nights the only thing I ate was what I pulled from my garden that day and it was amazing when you plant and grow. In fact those young small plants are so tender and as you continue to thin things, for instance carrots you have to continue to thin or you are going to have odd shape carrots or not big carrots and it was amazing what you could pull out of your garden but I also liked things that you don't see of course those were more Midwest things like rhubarb that if you go to try to buy things in the store it is amazing the cost of things, eggplants surprisingly grow real well and it's a versatile vegetable and so I've grown a lot of things but more along the lines of what tastes good and there is nothing better than a fresh tomato out of your garden instead of these hot house grown tomatoes that are picked way to green so they'll ship better, but if you have a fresh tomato ready to be picked in your garden I can tell you right now that is a hand fruit even though it's a vegetable.

Q4

A4 Well I think the organic items

A4a I just for a \$1.48/lb I just picked up organic Bartlett Pears at Lucky's and they were ugly, they almost looked like ugly fruit because they weren't the smooth hermetically grown using all the pesticides you have to perfect size Bartlett pears, but I think that fresh produce that has been picked at the appropriate times if sourced in the grocery store is fine but I think that most people would say that some produce items picked at the peak of freshness from a local farmer's garden property and brought to a farmers market there is no question if they picked them on Friday and sold them to you Friday afternoon or Saturday morning that's probably about as good as it is going to get. I think the big concern is not quite so much where you source these items, but do you cook the

goodness out of them? So a lot of it is not what you have but is how you prepare it. Because if you overcook it all you are doing is mimicking food processors that are going to put it in a jar or can and how many times have you heard all the nutrients just got poured down the drain from the water that you cooked the item in.

Q5

A5 Where I live in Gainesville absolutely

A5a I live right next to Hoggetown Creek, which is right next to Ring Trail, and as a former park ranger and manager I can tell you right now that it's like going back to my early days when I walk through a park. Especially parks in urban areas. I'm a big believer in greenspace in urban areas

A5b Walking, if you are talking what I can do easily when I have free time, I'm not sure I can define the last time I had free time but I firmly believe that when you eat food outdoors it tastes better because there is a better oxygen exchange and I think flavors are enhanced so I think if you can grill and or have any kind of family gathering, a picnic in a park that would probably rate next, but I can tell you right now getting out and hiking and walking in nice green space areas is probably one of the number one activities for my wife and I especially if they have an area where our little 15# dog on a leash can go with us, because it's good to get the dog out to exercise too, and I'm a firm believer in childhood obesity and nature deficiency and I think that if you are just going to talk about the outdoors you are talking to a former park manager and this would be a long lecture series, but I can tell you that hiking and probably any kind of activity would be a great activity and we do enjoy a firm believer in bike trails too and we have some hybrid bikes so we can go off trail or ride on a smooth surface

A5c I'd have to know everything you could do there to know what you couldn't do there so I don't have an opinion on that

A5d NA

A5e I don't know, I'm sure you've researched about Pinagree's Potato patches, there is a great program on the Discovery Channel about that. He was initially vilified on it, he had to sell a prize horse and things to raise money but once the success was there he had quite a bit of community support and it went from listen if Secretary of Interior Seward hadn't had an idea we would never have bought Alaska, and what a travesty that would have been. If we hadn't had visionaries like Mayor Pinagree in Michigan we would never have had, I'm trying to think he was Detroit. We'd never have had a garden city and I've been involved in creation of plots for specific gardens within parks.

Q6

A6 Very supportive and I know you spoke with my Assistant County Manager Gina Peebles. She and Sean McLendon who runs our Sustainability program they've been advocates for some of our shade trees along our paths and in particular in our parks to be fruit trees rather than just shade trees so that there is a product to share that is being produced on the parkland that we have so it's kind of dual purpose and I quite frankly think if you knew where I'm sure if you had let's say an orange tree and you were homeless and could eat a couple of pieces of citrus that would certainly add a lot to your diet that you would likely be deficient in.

Q7

A7 Everybody has their own opinion, but a community garden would be and as far as the size of the plots for the potato patches, were they 10 X 20? I'm thinking of an area

maybe half the size of this office and maybe you could get 3 plots in this office. I would imagine this, now if you are going to plant corn or something that could be a little bit different, but then again I'm a firm believer in between your rows of corn you've got squash growing for instance or cucumber, some other kind of ground vine. A plot would be a designated area that you would be responsible for that the sponsoring organization let's say a county government would likely have not providing tools although tools might be part of it because a lot of people I would think that communal tools would make sense, because a lot of people for the value of the produce they get out they may not have the financial wherewithal to go out and buy a hoe and shovel and rake and a spade and the types of things that you would need to actually tend the ground and then there should be some sort of a water source nearby and everyone would be designated by a number or letter or combination thereof for their own plot and from what I've heard in the past you ask about people in farmers markets and do you bond with them, and I will tell you right now if you had a plot next to me I would guarantee we would bond and it would actually be a social outlet so you get the advantage of not just good nutrition that you grew from the good earth with your own hands but also probably will develop a positive relationship with the people around you so it's also I would think clearly a social outlet when you do the activities you participate in you obviously have something in common with someone if they too have shared values and so size would be determined by probably the master parcel available would be divided up I would think the sponsoring organization would have some level of support they may go in and completely let's say rototill let's say the whole area and then go through demarcation for whose plot was whose and then I would imagine there would be a certain responsibility you would acknowledge whether it would be some kind of a liability release where you'd also agree to tend to your plot so that it didn't become let's say a source of weed, seeds, and vermin or infestation in adjacent plots. So I think there is probably some acknowledgment of obligation

Q8

A8 What I just told you, not only nutritional but also as a social outlet quite frankly building some life skills and also stress relief so I think it has health benefits beyond nutritional.

Q9

A9 Yes

A9a see above: What I just told you, not only nutritional but also as a social outlet quite frankly building some life skills and also stress relief so I think it has health benefits beyond nutritional.

Q10

A10 Yes

A10a With once caveat and that is if you went into land that was purchased for one purpose let's say conservation lands and all of a sudden you are out there, or let's say land near a water body and all of a sudden you've got irrigation going on or active watering so you have the use of water resources and all of a sudden you're applying chemicals to the ground and pesticides and herbicides so one of the things that you have to do is make sure it is a good upland piece that will not have any deleterious or detrimental effects to the environment in general. But you know what if areas didn't allow agriculture we'd sure starve wouldn't we?

(Interviewer - many community gardens are required to be organic)

My guess is most of the farmers markets is organic and so there would have to be a certain you may want to go ahead and heat sterilize the soil depending on the sponsoring entity whether it is local government or not so that you don't just go into an area that has cotton root rot and all of a sudden it impacts through fungus half a dozen of the plants that you are working with that you are trying to grow.

A10ai I would say through its purchasing power should provide communal tools for those that don't have any and then irrigation reasonable access and probably some semblance of regulation or security

**SQ When you say some semblance of security?**

**SA Police deputy patrol maybe volunteer service where you have volunteers who are just some sort of authority to make sure, have to provide reasonable protection, let's say parking posts so somebody in a 4 wheel drive just doesn't drive on through spinning his or her tires so I think if you are going to give them the citizens some of their land to use for their personal benefit I think you also have an obligation to keep the area secure, if the area is going to be remote from where the individual lives.**

Q11

A11 Sure/yes

A11a Well because if an activity is not permissible and you want it to occur you are going to have to go through the local land development code and or the county's comp plan and I would think that government service and purpose for health and safety I would say it falls right into the primary purposes of government. Plus I'm a firm believer the citizens own the land so I think reasonable access for a specific purpose is not unreasonable.

A11ai see above

Q12

A12 Well the darker side of human nature vandalism, theft, you know the worst thing you could do if I've got a rake in my hand and you have a hoe in your hand and I think you've stolen some of my snap peas I wouldn't want there to be any physical altercation so I would say the downside would be kind of 2 fold, what the customers of the particular plots might do to each other and then the maybe Not In My Back Yard NIMBY people what if these lands are right next to a development and all of a sudden you've got an influx of people into an area and then the NIMBY's come out because ya you can have a community garden I just don't want it next to my house or next to my apartment.

Q13

A13 Well there hasn't been to the best of my knowledge community gardens haven't been specifically addressed but they're in the land development code. You tell me I do know within the last couple of months we did get into I don't think they actually went as far as food plots, but certainly fruit trees being planted in our parks being acceptable instead of just a standard live oak or something.

A13a well depends on what resources you want to bring to bear. We have two things and one of the things I want to kind of alert you to. We should probably better notify people that the opportunity exists but here's the thing and I looked at tool from yesterday and we constantly get email notifications on parcels available for purchase they are basically because of property taxes or something many times it's vacant land.

People bought land then they moved away and have no intention of building on it but we have a lot of lots and you should probably acquire a list just to get an example of well you get into developments that maybe started prior to the not so great recession and not everything sold. So if I've got a vacant plot or vacant lots within a development one would imagine especially if they are next to common areas like if you've got a park or trail or tennis court or swimming pool cause you are in a gated community or nongated community maybe that's a great opportunity for easily accessible plots that could be utilized for community gardens. So I think that's one thing the local government could be doing 1 to let folks know that it's permissible, what the benefits are, and 2 identify surplus properties that might be suitable for the purpose.

A13b No I can't this is a caring community and I think it would be strongly embraced  
Q14

A14 I think in getting the message out, a shared message

Q15

A15 Not only by advocating for and seeing them developed but also doing ancillary activities that are not incongruous with community gardens and I'm sure what Gina told you about too. Basically having fruit trees in our parks and right of ways and then the other way you support them is if in you have a community garden and likely there will be some folks who are raising things that they are going to sell support the people that are supplementing their livelihood with what they've grown

**SQ: So some communities are against allowing community gardeners doing that while other communities are all for community garden and being able to sell the fruits of their labor.**

**SA: I would think that the fruits of their labor is not to negatively impact an individual citizen to the advantage of a profit motive by someone else, in other words I can understand where some would say if you grow it you have to eat it or consume or you or your immediate family whereas others would see it as an entrepreneurial opportunity I can tell you right now if the homeless people could grow their own food plots and sell it and supplement their life I would be in favor of it.**

(Interviewer - spoke to a city commission and you could have Publix possibly sponsor the garden plots at Grace Knight homeless center).

Q16

A16 Past attitudes is the same as it is right now, supportive

Q17

A17 No

A17a Because it was always strong before, but what it has done is whenever I have discussions that are stimulating from a topical nature it causes me to ok its brought this subject matter back into attention for me are we doing everything we should be doing. So what it does it raises an awareness of the potential for action.

Q18

A18 No

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, [avince@ufl.edu](mailto:avince@ufl.edu), [susan\\_vince2002@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_vince2002@yahoo.com); Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

Alachua County Commissioner - Requested no direct attribution of their name

Q1

A1 Yes

A1a I've been to the one on 441 and the one downtown

A1b The availability of products the fact that you get fresh vegetables and the community atmosphere

A1c Yes

A1ci You always get some sort of in the exchange some sort of bond

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a I believe there was a fund raiser for blue ovens kitchens I participated in that.

Q3

A3 Yes

A3a blueberries, peach, plum, veggies, corn, okra, tomatoes, peppers, peas all different types, cantaloupe, watermelon, squash, yellow zuchinni

Q4

A4 I would imagine as far as what I grow I know what went into it as opposed to what you get in the grocery store. I will say I've depended on the grocery store for an awfully long time.

A4a I would imagine as far as what I grow I know what went into it as opposed to what you get in the grocery store. I will say I've depended on the grocery store for an awfully long time. I will characterize it this way what I grow I know that there is a lot of TLC in the product that is being consumed. I don't know if that is always the case at the grocery store.

**SQ Are the organic sections in the grocery store going to have more TLC than the non-organics?**

**SA I haven't been around the operations of an organic farm to know if it is much different from a regular farm. So I don't feel I can give a good answer. I would say if an organic farm or any farm where the size of it is smaller than there is probably a little bit more oversight than a large farming operation and perhaps that could be equivalent to TLC.**

Q5

A5 Yes

A5a my backyard, backyard he likes best, but also a farm and it's a very special place per the county forester. It's one of the unique properties in the county it's got long leaf pine, quail which is rarity now a days.

A5b farm, cooking out there, listening to wildlife, listening to the wind how dynamic it is in that kind of space as opposed to in town. Mowing, nothing better than tractor time, the physical labor

A5c NA

A5d NA

A5e NA

Q6

A6 I think it's a positive thing as a matter of fact I think when we talked about it we put it in our comp plan to encourage community gardens

Q7

A7 I consider a community garden would be a space that can be used for community gardening or gathering or something that a neighborhood or neighborhoods depending on the size of it could use as a community space, one of which would be for gardening and we've allowed an agriculture use in an area that usually isn't considered agriculture because it's usually in residential developments because it allows people the opportunity to grow their own food. I think there is one Maria Edwards in the City of Gainesville a few blocks away they have a community garden it's not a garden but it's also a community space where they have stools and stuff where people can gather

Q8

A8 You get the end product that's a good thing but it's also the process you know of seeing a little bit of what nature is about how you can plant something that is this big (holds our his hand to show the size of a seed) and it grows into this plant that is 100 times larger than the seed itself. What it takes to reach that point where it produces something and how to get rid of dam weeds, all the things necessary to make a viable end product. And the satisfaction when it works and the disappointment when it doesn't. --- Note, after recording stopped commissioner asked me specifically to add the educational benefit of community gardens for children who may have never seen food outside of a store or plastic wrapper

Q9

A9 Yes

A9a Own land in a development or just own land somewhere in the area?

(Interviewer - let's say they live in an apartment and they don't own their own land) and they have an area set aside in that area for community gardens is that your example?

(Interviewer - so let's say they don't own land)

I would say if there is an area set aside for community garden unless it's in a private development that's in their area if they've set aside some area for a community garden it should be for the community. If it's a community owned public space then yes

Q10

A10 Yes, we are working on that

A10a That's a good point I'll check on it, that's something that we brought up if there is area on county lands that can be used for community gardens. I know it's something that we've discussed in the past

A10ai First land and make sure available and I think at that point we offer or we help pay for the extension office which is an incredible source of knowledge so we are helping with trying to get the expertise in order to make gardening work. So I think that's a pretty good starting point.

**SQ: You mentioned giving money to the ag extension office, what percentage of residents here know of that source of information that would be available to them?**

**SA I'm clueless as far as that's a concern I know it's a resource it's something that we put on channel 12 about the availability and we have the community support where you can ask if somebody is curious. I would imagine the percentage is higher than I think it is but I'm not sure.**

Q11

A11 Yes

A11a Really where we focus in on and I think we did it on general and public lands and developments and what not that we tried to encourage the ability to have community gardens because a garden would not necessarily be something that is allowed in a residential neighborhood. So we made sure that was an available use and as I said because I don't remember where it is the ability to utilize county property for community gardens, but I will check on it.

A11ai see 10ai First land and make sure available and I think at that point we offer or we help pay for the extension office which is an incredible source of knowledge so we are helping with trying to get the expertise in order to make gardening work. So I think that's a pretty good starting point.

Q12

A12 Maybe they'll be one less or a few less housing units maybe? I don't know but I don't see a real drawback.

Q13

A13 In the ways expressed before: First land and make sure available and I think at that point we offer or we help pay for the extension office which is an incredible source of knowledge so we are helping with trying to get the expertise in order to make gardening work. So I think that's a pretty good starting point.

A13a At some point perhaps you can inform me about how accessible or whether not the availability of the county extension office is widely known and if not we could perhaps do a better way of promoting all that they offer. Cause they help you with soil samples, tell you how to do it, they have classes (talk about blueberry bushes)

A13b I think that Alachua County is probably taken care of most of the potential roadblocks because we made it where you can do it in a residential neighborhood. Obviously the land development regulations is how those are done could be a major

impediment, but we've done what we could to rectify that. The other problem would be lack of interest, but I think that there is

Q14

A14 Well you know I would imagine if to work with if there was an activity of something I know that Maria Edwards does a lot with her community garden. If there is a way to get the word out and somehow help them with to be to help publicize and get the information as to what resources are available to assist people in their efforts to have a community garden

(Interviewer - clarification on question, the question was what can the local governments be doing together to promote them)

As far as working together if the City of Gainesville and they may have already done it or some of the other municipalities wanted to replicate what we've done or if there is something that another jurisdiction is doing that might be a little bit more than what we are doing to do whatever we could to coordinate the effort or make them as similar as possible to the best degree possible.

(Interviewer - so it would be fair to say that more communication)

Cause I don't think there is much if any communication as it stands now as far as community gardens and part of that could be potentially you have homerule and we try not to step on toes, but if it was more in a positive manner to see what other people were doing that's a different situation.

**SQ: So maybe something more along the lines of the water ordinance that some communities were opting into?**

**SA Yea, right, theoretically or something like this it wouldn't necessary be county wide, you know water and air are county wide so but on something like this it would be, what are you doing and that sort of thing would be something to talk about because some of the smaller communities may already be doing**

Q15

A15 Participated in the conversation, being supportive of the conversation during our comp plan development

Q16

A16 About the same, I think it's neat when people can grow stuff I know from being from here and being familiar with the bat house and seeing what they do there and how well utilized they were and seeing what's happening there and always viewing it as something kind of positive that not really have any negative implications towards it

Q17

A17 No

A17a but it made me realize I need to check to see where we are on the county owned property and what we are doing with that as far as community gardens are concerned.

Q18

A18 No

A18a NA

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community

garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, [avince@ufl.edu](mailto:avince@ufl.edu), [susan\\_vince2002@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_vince2002@yahoo.com); Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

Florida Organic Growers (FOG) - Marty Mesh

Q1

A1 Yes

A1a Alachua County Farmer's Market, Haile Market, Union Street Market, Hawthorne Farmer's Market, and the High Springs Farmers Market

A1b I like that to see direct relationships between growers and consumers. So, the Haile Market and Alachua County Farmers Market are producer only markets for some assurance that the person growing the food is the person selling the food or at least their representative vs other markets that have resellers, people that go to terminals, and get boxes of tomatoes and put them in baskets and call it you know they are at the farmers' market misperception, and it's an opportunity for someone to say I'm here to support local farmers, but really what they are doing is supporting the local vendor whose buying imported tomatoes in that case. So we found a disorganization on Florida's certified organic growers and consumers recognizing if we didn't shorten the supply chain then the growers were going to be extinct coming out of the farm foreclosure crisis of the mid 80's so to see I like to see those relationships. There is also the community feel I think people enjoy the feeling that farmers' markets can bring whether its resellers or not, but it can bring that sense of community. You know you might see somebody shopping at Publix or Walmart of where ever you shop that you know, but you are more likely to engage in better conversation at the farmers' market it feels like to me.

A1c Ya

QA1ci recap (Interviewer - so it's letting the farmers be able to sell directly and be able to stay in business to the consumers)

A1ci Right, and my kids we used to farm and sell. My kids grew up helping me at the market. So they got a sense of learning the perils of coming to market and going home with a bunch of stuff or how you hopefully estimated well, because they are all small businesses in that aspect and the struggles of small businesses, but also the success of having people give you positive reinforcement about boy those were really good watermelons, boy those were really good cantalopes or we really enjoyed that eggplant

Q2

A2 Extensively

A2a We did a local food project years ago trying to encourage local businesses to support local farmers. We had a marketing campaign. We had TV advertisements the organization itself operates the EBT Booth at both the Union Street and Alachua County Farmers Markets so low income people can hopefully access healthy food we incentivize the Alachua County Farmers Market so that \$10 of SNAP benefits turns into \$20. That's \$20 of fresh healthy produce hopefully that it encourages healthier eating habits for those most at risk, but \$20 also goes into a farmer's pocket, and you know the multiplier effect has economic benefits for this community versus (don't quote me on this) "the big sucking sound of Bentonville, Arkansas where people that don't have that much stake in the community are the ones benefiting from the communities labors and business transactions"

Q3

A3 Yes

A3a main cash crops were watermelons which we distributed nationally. And you know another thing about farm to is that part of my work here is growing the next generation of farmers you know helping farmers access resources that may help them get started if they choose. I wrote the grant from the University of Florida on developing the model to increase land resources for organic agriculture. You know institutional resources and commitments and I believe the outcome of that organizationally funded project Sera funded project for FOG was a degree offering in organic agriculture first there was a minor and now there is a major and certified organic research papers that the University has benefited from, and I think the organic community has benefited from seeing more land grant university support for organic agriculture. So to help support that project we used to have sustainable ag week here in the county which was a week of getting media and public attention. We did farm visits, farm tour visits so you know we had weekends where during sustainable ag week farmers opened themselves up. We still do that although we don't have sustainable ag week per se now, but we've done a sustainable ag week where businesses offered a discount for dining out that day or offered this or that so yea we've done a lot through the decades. Our gift gardens program tried to help low income people or institutions grow their own food and have more direct access to installing gardens and at the homeless veterans facility or low income people's homes directly so that they could grow their own food as well as Porter's community farm that we did that provided fresh produce to the homeless shelter and other agencies. So the local food stuff has been, and this is where we started our EBT work. Putting EBT in the markets through commission support years ago and we showed that it could be done. We also incentivized that on a small scale and we were successful in getting grants that brought more dollars into Alachua County to grow that and then take that statewide and now this year there will be 40 farmer's markets throughout the state with other market partners operating the EBT booth. We don't drive to Lakeland or Ft Lauderdale to operate at the market, but other nonprofits or the market themselves operates it but incentivizing low income peoples purchasing of food at the markets that serve that community as well as incentivizing their produce so it goes a little further and we've done school gardens. We had a program years ago that we installed school gardens, community gardens, nutrition education, we did a youth

food and farm preservation project with, in conjunction with the Riechart house even that was operated by the Gainesville Police Department so that those kids. You know trying to take kids that GPD would say the next stop on this kids bus line is gonna be jail if they don't change and so the Riechart house was kind of that last intervention so the work at the Riechart house and or develop a program where we would take kids and try to teach them life skills by utilizing agriculture, but that takes continued grant funding or some degree of support. You know the grant runs out if the community doesn't step up to the plate to sustain it so sadly it goes away. We still have our hopes up of rekindling some programs like that but resources to be able to do is critical. You know Porters and gift gardens were multiyear projects, gift gardens for many many years and we had to close that down and are applying for CAP funding now to try to we will hopefully apply for CAP funding this year to try to rekindle that program.

(Interviewer - Commissioner Byerly has said he is very much in favor of that being restarted)

Q4

A4 It can be fresher

A4a So fresher produce riper produce may or may not be healthier it may just taste better, but more importantly to me is how the food is grown. I would rather support an organic farmer in probably south Georgia then somebody who is contributing and this is a negative, I don't mean to cast all farmers in this light but the fact of the matter is my kids say "Dad the springs aren't as clear as they used to be years ago" I remember when the springs were clear, and that's because of nutrient overloading, septic tanks as well but nutrient overloading, agricultural, chemicals, dairies- whatever the source of the nutrients are um and so I want to reward farmers that are doing the right thing I would rather support an organic farmer in Georgia or North Carolina a lot of times than a conventional farmer here. Yes we buy stuff from local farmers just because of bonding with local farms um but in the aggregate do I think that buying locally is buying better than something grown in South or North Carolina that is grown organically? Not necessarily even if you went with what had less carbon footprint or food miles from California that is used as an example all the time, but really it's how the food is grown that is under-appreciated as opposed to the distance it travels. So when a farmer is using cover crops using organic practices to grow food it's much less resource intensive on the aggregate than somebody using petroleum based fertilizers or pesticides and putting those byproducts into surface water obviously groundwater as it leaches down and into the air blab la bla but they are local so it's good that's the problem I have with that.

Q5

A5 No, not from my house or work and in fact the schools, sadly now the schools now all have fences around them so I used to go up to the school playground to play.

Q6

A6 We have a history of encouraging community garden here and we helped shephard the city ordinance that really instructed GRU to take vacant city land, GRU owned land and if there was a group of residents that wanted to start a community garden that GRU would agree to let them use their land that's vacant to have a community garden and to even supply them water first example of that was on 4<sup>th</sup> avenue about SE 3<sup>rd</sup> Street that community garden we worked closely and helped to start

(Interviewer - was that the McRorie community garden?)

Yes, and we helped start Pleasant is it on Pleasant Street, Marie Huff Edwards came to us and I helped her navigate through the commission and advocate for and now that little community garden has been going ever since and that's a little bit different in that it wasn't done through the GRU program that wasn't GRU owned land but the city is the one that ended up saying no you can't have a garden on 8<sup>th</sup> avenue, but we'll help you access this other lot on 10<sup>th</sup> avenue. So that garden has been going on and in fact we serve as kind of the fiscal agent for that neighborhood so say if somebody wanted to make a donation we would keep the funds here and then if they install a fence or bench or something as long as the person that donated the funds approves the expense line we'll write the check. We encourage community garden we work with community garden. Porters community farm has community garden plots the little farm that we operate in the Porters section and we are a big believer and we think that it creates community, yes they can struggle to grow, but the satisfaction of producing something and seeing it and having a kid out there picking cherry tomatoes with you and eating them and getting appreciation for them they are much more likely, and its why we had a dedication to school gardens with that program. We put school gardens in many many schools here and now federal policy workers a farm to school program and extension. UF has actually taken over the statewide farm to school work so, but that didn't just. The Congress of the past didn't just come up with the idea of farm to school resources and educating kids about where their food comes from, getting them to understand what we you know if you take motor oil and dump it in the drain this is what happens to it. So these kind of environmental connections between how we live and the food that we have and you know doing sustainable agriculture getting people out to farms and um being able to do farm tours and look at it I think the community appreciated it.

Q7

A7 Well a community garden is where members of the community come together probably and you know I find opposed to what it is I find that community garden that are community based and not community placed have the higher likelihood of being successful. So, it's when we are gonna come in and we are going to put a garden over here for you it has a less likelihood of working with the community and then having people go well it would be nice if we could grow our own food. You know and whether that's a community discussion whether that's up to people within the neighborhood or community but when it comes from the community and then it becomes how can we help you, what can we do to help you guys achieve what you want to do. I find that a higher likelihood of success. So community garden for me is where members of a community come together with the common desire of saying it would be nice as none of us have access to land to grow food, many of us would like to this subgroup would like to and we thing there's other people in the community that ours. So, let's find land and also how it's structured, can anybody have a plot who gets the plot who's going to manage it and how what happens if or how do we or if I leave my tools there are they going to be stolen? Do I have a right to use your tools if they are in your bed? Is there a common place? Is there, can we share tools? All those just logistics of a community garden need to be best navigated and discussed with solutions from the community.

Q8

A8 Typically, you see community garden as people providing their own growing some of their own food for their own consumption. Certainly I've seen community garden that are big enough so that somebody says I have so much of this, and they could trade other community residents or you could say you have eggplant, I have okra lets trade or whatever. You know it and helping members of their own community or neighbor, that old person that wheel chair bound person can't come but let's go take him some produce just as a gift. It starts to build community gets people vested in and gives an opportunity for community members to interact and talk to each other because now we've gotten so disenfranchised where I know the people in my own home, but I don't know my next door neighbor. Um and so the community garden is a way that kind of brings people around and then community garden will sometimes have a pot luck and so you know food is a great way to bring people together a great way to talk about stuff so if I grow squash and he grows okra and you grow tomatoes and we all bring a dish made out of what we grew to a potluck it's a pretty fun time and you know it starts to build those relationships and sense of community to me and it also can spur somebody to say you know I'm really good at gardening and I like this garden in fact if I could get a few other beds maybe I could take some if there is extra maybe I could take some of this to the farmer's market and sell it. I could make a little business and so then you've seen people you know get the itch to increase their productivity and then maybe look for a little piece of land and maybe that would be a fun thing to do and other people are just happy, I'm just happy to exposing my kids to lets go plant a tomato and squash and eggplant and see what happens to show the kid that this is what we can do.

Q9

A9 I think that yea,

A9a For people that to facilitate the idea that people if they want to grow some food of their own should have a place to do so is a pretty non. It's a less violent or dangerous way to spend time, then I see skateboard parks and umm certainly kids like skateboard parks. I never let my kids you know go in them because I was worried about injuries. I would never say to my kids don't go play out in the garden or work in the garden or produce something, and luckily, hopefully accidents don't happen, and skateboard parks are safe but I would think community garden or places to grow food is a tremendous community benefit for people that want them and we need to train and encourage people on how to do that. They've become so disconnected from their food they have we have to do a better job as a society to rekindle that spark and get the spark that is there and hopefully let it grow.

Q10 Yea

A10a Why not, otherwise they have to mow them so why not let people grow some food? And you know there is always a balance of you know if you are out there if there are 10 people out there with a garden plot that could have been a baseball diamond for kids, you know all kids like to play baseball. There is always a balancing act with government but you know but food is probably underrepresented versus playgrounds and active sports and we all eat every day we all don't have to play soccer everyday so a way to find that balance by not totally neglecting food, but while maintaining some attention to group sports or activities to kids that they like to participate in I think is a governmental function.

A10ai Well I think the city has done a great job in saying if there is city owned vacant land through GRU they'll make it available and by the way the other thing FOG did back to your earlier page was the chicken ordinance and that was when I lived in Gainesville my kids wanted to have chickens. You know what do you mean we can't have chickens, we can change this and so um it as just a couple a few chickens and now it's more so that was another thing that we advocated for. You know so to the current question that we were addressing is what resources? What resources government should have?

(Interviewer - clarify, "provide")

So I think the space and you know water GRU its water as well you know so if there is food that we are growing could that be a lot of water? This community has given the University free water for decades and decades and decades so you know let's talk about the investment of inefficient irrigation systems on campus although I'm sure there is now recycling of waste water in that versus people actually growing food to eat for themselves and their families it seems like that some caveat could be made to get some land and water for community garden

Q11

A Yea

A11a They should be able to request that's not to say I think just because they have requested it the answer is yes on public lands. There is always competing interest, but yea I mean why shouldn't they be able to request it? And make the case as to why, but I don't think it should be unilaterally if somebody requests it the answer should be yes.

A11ai (same answer as a10ai) Well I think the city has done a great job in saying if there is city owned vacant land through GRU they'll make it available and by the way the other thing FOG did back to your earlier page was the chicken ordinance and that was when I lived in Gainesville my kids wanted to have chickens. You know what do you mean we can't have chickens, we can change this and so um it as just a couple a few chickens and now it's more so that was another thing that we advocated for. You know so to the current question that we were addressing is what resources? What resources government should have?

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Q12

A12 Well I mean you know some more support technical support. I mean that's what extension was originally developed for and you know but some way to help growers get up and going and you know assistance, technical assistance. We could have done that would have done that um with some degree of resources to be able to do it. You know um, you know you want people to success in school gardens you want the kids to see something grow and then they get the bug. If they just get frustrated than they are not

likely to succeed. If you going to make an investment and spend public resources it seems like you would want to design a way through either a community partner that um helps people be successful at it. Maybe that's helping them, maybe compost, fresh compost for the next year or whatever. Maybe a tool lending library or a tiller lending library I don't know. Maybe the library should have garden tools or tillers that you can check out once a year, to use once a year you don't need a tiller every week.

Q13

A13 FOG support of community garden's

A13a Well right now Porters is on hiatus in hibernation. Gift gardens is in hibernation because we don't have resources to do it so we are resource dependent and um we have a waiting list and have always had a waiting list so um it's just a matter of if we encourage people to eat healthy food and if we encourage in policy perspective you getting out of poverty and we think that if people's income is spent on either unhealthy food or food and you can save money by growing some of your own food it seems like some degree of public investment into alleviating poverty by growing some of your own food thus you can pay your electric bill or go to the doctor if you need to or buy medicine or whatever as opposed to whatever as opposed to just food and in often time driving you to unnutritious cheap food as you possibly can would be helpful. Um and so I think we could do a lot more through technical assistance through compost, through soil health through you know if the infrastructure was there to do it we could provide seedlings you know some of our farmers here would probably be open to providing seedlings and have provided in the past but right now it is hard for us to step up to the plate because we feel like we are the only ones um that are stepping up and the organization hasn't been able to afford it.

A13b Our current budget situation the fact that we ran into a terrible year a couple of years ago 2014 that we are digging out of that hole and that mess slowly is what caused us not to be able to say we'll just support some of these programs that we lose money doing. Now I have a board that says if a project doesn't have the money to support it then don't do it because we have to get out of this hole. So for us um when we have surplus extra money we are a non-profit we try to do good things with it and while we are happy to have a stake in the effort we just don't have the resource capital now to fund it or to really contribute to it and lose money while we are digging out of the hole. Once we get out of the hole then maybe we can help out if there's other public contributions to do it.

Q14

A14 I think that probably partnering with a nonprofit or nonprofits we aren't the only people in town we were the only people in town when we started this years ago but we aren't the only people in town and we may not be the best ones locally in town other people may be a better fit for it, I mean I don't know. So, but I think that it's not so much the function of government because I think nonprofits can do it probably better as opposed to if you hire somebody to be the gardener then a person from the county or city then somebody's earning pension, not that we don't want our own staff to get a living wage um but there's probably a higher cost in multiple layers of bureaucracy within a governmental organization versus partnering with nonprofits that's probably why the CAP program is a good investment of public dollars

Q15

A15 I've always supported it

Q16

A16 – always supported them (based on above answers)

Q17

A17 No

A17a I mean I haven't changed my view towards community garden it has caused me to think about how active. About how active governments should be or shouldn't be in what commitment they make versus resources available, land available or should they actively operating a garden program and so where do you draw the line that's the interesting thing because governments typically are trying to figure out how to do less or how to survive with less resources not how to expand their reach.

Q18

A18 no

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, [avince@ufl.edu](mailto:avince@ufl.edu), [susan\\_vince2002@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_vince2002@yahoo.com); Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

Community Gardner Organizer Maura Brady

Q1 Yes

A1a: I've been to Downtown Farmer's Market since its inception, which was probably over 20 years ago. I've been to the one on 441 and the one in Haile

A1b: Having local organic produce, & also like prepared foods when they have prepared foods

A1c: Yeah

A1ci: I generally try to roll with it, in the beginning I tried to buy from all of them and see them every week

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a: Um, the co-op, I was part of Grow Gainesville when that was happening, & yea a lot

Q3: Yeah

A3a, I have a garden at the community garden for about 20 years now, and I had a garden before that. So probably for about 30 years now, as far as really utilizing the food in the garden that takes some time to cultivate that ability to really grow the right food and really use it all

**SQ: And you mentioned growing the right type of food, What type of food have you grown?**

**SA: I mean a lot most vegetables, not so much flowers.**

**SQ: Do you grow potatoes? I know when I tried to grow them they never worked out for me**

**SA: Yea, right now I have sweet potatoes, butternut squash, What just finished was cucumbers, peppers, are still happening jalapenos, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, lots of different varieties of tomatoes, squash, so right now I just have basil, some pumpkins and sweet potatoes, pretty much growing now. Then in the winter it's a whole different thing, I don't know if you're familiar with the seasons here. So I grow all the winter stuff in the winter. I had a good potato harvest this year. You can't let anything sit in the ground too long cause then it will get eaten or the skins will get messed up.**

Q4

A4: food grown locally

A4a: umm, its fresher, generally there is less pesticides, and then energetically the connection because its small time farmers maybe more effect from their care then a larger operation

Q5:

A5 Yes

A5a: To walk to? I mean, I don't like to walk much, mostly ride a bike, Thomas Center, Duck Pond, walk around the block, Roper Park. There is a lot of green space right here. Watch out for dog poop

A5b: Um, don't really use them for activities, sometimes the Thomas Center for a picnic. Will do yoga somewhere like the Thomas Center

A5c: no activities undesired

A5d NA

A5e: none of them have a community garden

Q6

A6: favorable

**SQ: What sparked your initial interest in taking part in a community garden**

**SA: I had a garden at the house that I lived at and I just wanted to continue gardening. The community garden opened up and I got a plot there, and then I became the coordinator after a couple of years and now I'm relinquishing that coordination.**

**SQ: So you initially had a garden, and then you wanted to move to a community garden?**

**SA: I think we had a garden in this yard too. I had a garden at my previous house. The shade here overtime the trees are a factor as far as where they live, the full sun aspect draws some people to the community garden**

Q7

A7 You know it's a community garden where its free and you get a plot. That's your plot to care for, we aren't all trying to coordinate gardening together.

Q8

A8: Our community garden has plots that are individually cared for and um, sometimes we'll have workdays that are voluntary, and um ya know having the space with sun helps and I guess as far as the community aspect of it the workdays, the sharing information, plants, vegetables perhaps with those that come to the garden are part of the community aspect of it that anybody can be involved in it.

A8: I'm sure there are. I mean school groups a place for school groups and people in general to have that connection to the earth and growing things um. Another greenspace for the community, education, showing people how to grow vegetables, etc. A place of networking, resources.

**SQ: You mentioned school groups have you had school groups come through MrRorie community garden?**

**SA: There is a homeschool garden, 2 of the plots are homeschool garden. I ran the homeschool garden for years when my son was homeschooling, and Americore has sent some people out at different times for helping. The woman that is taking over coordinating the garden from me is involved with kids and wants to coordinate some of that.**

Q9

A9: Yes

A9a: More public land, more space for having a little bit of real estate in their life.

Q10

A10: Sure

A10a: Um, gosh, reasons why to grow own food, less fuel, less pesticides, closer to home, more nutritious, community building, connection to the earth

Q10ai: what resources

A10ai: um the city here puts in fencing and irrigation if there is a city lot to be used for community garden space. That's how GRU lot got used for it. That works, I mean we can I guess, seems like enough to me some people would probably want more stuff

Q11: code

A11: sure

A11a same as above: I'm sure there are. I mean school groups a place for school groups and people in general to have that connection to the earth and growing things um. Another greenspace for the community, education, showing people how to grow vegetables, etc. A place of networking, resources.

A11ai: Why? The same reasons, public land, It helps people health, their education, reduces emissions that supposedly is going to help this planet survive

Q12

A12: territorialism, annoying gardeners, that's about it I mean I guess you could say cars going by, fuel emissions, being so close to the road. People come and steal our stuff that kinda sucks, You know when people are like Oh, there are tomatoes, or

peppers or eggplants. They can be really rude about how they do it like pulling up whole plants of something or picking everything off or whatever, that's a drag. We call them 'urban deer'. You might not have to put up an 8 ft fence for them but.. So yea that's the drawback to our garden.

**SQ: Are there large incidents that you've had of people coming by and stealing vegetables and plants from the garden**

**SA: not large, but whole plants being taken, all the peppers, or all the collards off these plants. I'll put signs on my broccoli in the winter. 'Please these broccoli need their leaves 'cause there is one person in the neighborhood who used to send her nephews over or whatever she still does, but there is a certain type of food that is taken regularly, collards, large tomatoes. So, I've kind of tailored what I grow to things that aren't so um attractive to steal.**

(Interviewer - I remember Lake Alice UF's garden being stolen from and being sold at farmer's markets until they were caught.)

**We haven't had anything to that level.**

(Interviewer - So it's more 'urban deer' people grabbing and going)

**SA: Not really, but sometimes you're growing your garden, If you are growing your garden 3 pepper plants, or 1 pepper plant I remember this time when someone came and took the whole pepper plant that had green peppers on it. They could have just taken the peppers, and at least leave the plant so it could grow more peppers. That kind of thing is a real drag. There is a community garden over here Dreamer's Garden they have like a fence around their's and everyone has a key. I'm glad I don't have to deal with all that. I wouldn't want to have to deal with all that. I'm glad that its free but it also not having a fence or a lock anybody can go in there. Having it free that the gardeners aren't as accountable, and they'll like leave their plot unattended to for long periods of time. Then I'll contact them and they'll be like 'oh yea I left town 3 months ago', or they'll not tend their plot for a long period of time and I'll contact them to ask if they really want their plot 'O yes I really want my plot' and then they'll get it together and do it. I'm glad I don't have that job anymore.**

(Interviewer - So you've seen both sides both the growing and the running and having to deal with everybody. So you enjoy the gardening, but then you did the coordinator position, and it can be more stressful)

**SA: Yes, it was fine for years, but I just recently had an altercation with someone in the garden, and decided I'm not doing this, I have a 19 year old son I don't need more drama in my life. So, this nice couple that lives across the street is going to take it over, but I'd been coordinating the garden for 18 years. So its been a while.**

Q13

A13 NA

A13a NA

A13b NA

Q14: local gov't work together

A14: dunno, If it becomes more of an initiative in cities then parks can deal with it. It's funny, I was just talking to a friend of mine what would happen if I just said to John Weber (parks liaison), if I didn't want to coordinate anymore what would happen? Friend

of mine said probably nothing. So, if I didn't get somebody to coordinate, I don't know what they would do. So how much interest they have in the whole thing I think it would really come from somebody. Like in this situation it came from this guy wanting to start a garden knowing the city would put in fencing and irrigation for a public lot. I mean I guess education about that aspect of the local laws of the place and what would ya know what would a city offer for community garden space, and then getting some persons or peoples depending on how many are interested and then they would then sort of facilitate that. But yea, it would be great if it would be part or like ya know. If they are building a playground well we are gonna build this, but a lot of times those initiatives come from the populace 'oh we'd really like to have you know a swing set in this park over here' and people ask for that and then they get it. So I guess the initiative would come from the population the public for it to get off the ground. So yea, at whatever level interest that actually got to then be positioned thru the city I don't know. Florida Organic Growers FOG does a lot of putting in Gift gardens going on.

Q15

A15 She's a community garden organizer for McRorie Garden

Q 16

A16: (past attitudes) – No past attitudes b4 this garden.

Q: *Are you still favorable towards community gardens?*

A: Yes

Q17

A17: No

A17A I don't think so, but I thought about it a little bit more

Q18

A18 Yes

A18a: (share that wasn't addressed) I'm kind of amazed at the lack of gardening that happens. Laugh,

**SQ The lack of gardening that happens at the community garden?**

**SA: Yea, I mean you can grow 12 seasons out of the year here really, and if not 10 seasons is doable and the I mean we are full right now, but people you know they might grow a bunch of stuff and then not really harvest it. I'll see stuff go to waste in the garden, yea I've just seen so many people come and go. I'm just amazed I guess that being we are in Florida that more people don't garden.**

**SQ: So a lack of utilization?**

**SA: sometimes in the plot itself yes, and then um yea, yup, like a lack of utilizing a space that's offered or they have to use or lack of utilizing the food that comes out of there or yea people get really gung ho and into planting it but then maintaining it is a different level. It takes a long time, it took a long time for me to really utilize the food in my garden and grow what, and now I pretty much use every leaf out of my garden that's edible. But that takes a while throwing a lot of stuff from the community garden in a bag and then a week later your composting ½ of it out of your fridge. I come home I wash it all off. I put them in their containers and have this great ready to go food.**

**SQ: So you'd say there is a learning curve?**

**SA: I think so for really utilizing the food in your garden and knowing what to grow. Certainly when to plant stuff and all that business.**

**SQ: So do you think possibly having a community garden mentor for somebody that has newly joined the community garden would be a good idea?**

**SA: yea, I mean I am that to people to some degree. I answer questions, I ask them how much gardening experience they have, but yea that would be great.**

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Q1

A1 yes

A1a primarily downtown farmers but I've also been to the one on US 441

A1b the availability of local fresh produce I like going there seeing a lot of different people walking around and having a good time Music kids running around is just fine with a lot of people a fun place to kind of see the community

A1c Yes,

A1ci a bond in the sense that I like to grow things myself I have a young fruit orchard and garden and I'm often asked questions how to grow things so to that extent yeah

Q2

A2 As a county commissioner

A2a food initiatives or as a county commissioner we participate as a commission as a county governments and number of things that happens the indoor kitchen I think it is called do you want me to kind of as a commissioner as a part of the County commission and county government yes we sponsor and participate in food initiatives. As a private individual I can't think of anything off of the top of my head. Well I am a co-op member if that counts.

Q3

A3 Yes

A3a I have about 10 fruit trees now and some pecans and some American chestnuts and we have wild persimmon and some red mulberries on our property to better take care of and we eat from them every year and have a raised bed. We practice organic gardening this year there's not much other than some cantaloupes because I'm in a reelection campaign, and I don't really have a lot of time to garden. Yes I like to grow vegetables as well. Primarily tree crops that I'm interested in doing more of that

Q4

A4 and A4a I don't want answer that categorically because it depends. I think that food that is fresh is healthy. Healthier for your body if it's fresher and harvested closer to the point at which you eat it. That's probably better for you. You tend to find food at the supermarket it comes from faraway and therefore perhaps harvested before it's ripe or ready if you take into account shipping. Generally things that are grown for a mass market tend to be selected on the part of the gardener or farmer for shelf life and visual appeal and transporting ability where as local growers are able to grow varieties that perhaps couldn't survive a truck trip from California to Florida for instance and therefore are probably bred more for characteristics for nutritional and more consistency with the local environment. Don't mean to be evasive I just don't want to give an overly broad answer. I'm sure there is something in the local Publix that is on par nutritionally with stuff at the local farmers market and generally speaking you do your shopping at the farmer's market you're gonna have a healthier diet then if you purchase your produce at the supermarket.

Q5

A5 Yes

A5a I guess my own land we live on 30 acres and it has a permanent conservation easement on it and there are several places in downtown Micanopy we are about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from downtown Micanopy that has some parks we like to walk sometimes. We live out in the country so that's probably as far as you can get to being able to walk to something.

A5b Hike, kayak, and a nature photographer.

A5c Still talking about examples I gave? ... My land so I guess really no constraints, I do everything I like to do there.

A5d na

A5E unsure I haven't seen one, it wouldn't surprise me at all if there were some things like that around town, it's that kind of town around town but I haven't seen a community garden

Q6

A6 Positive. I think it's good for people good for society, self-sufficiency and local production growing some of your own food. Multiple positive benefits for the community and people individually. Micanopy is a small town so people have yards and space. It isn't an urban environment where people are hurting for space. So that's probably why you're not going to see as much of a community garden

Q7

A7 It's a space made available to people who don't have space to be able to grow food, but not necessarily food to grow things.

Q8

A8 Talked about a little bit before, but I think being able to get your hands into the dirt and being able to grow things is good for people psychologically, I know it is for me. I think it's good for people to understand the connection to the land and where the food comes from and whether it is grown adults and their children. Certainly give them an opportunity to connect with where the food comes from nutritionally I think for the reasons we discussed before the food that you grow yourself is likely to be a lot healthier and lastly without getting too far into it I think it would be beneficial for our society if we had a more decentralized dispersed smaller scale agriculture system to the extent that people can grow some share of their food locally it reduces our reliance on the large scale industrial agricultural operations that are more typical of the American food system.

Q9

A9 Sure

A9a- why for what was previously mentioned- I think being able to get your hands into the dirt and being able to grow things is good for people psychologically, I know it is for me. I think it's good for people to understand the connection to the land and where the food comes from and where it is grown adults and their children. Certainly give them an opportunity to connect with where the food comes from nutritionally I think for the reasons we discussed before the food that you grow yourself is likely to be a lot healthier and lastly without getting too far into it I think it would be beneficial for our society if we had a more decentralized dispersed smaller scale agriculture system to the extent that people can grow some share of their food locally it reduces our reliance on the large scale industrial agricultural operations that are more typical of the American food system.

Q10

A10 I do

A10A and in fact I have worked to include such policy in Alachua County's Comprehensive plan.

A10ai Designated space, someone to kind of keep an eye on things and to the extent that it can be afforded materials and instruction. I can't off the top of my head tell you what the status is of the county's current operations. Though I know in previous years we funded community garden plots through a local organization FOG that funding was discontinued over my objections several years ago through our community agency partnership program and I'm hoping that the time will come when we will fund it again and I think for the most part now the county's posture is legally enabling and providing space, but I don't believe we are providing any funding, oversight, materials or instruction but I would be very receptive to some kind of programming that does that.

Q11

A11 yes , A11a and they can currently

A11ai see above - Designated space, someone to kind of keep an eye on things and to the extent that it can be afforded materials and instruction

Q12

A12 I don't see any. I mean oversight issues like people stealing food that doesn't belong to them, but that's not a problem of the garden itself. Security might be an issue, make sure that people are able to harvest the fruits of their own labor literally.

Q13

A13 Spoken to this above. We talk about it in our primary guidance policy our Comprehensive Plan, there is language describing how it is beneficial to the community and enabling them to setup a process where we can authorize public gardening in public places on publicly owned lands, and of course we support the farmers markets, and we once funded FOG Florida Organic Growers program to provide garden plots and assistance in areas where people need it and we discontinued that, but I'd like to bring it back.

A13a I'm not certain so I probably shouldn't say this, but I believe there are other indirect means that we support this kind of thing. We support provide financial assistance for the agricultural extension office, UF, I don't know if they have any programs to that affect but they certainly provide assistance to home gardeners. We support the 4H program financially and they may do some of that as well our community agency partnership program is the mechanism by which we provide funding to not for profits and we have funded the Florida Organic Growers in the Past and can and should again. Those are probably the most appropriate mechanisms and I believe that if any organization approached the county and asked for space we have the legal framework to permit that. I'm not aware if we have or not, but there wouldn't be any procedural obstacles, it would just be a matter of them asking. I'm not personally aware of anyone have.

A13b No I can't we've discussed it at some length in advance in our policy documents.

Q14

A14 We could make sure our codes are consistent primarily the City of Gainesville. We'll probably find more need and demand for this as they typically have a more urban environment that makes it harder to find a patch of land to grow so I'm not familiar with the city's regs or if they correspond to ours, but it's one of those areas where we could probably make sure that our codes are consistent with one another if not identical so people don't have to worry about what jurisdiction they are in.

Q15

A15 see above, gotten it entered into county's codes, advocated funding for FOG, enabled guidelines for their establishment

Q16

A16 Its always been positive. Going back to when I was a kid we grew our own food and my brother and sister we had to help with the gardening and come from families that have always been gardening so I've always been positively inclined to it and seeing the benefit of it. The concept of a community garden I couldn't tell you when that entered my consciousness, but when it did I'm sure I thought it was a good thing.

Q17

A17 no not really. I'm already very receptive and positive towards it

Q18

A18 Yes

A18a There is a part of it I guess that I don't know that much about, and that's how people are brought into it and introduced to the idea. How do people I guess in the urban setting without access to land I don't understand how they are recruited into the concept of gardening. How they would find out about it, how they would be encouraged to participate? That part of it is not something that county government is not really involved with the county role is more to enable not to necessarily recruit or evangelize or go out into the community and make people aware of it, so that's an aspect of it we haven't really talked about and again as a county commissioner I don't know how much of a role there would be that's the kind of thing we really rely on private organizations like Florida Organic Growers, or possibly 4H, or Boy Scouts, or you name it, it could even be a not for profit community organization who are interested in the value of it. The government's role is to partner with them and enable them to do what they can. Possible room for communication with the City of Gainesville and the county to get our regulations in line.

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Alachua County Commissioner Robert Hutchinson

Q1

A1 Of course many times

A1a The one that's downtown every Wed, and the one on 441 North maybe once every 2 or 3 months

A1b Downtown as much for the social aspects, the one on 441 is primarily a shopping trip

A1c Very much so.

A1ci some of our best friends are farmers that appear at this one downtown Joe Durango and Trace Darnelli have Possum Hollow Farm, and I know a number of the others. I live over near the Agrihood in SE Gainesville which has the Edible Plant project Jimmy Ellis and that gang so I know a lot of folks in the small time ag business.

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a I've been part of CSA's in the past its been a number of years and let me think, ya we'll do a certain amount of upick em stuff where we'll pick blueberries. Many of my neighbors had a piece of the blueberry field where you can rent a row. We never did ourselves but we always had someone rent a row where we'd go and pick with them, and yea I'd grow some of my own stuff I was the person who encouraged Forage Farm to come out to Alachua Conservation Trust project and wrote the lease agreement for them. So I know the Forage Farm folks very well.

Q3

A3 yes

Q3a

A3a I've got 10 citrus trees and a fairly good sized grape arbor and we have different neighbors that have gardens and we share stuff so we do a certain amount of our own agriculture.

Q4

A4 depends

Q4a

A4a If you are careful what you buy it's probably about the same. I don't view supermarket food you know if you are buying veggies and fruits and stuff I think it's about the same in healthiness. In terms of other impacts, carbon footprint and stuff obviously local is better

Q5

A5 Yes

Q5a

A5a Gainesville Hawthorne Trail is very near where I live and I essentially live on the north rim of Paynes Prairie so I've got to say Paynes Prairie and the trail are my major nearby green spaces.

Q5b

A5b Biking, hiking, bird watching, botanizing

Q5c

A5c we used to do a lot more horseback riding, but Paynes Prairie has really tightened up where you can ride your horse

Q5d

A5d NA

Q5e

A5e No

Q6

A6 I think they are an excellent idea they have to be well managed by somebody who can be somewhat of an authoritarian if necessary. These things can get very sloppy very fast if just about anybody can sign up and there are no standards. But when they work well they are an awesome sense of community. Essentially my community has community gardens but we don't fit in the traditional model. I'll go pull weeds in my neighbors garden without asking, just do it and if I need a few tomatoes I just walk next door and just grab them. Nobody has any problem with that.

(Interviewer- So like an extended community garden)

Mhmm right

Q7

A7 I view it as common open space that is divided among a number of users who both share the land but also share the other resources and whether that's seeds or tools or knowledge and so it's at best a social place where people help each and get to know each other better and it can be very productive although I'm guessing in terms of dollars per hour most of the small scale agriculture is probably hard to justify on a purely economic basis. Which is why I think it needs to have that community and social component to make it sustainable in the long run.

Q7a

A7a

Q8

A8 Well again primarily the social component. Having a green space in neighborhoods is important. Think of a golf course community except replace the golf course with a farm not so much community garden but having an actual farmer out there farming real acreage because people that often locate their houses along golf courses don't even play golf they just like the open space. I think farming/gardening can do the same thing and be much more interesting and environmentally beneficial than a golf course. I was hoping that when Turkey Creeks golf course went down the tubes that some farmer would come in and say ok, corn here, watermelons here, ya know hops over here for the brewers, but that didn't happen

Q9

A9 yes

Q9a

A9a Social aspects and for some it may be important for nutrition and so forth and connection with the outdoors. You know there's a spiritual connection with growing things and I think it's really important for kids and families for their kids to understand where stuff comes from. The disconnect between the living world and children know a days is more profound than it ever has been. We are engaged in a social experiment of

removing children from the environment, and we are going to see how that turns out and I don't think it's going to turn out well.

Q10

A10 Yes

Q10a

A10a see a9a Social aspects and for some it may be important for nutrition and so forth and connection with the outdoors. You know there's a spiritual connection with growing things and I think it's really important for kids and families for their kids to understand where stuff comes from. The disconnect between the living world and children know a days is more profound than it ever has been. We are engaged in a social experiment of removing children from the environment, and we are going to see how that turns out and I don't think it's going to turn out well.

Q10ai

A10ai I think the main thing is the water supply and possibly the perimeter fence. If we were to provide those two things you can imagine a small tool shed. If we got into a program of community gardens then I could also see having a plowing service, but it could probably be handled by the private sector. When I lived in a small town in S. Carolina. Two or three guys would plow the gardens to plow the soil. They would plow from before the sun came up to well after dark, because when it was gardening season the moisture had to be just right they'd be plowing and plowing. You could see a situation like that where services would come around and prep everything all at once, it wouldn't need to be a gov't agency. Around here you don't even need to plow.

Q11

A11 Yes

Q11a

A11a Really we have these requirements for community open space and we always sort of assume it's going to be for trees and open spaces. Maybe what we ought to be doing is some of those designate as community gardens. Frankly the retention basins in a lot of our drier sites never hold water, and you could easily grow some crops that particularly along the banks of them you could see that being solid melons. Every now and then like every 5<sup>th</sup> year you might lose the entire crop because of a flood but 4 times out of 5 you'd never have a problem.

Q11ai

A11ai I would say the expertise that our extension office already provides, but they could be putting up you know if you had a little tool shed you could have a bulletin board there and you could imagine seed sharing opportunities or classes or somebody swinging by a master gardener coming by and helping first time gardeners.

Q12

A12 Strife between people who have different standards and different interests or tolerances in chemicals. The person who is a hard core organic next to someone using round up. So there would need to be some governance issues to avoid strife.

Q13

A13 We have a little demonstration garden out here. But through the cooperative extension service while that's a state agency we are responsible for providing their facilities and we supplement their budget, and we provide a lot of publicity for them and I'm not aware of us setting aside any county land right now.

Q13a

A13a Mainly setting aside land and putting up a fence and setting up a water supply. It seems to me that a group would have to come to us and say we've organized ourselves. So they could essentially take a lease on a piece of county land and the conditions of the lease would be we will govern it this way here are our rules on pesticides. Here is the condition we will leave the land in when we are done. That sort of thing. If a group came forward and said give us those 10 acres over here, or in a park, and we had that basic agreement put together we would probably say yes.

Q13b

A13b Our climate, only insane people try to garden in the 6 months when most people think you are supposed to garden

Q14

A14 I could see where the county might through our extension service get into the community garden business and then the city would essentially allow those people to operate within city limits and I particularly view this as out in the smaller municipalities. The way you phrase the question it sounds like Gainesville and Alachua County, but really our smaller cities are where community gardens would make a lot of sense and some of them are starting to grow rapidly. They come from a more rural and agricultural tradition and so you can imagine where there may be a lot more inherent interest in some of the smaller cities and they may be a lot more land available. You know I think working.. to me I think the school board is local government and we could be doing the same thing. If we get a crew that is willing to put up fences and willing to put in water supplies and so forth we could do that at many of the school sites as well in cooperation with the school board and many of the schools will have a teacher who decides, like a 5<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher, ok we're going to grow a garden and teach you guys how biology works and I know there used to be one over at Prairie View elementary school and there is a sad little affair, but the kids would go out there and work it, and they'd plant the seeds and see the beans come up. So, it was a good thing.

Q15

A15 Primarily through Forage Farms which I view as kind of a glorified community garden. I've been very supportive of them I donated my tractor to them for instance and bought them a roto tiller to fit on the back of it. So that's been in recent years at least the main thing that I've done.

Q16

A16 Always positive that again it's a place that brings people together and it teaches kids about agriculture and the environment.

Q17

A17 Yes

Q17a

A17a It has and I do think the county needs to look at some of our open space and see if we can make it available. That's primarily the thing that occurs to me that we haven't done near enough to encourage it.

Q18

A18 No, I think its been a good interview

Q18a

A18a NA

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Alachua County Sustainability Coordinator Sean McLendon

Q1:

A:1 oh yea,

A1a: The downtown, 441, and Haile Village

A1b: All different reasons downtown farmers market very eclectic a lot of different activities going on, not necessarily for the food being sold, the vegetables, there is no guarantee the downtown farmers market would have locally grown food I think the 441 market does a really excellent job of having and representing local farmers and then Haile village is its own unique thing. Smaller more intimate, but they all have their own things that make them special and worth going to

A1c & A1ci: It depends if they are really from the area, if they are just resellers of produce if they are not the actual growers themselves a lot less so, it feels a lot more transactional. If you see someone you know that the cheese you are eating is coming from the goats and the pasture, and the eggs are ethically raised and they are pasture raised animals. Same with the vegetables you get you are supporting the guy who just got vegetables from his field and they were just picked that morning and brought into the market you can develop a real relationship. You see that at the 441 Farmer's Market where people are just waiting at the gate because there is a mad rush to get in there and get the produce from a specific farmer(S) that they want to buy from and they know there is a limited supply. It's really encouraging to see that.

(Interviewer - comment about buying at the market)

Q2

A2 Yes

A2a We've helped to cohost local food weeks for various proclamations for various entities a variety of local food events around the community as well as local food and food economic events over the years as part of the sustainability programs/activities.

Q3

A3: Yes

A3a vegetables all types all manner and raised chickens for eggs

Q4

A4a it all depends you can buy unhealthy food from a farmer's market just as you can buy it from a supermarket

**SQ is there any particular reason that you feel this way?**

**SA There is nothing sacred about a farmer's market and nothing inherently evil about a supermarket.**

Q5

A5 Yes

A5a Cofrin Park

**SQ: The City Park?**

**SA: Yes**

A5b They have nature trails. They also have a playground that we use for our kids

**SQ: Ever look for shark's teeth in the creek?**

**SA: Yes**

A5c unavailable activities

A: There are a lot of activities there that we don't take advantage of like the active recs, the tennis courts out there we don't really use that right now, but um right now I can't think of any other amenities I would want to squeeze into that location. It's a fairly tight space. They did just take out the house, it was taking up a 2,000 sq ft area. I'm trying to recall if it would lend itself to gardening, cause there is a lot of pretty heavy canopy. The canopy is appreciated for the uh, playground areas and the nature trails because it probably would not be much fun to be out there in the middle of the sun. It might be able to host a garden.

A5d NA

(Interviewer- mentions about Deer in the park)

A5e Yes, that's the other thing there is a lot of wildlife, surprisingly so because it is such a small preserve area that the park is associated with. That would be a real challenge because we have deer regularly in our backyard making there way through the park there. That would be free lunch all the time

Q6: attitude

A6: I'm supportive I think they really live and breathe by the community wanting to support them. It's not really other than the base amenities, providing the land and water it really takes the community to organize them and keep people committed to them, because it is hard work. It's fun and its rewarding but for these things to be sustained and sustaining it really needs a someone to actively lead it whether it is one person acting as the point of contact or a committee of folks I've seen lots of community garden's die on the vine no pun intended, and others I've been involved in either personally or indirectly um they've thrived because people have loved them to keep them growing. Of course every garden goes through its season, and I think that they have a natural life cycle themselves. Some locations might be great to have a garden

for a few years or decades, but eventually it may be time for gardens themselves to move to some other location. As cities and communities mature they need to move to where it is appropriate for them. The next to the GRU admin' Bldg off of SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Very old community there fell into disrepair for quite sometime and you could guarantee that a lot of the poorer housing back there were living off of the industries that were there, probably had backyard gardens. As people became older and the area became dilapidated I didn't see it as much when I first moved into the downtown area. As more people moved in and the area began to gentrify the demand for taking advantage of some of these former housing areas, taking the empty plots and turning them into a community garden space really took off and I believe it is still out there today. Artists moved in and would put artwork into the spaces they would contact to help organize for a load of compost to the site and act as a community advocate for the site until the city wants to do something different with the location, and eventually the city will want to do something different with the location. Probably as it becomes more urban and dense the nature of the way people garden will change and that site will become something different and that's ok.

Q7

A7a Um, a community garden is very much about the community a place where people don't necessarily grow food for subsistence from what I've seen. Certainly it can be a big aspect of it, but it's a place where people build connections with one another as much as to the land that they depend upon for the food that they eat. community gardens have always been more about community then the food that comes out of them in my experience. Though that's I'm sure that varies.

Q8 benefits

A8 Provides again something that is missing in society these days. So much of urban life of just modern life is centered around private places and shopping and retail. There are less and less venues for people to just come together and be together and do a shared activity. I think of how there is a declining number of people who go to movies together, and people don't bowl anymore, they stay at home and play video games or they watch their entertainment inside, very insular. So community gardens really fill a void for people that want to be out and about and interact with other people their neighbors and do something constructive and positive.

Q9: land

A9: I think that's fine

Q: Why

A9a: The best interactions I've seen are those that have a need and people can rarely eat all of the food that is produced and whether or not the person needs it for themselves or give it away is a great way to build community and to share, sharing the surplus, sharing the wealth, sharing the bounty. These are the things kind of built into our culture. No one wants to see food go to waste and if people need to eat to survive this is an excellent way to give them that. Or that community spirit outlet to share.

Q10: community garden

A10: Yes, we are actively doing that, Alachua County

A10a: It builds society, community it makes for common ground between people, positive and creative and directly provides nutrition, good nutrition, good food to people. It provides a means of exercise and keeping people healthier longer. There are societal

benefits from people working together that might not ever work together. People getting out of their houses, there are the larger benefits of people appreciating the efforts it takes to grow food and appreciating are local farming community. The farmers that feed us 24/7. In the broad scheme of things its connecting back again to nature. Food doesn't come in plastic shrink wrap it comes from the Earth.

A10ai: na

Q11: land code

A11: Not sure if it needs to be part of the LDR's,

A11a Not sure if that's the appropriate location for certainly they should feel like they could ask their local governments to help find an appropriate location for a community garden site.

A11ai The things that are most difficult in urban areas is land and finding the right location with the necessary infrastructure, water and dirt the topsoil to make it possible, fencing, there is a whole amenities list. Sometimes it can be the initial assistance and setting up the coordination it takes, but beyond that I don't think the gov't should run the programming of the garden it's something that is turned over to a community group that actually runs it. The Gov't provides the overall framework that they run under. Some people want to grow flowers, grow melons, grow a variety of things that should really be up to the community at large.

**SQ: and why do you think that it should not be part of the LDR's?**

**SA: I'm not sure if that's the appropriate mechanism for it. Certainly, it could be a suite of things available to the developer in terms of meeting their open space requirements. But I'm not sure if you'd get the best results in prescribing a community garden into a new community development if you don't have the community asking for it in the first place. LDR's would really effect, my understanding, new proposed development not existing development. So a certain requirement for open space and shared common areas. The developer could forward a proposal that the common areas be utilized as garden space after the fact those developments are usually governed by some form of covenants.**

(Interviewer- like home owners associations?)

**SA- Home owner' associations, they would petition the HA or the developers to use this. For gov't controlled lands, Parks things that people are already coming to in order to recreate. Work together on it and we think that those would be very appropriate sites. Real centroids in various communities the people utilize for that purpose.**

Q12:

A12 there is the aesthetics and upkeep, it is hard to maintain a garden space and gardens have seasons. Some of the seasons aren't very nice they can be underutilized, abused and vandalized. We've had instances in the City of Gainesville where people were coming in expressly to steal from community gardens. People worked very hard and it is incredibly demoralizing to come back to the plot and see everything you worked so hard at to just be stolen and resold which what the case was. These things do happen and a lot of benefits. I think the benefits overall outweigh the potential deficits, but trying to grow something is hard, hot, buggy work and having someone committed to be out there to take care of that year after year after year it is very difficult to do that it

takes constant rejuvenation of that space, bringing new people in as old people go on to try different things.

Q13:

A13: Right now Alachua County is supporting edible perennial landscapes and we are doing inventories of our space because much of our land that we directly have control over is in the rural and unincorporated area. We are probably not going to be involved in the short term in creating a community garden that is our plan in transforming our parks system to allow these types of activities there and to do more work with IFAS our extension folks in these communities, but as you get out into the rural areas you're going to find more and more land available for folks to grow their own food on their own plots. The unincorporated area has bigger parcels so it's not uncommon for people to have an acre of 5 acres worth of land. The more agricultural uses there, people are actually farming for a living. community garden are mostly some urban phenomena not that they can't occur in rural settings. They are more high density phenomena where people need an open space because they lack it, they live in apt complex or they have a home with very little yard space appropriate for growing things.

**SQ: You are qualifying between urban and rural, what about the urban fringe area? So the areas on the outskirts of the city but they are in the county and you start getting higher population densities in those areas.**

**SA: Definitely, I'm generalizing when I'm saying urban to rural, but you can have more urbanized rural areas as well that are built up like cities where that condition existed. Again, where the county has those areas we are looking at our parks space as a vehicle to help with that.**

(Interviewer- so then that might be like the Kanapaha Veterans Park to put a community garden out there if the Wild space tax is renewed.)

**SA- I think regardless of the tax what we are seeing is the Parks programs recognize there is just a need for it, a preference in the community for it, these types of activities active recreation opportunity. So, regardless of the recreation tax passing finding that they are already building this into the future of what they do as an amenity in the Parks system. We are going to have to do a few pilot projects to find how we do it and what we do but it's becoming more and more part of our culture giving a common area for people to dig some dirt and grow something and learn something about that. The way we do it in unincorporated county park might be different from a more urbanized dense urban core. What happens in the COG would be much more in the spirit of what people think of as community garden and what happens in our park systems might be more appropriate to those locations. Have elements of what happens in an urban core, but also be slightly different might cater to other needs beyond just growing tomatoes**

Q13a:

A13a: Again we have to go thru this process that we are in the middle of right now, establishing our first pilot facilities and put some stuff in the dirt. Have to be actively engaging the communities to ask the questions are you interested in having a community garden out here. We are providing the infrastructure because we know in general people want this, but we have to begin building up that support base of folks that we know will participate and take advantage of the amenities we think they would

want to use in these locations. We are probably start with the things that are easiest to take care of and maintain then build upon those foundations based upon what the community says they desire.

Q13b: roadblocks

A13b: um, available land, right land right location, community leaders that is people that will help with the basic organization making sure everyone is assigned a plot and people do the communal work that is necessary to maintain the space itself. Another barrier would be the lack of infrastructure if you don't have water, the ability to irrigate, probably one of the most important aspects of making a garden space workable. You can always import the soil always find people that are willing to do the work, but if you don't have water you are cooked.

Q14: intergovernmental working

A14: There is a lot of what the city and counties are doing, some ways they are focused on the needs of the citizens themselves. I think in general COG and Alachua County are very interested in local food economics, and what it means to have people appreciate food grown from here so we are supporting these kind of bigger issues that make people excited about growing some foods themselves in a community garden. What we can do is make sure that we have people that are aware of the importance of growing and eating local food. The benefits of not having your food travel from thousands of miles away. The reinvestments of local dollars when you support local farmers. In general, making the environment that values that. We do that by supporting research projects together. We are doing that right with some ongoing survey work to support local food enterprises. Intergovernmental coordination is part of our comprehensive plan/mandate. So as interest comes up we do that, but mostly at the macro scale (Interviewer- part of the Comp plan)

**SA: we coordinate with other local gov'ts for roads, and basic urban infrastructure and how we handle water, we do all of these things right now and certainly the urban/rural interface. You have farmers next to people living in homes that's something we have to navigate something of the scale of a community garden we don't normally work on those things together. We support local food support local food economics and bigger issues together because they have shared benefits.**

Q15: how have u supported

A15: participated in community gardens

Q16: past attitude

A16: didn't really have any, grew up in a rural setting where I participated in growing my own food. Moving to a city with less land apartments and dorms, that wasn't really an option where I was living. Renting a place I didn't want to invest the time and effort into putting plants in at an apt or at a home so community gardens were a natural outlet where I could get a lot.

Q17:

A: no change due to interview

Q18;

A18: nothing else to comment on

Q19 In order to not reveal individual interviewees networks all of the answers to question number 19 have been aggregated into one composite answer as follows:

A19 City Manager Anthony Lyons; Neighborhood associations throughout Gainesville; the Sugarfoot Neighborhood has a strong association and they have a community garden in the back of the neighborhood in their park; Susan Benz, [avince@ufl.edu](mailto:avince@ufl.edu), [susan\\_vince2002@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_vince2002@yahoo.com); Ginny Campbell [epaulc@gator.net](mailto:epaulc@gator.net), Master gardeners; NPR garden tips on 89.1FM; Mr. Kalie Blount- a nurse in town and community activist; University because of IFAS department; former commissioner Randy Wells; Commissioner Warren, who is on the board with Grace Marketplace; Cyndi Sanders at UF IFAS; Vernest LeGree at Alachua County Parks and Recreation; Sean McLendon at Alachua County Sustainability; Heather Martin at Alachua County Public Works; Anna Prizzia; City of Gainesville Manager; Marie HuffEdwards at Dreamers Garden 258-1238; Robert Parks 5th avenue 352-372-8367; Karissa is starting the Duval neighborhood gardens 860-488-0018; other local municipalities city commissioners; Jeanea Mastrodicasa an administrator at UF and works for IFAS but a few years back was on the city commission; Paul Myers Alachua County Health Department; Home Builders and Realtors; Kayvun who runs the Porters Community farm phn 646-247-0747; Melissa Desa; and Eleanor Blair the artist.

## APPENDIX E – IRB Approval of Interviews



Behavioral/NonMedical Institutional Review Board  
FWA00005790

PO Box 112250  
Gainesville FL 32611-2250  
Telephone: (352) 392 0433  
Facsimile: (352) 392 9234  
Email: irb2@ufl.edu

DATE: 6/15/2016  
TO: Daniel Blumberg  
3705 NW 53rd Terrace  
Gainesville, Florida 32606  
FROM: Ira Fischler, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus  
Chair IRB-02  
IRB#: **IRB201600978**  
TITLE: Interview Process for Determining Attitudes Towards Community Gardens by Alachua County Leaders

### Approved as Exempt

You have received IRB approval to conduct the above-listed research project. Approval of this project was granted on 6/15/2016 by IRB-02. This study is approved as exempt because it poses minimal risk and is approved under the following exempt category/categories:

2. This research involves the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior. Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. Disclosure of the human subjects responses outside the research does not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects financial standing, employability, or reputation.

#### Principal Investigator Responsibilities:

The PI is responsible for the conduct of the study.

- Renewing your study before expiration
- Obtaining approval for revisions before implementation
- Reporting Adverse Events
- Retention of Research Records
- Obtaining approval to conduct research at the VA
- Notifying other parties about this project's approval status

#### Study Team:

Ruth          Steiner          Other

*The Foundation for The Gator Nation*

An Equal Opportunity Institution

*Confidentiality Notice: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s), and may contain legally privileged or confidential information. Any other distribution, copying, or*

*disclosure is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and destroy this message immediately. Unauthorized access to confidential information is subject to federal and state laws and could result in personal liability, fines, and imprisonment. Thank you.*

APPENDIX F – Interviewee Signed Consent Forms

*City of Gainesville Commissioner Adrian Hayes Santos*

Analysis of Alachua County Community Leaders Attitudes Towards Community Gardens:

My name is Daniel Blumberg. I am a Masters Sustainable Design student at the University of Florida. I am conducting a research study as part of my degree requirements, and I would like to invite you to participate.

I am studying the attitudes of leadership in Alachua County towards community gardens. You will be asked a series of questions concerning your attitudes/beliefs towards community gardening in Alachua County. If you decide to take part in this study I will arrange to interview you. The meeting will take place at a mutually agreed upon time and place, and should last up to one hour. The interview will be recorded, so that I can transcribe and analyze the information. Upon conclusion of the research the recordings will then be destroyed.

You have the right to not answer any questions that you do not wish to. While you may not benefit directly by taking part in this study, it is hoped that others in society will benefit from this research into community gardens.

Participation will be confidential to the extent of the law. The results of this study may be published. If you do not wish to have your comments directly attributable please initial here \_\_\_\_.

The decision to take part in this study is up to you. You may quit the study at any time or decide not to answer any question you do not wish to answer.

I will be happy to answer any questions concerning this study that you may have. I can be contacted directly at 352-538-6911 or [dnlumberg75@ufl.edu](mailto:dnlumberg75@ufl.edu). The chair of my thesis committee is Professor Donna Cohen and she can be contacted at 352-562-1074 or [dcohen@ufl.edu](mailto:dcohen@ufl.edu), the committee co-chair is Professor Ruth Steiner and she can be contacted at 352-294-1492 or [rsteiner@ufl.edu](mailto:rsteiner@ufl.edu). If you have any questions that you would like to ask about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Florida’s Interview Review Board at 352-392-0433 or by mail at IRB02 office, PO Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250

I will make a follow up phone call within a week to confirm receipt of this letter, if I have not heard from you.

Best regards,

Daniel Blumberg  
3705 NW 53<sup>rd</sup> Terrace  
Gainesville, Florida 32606

Phn: 352-538-6911  
Email: [dnlumberg75@ufl.edu](mailto:dnlumberg75@ufl.edu)

**I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure**

Participant:  Date: 7/5/16

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Participant: Charles S Chestnut Date: 6/27/16  
Charles Chestnut Alachua County Commissioner

*City Commissioner Craig Carter*

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**I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure**

Participant:  Date: 7/7/16

City of Gainesville Harvey Budd  
COMMISSIONER

Analysis of Alachua County Community Leaders Attitudes Towards Community Gardens:

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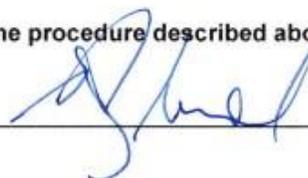
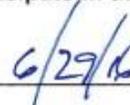
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**I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure**

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Analysis of Alachua County Community Leaders Attitudes Towards Community Gardens:

*Dear City of Gainesville Parks Department John Weber:*

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Email: [dnlumberg75@ufl.edu](mailto:dnlumberg75@ufl.edu)

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Participant: *[Signature]* Date: 6.27.16

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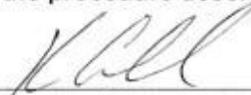
I will make a follow up phone call within a week to confirm receipt of this letter, if I have not heard from you.

Best regards,

Daniel Blumberg  
3705 NW 53<sup>rd</sup> Terrace  
Gainesville, Florida 32606

Phn: 352-538-6911  
Email: [dnlumberg75@ufl.edu](mailto:dnlumberg75@ufl.edu)

**I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure**

Participant:  Date: 6/23/16

Mayor Lauren Poe

Analysis of Alachua County Community Leaders Attitudes Towards Community Gardens:

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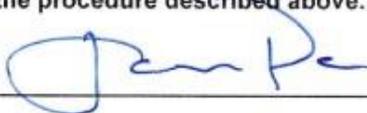
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**I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure**

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

7/5/16

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**I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure**

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Lee Niblock*  
Alachua County Manager Dr. Lee Niblock

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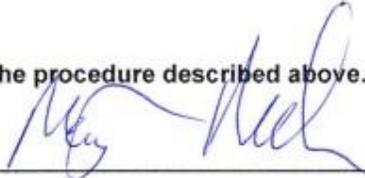
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Email: [dnblumberg75@ufl.edu](mailto:dnblumberg75@ufl.edu)

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Participant:  Date: 6/29/16

Marty Mesh

Analysis of Alachua County Community Leaders Attitudes Towards Community Gardens:

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Participant: Maura Brady Date: June 2016  
Maura Brady McRorie Community Garden Coordinator

Analysis of Alachua County Community Leaders Attitudes Towards Community Gardens:

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Participant: Mike Byerly Date: 6-27-16

Mike Byerly Alachua County Commissioner

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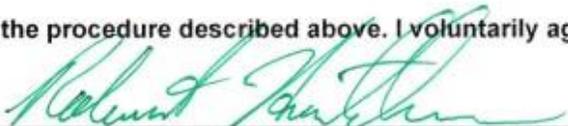
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Participant:  Date: 6/27/16

Analysis of Alachua County Community Leaders Attitudes Towards Community Gardens:

*Dear Sustainability Coordinator Sean McHendon:*

My name is Daniel Blumberg. I am a Masters Sustainable Design student at the University of Florida. I am conducting a research study as part of my degree requirements, and I would like to invite you to participate.

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Daniel Blumberg  
3705 NW 53<sup>rd</sup> Terrace  
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Email: [dnlumberg75@ufl.edu](mailto:dnlumberg75@ufl.edu)

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Participant: *Sean McHendon* Date: 6/21/16

## APPENDIX G – AUDIO RECORDINGS OF INTERVIEWS

- [Adrian Hayes-Santos City of Gainesville Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Alachua County Elected Official Community Gardens Interview](#)
- [Alachua County Staff Community Gardens Interview](#)
- [Charles Chestnut Alachua County Commissioner Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Craig Carter City of Gainesville Commissioner Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Harvey Budd City of Gainesville Commissioner Community Garden Interview](#)
- [John Weber City of Gainesville Parks Staff Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Ken Cornell Alachua County Commissioner Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Lauren Poe City of Gainesville Mayor Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Marty Mesh Florida Organic Growers FOG Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Maura Brady Community Gardener Organizer Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Mike Byerly Alachua County Commissioner Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Robert Hutchinson Alachua County Commissioner Community Garden Interview](#)
- [Sean McLendon Alachua County Sustainability Coordinator Community Gardens Interview](#)
- [UF IFAS Staff Community Garden Interview](#)

## REFERENCE LIST

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I have earned both a Bachelor's Degree of Business Administration and a Master's Degree of Sustainable Design from the University of Florida. I have resided in Alachua County Florida since 1980 and am a major proponent of living sustainably. I have worked in private industry, public service, and have published books and podcasts. I look forward to making this world a better place in the company of my wife.