

Before you Plant a Seed, Have a Lawyer Look at the Deed

Is your community association involved in a community garden? If so, the Community Law Center can help you:

- ✓ **Get started** - create bylaws and articles of incorporation so that the association can sign agreements to ensure the long-term sustainability of the garden.
- ✓ **Become tax-exempt** - to qualify for greening grants from a variety of funders.
- ✓ **Investigate and secure legal rights** - preserving open spaces requires legal ownership and legal rights to the land. An attorney can help in determining who owns the land, negotiating and securing rights to the land from the owner - whether it is the City or a private owner - and may help with temporary rights utilizing nuisance law prior to the project qualifying for entry into a land trust.
- ✓ **Get in the zone** - if the community does not have rights to the land and a developer wants to build on top of the garden (but needs a zoning variance to do that), Community Law Center can represent the community in opposition to the development. If the community does have rights to the land and needs a zoning variance to put up a fence or structure, Community Law Center can help with that, too.
- ✓ **Green lots and create community open spaces** - help locating and contacting property owners and deciding how best to proceed in obtaining access to land.
- ✓ **Adopt lots and create community open spaces** - help negotiating and understanding these legally binding agreements with the City.
- ✓ **Understand and waive risks** - risks may seem remote, but Community Law Center can help try to put some minimal safeguards, such as liability waiver forms for volunteers, in place if the organization can't afford insurance.

Our services are generally free, after an application fee per issue. If your organization does not qualify for free assistance, the Community Law Center may be able to provide your organization with reduced-rate legal services.



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