

Cultivating the Power to Grow Food Equity Initiative FY23 Report



Cultivating the Power to Grow is a collaborative community approach to building long-term equity in our food system. It aims to expand food access for youth and their families facing food insecurity through integrating healthy school meals, urban farms, and community leadership and healing, and community planning for expanded publicly protected urban agriculture land.



“ A food justice leader takes charge in a positive way without being asked to do so. They also advocate for food rights and focus on food equity for all people. ”

KEYSHANNA CALLOWAY
Youth Food Justice Intern | Charlottesville High School



“ A food justice leader is someone who works with others to make sure people always have access to healthy and affordable produce. ”

DEMI BROWN
Youth Food Justice Intern | Charlottesville High School



JULY 2022 –
JUNE 2023

REPORT &
APPENDICES



CULTIVATE CHARLOTTESVILLE
FOOD JUSTICE NETWORK

Jeanette Abi-Nader,
Co-Executive Director

Quentia Taylor
Food Justice Network Program
Director



DATE September 1, 2023
TO Charlottesville City Council
FROM Cultivate Charlottesville Board of Directors & Staff
SUBJECT The Power to Grow FY23 Report Packet Addendum

Dear City Councilors,

Charlottesville's Booker T. Washington (BTW) Park has a legacy as a thriving hub of the African American community. For decades, Black Charlottesville residents played a key role in transforming the land from a history of injustice to a history of reclamation. For example, BTW Park was once the site of a horticultural festival that boasted 200 Black grower exhibits. We aim to reignite this legacy with an Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC) farm site located at Booker T. Washington Park. The site will continue the UAC tradition of growing and sharing fresh fruits and vegetables at no cost for residents facing food insecurity.

The City of Charlottesville has included Food Equity as a priority in our City's Comprehensive Plan and community members identified urban agriculture as one of six main areas to create a healthy and just food system in Charlottesville. This is articulated clearly in the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform developed to advise council on community centered practices to build food justice.

The enclosed packet of materials, The Power to Grow, outlines the depth of community support, precedent, and justification for such an action.

We urge City Council to express your hearty support for the following recommendations.

Charlottesville Food Equity Initiative
FY24 City Council Recommendations for Action
Recommendation #1: Charlottesville City Council recommends dedicating land in Booker T. Washington Park for an Urban Agriculture Collective farm.
Recommendation #2: Charlottesville City Council asks Parks and Recreation to prioritize a community design for this farm site in the upcoming Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan.
Recommendation #3: Charlottesville City Council recommends explicitly including food equity goals in the City's Strategic Plan in a way that aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7, Goal 4 and the Food Equity Initiative Policy Platform.

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Board of Directors: Karen Waters (Co-Chair), Matt Darring (Co-Chair), Deanna MacDonald (Treasurer), C.L. Bohannon (Secretary), Julia Prince (Philanthropy Chair), Anthony Smith (Governance Chair), Dr. Jeffrey Gander, Bianca Johnson



Community-led Food Apartheid Solutions on Public Lands in Black and Afro-descendent Communities

From “Food Sovereignty and Environment”, The Wilderness Society | Chapter: Food sovereignty and conservation intersections | Pages 9 and 14 | <https://www.wilderness.org/key-issues/community-led-conservation>

In Black and Afro-Descendent communities, food sovereignty is often associated with the concept of food apartheid. **The term food apartheid describes the political, economic, and racial divisions that have caused widespread food access issues in Black communities.** Food apartheid has its roots in Black land loss, gentrification, segregation, and systemic racism. Lack of food access is a key issue in underserved Black-majority communities, and we saw this reality reflected in our roundtables.

Public lands can be an important part of the solution to help underserved communities access ecologically sound, healthy, and culturally-appropriate foods. A common theme in our engagement was the creation of community-led spaces that support sustainable practices and create economic and educational opportunities. Black communities have devised innovative ways to use public lands to combat food apartheid, such as the Well at Oxon Run in Washington, DC and Mudtown Farms in Los Angeles. These inspiring community-led biocultural restoration projects transform neglected public land in underserved areas into hubs that feed communities, provide gathering spaces, and protect crucial wildlife habitat in urban and rural areas.

The systemic issues that cause food apartheid are directly correlated with access to nature and parks priorities of the Urban to Wild program and Rural Communities program. For example, in Los Angeles (and many other cities), the government funds food distribution programs and mandates community organizations to use public parks as food distribution pickup points. **However, the public parks are often scarce, underfunded, and physically distant from at-risk communities.**

Additionally, since the public parks lack capacity and fail to prioritize these food pickups, the food distribution schedule is very irregular. In practice, this means that at-risk community members don't know when they will be able to pick up food at the public parks and must travel long distances to access this food. **Increased access to public parks can be an important part of the solution to food apartheid.**

“Biocultural restoration is the science and practice of restoring not only ecosystems, but also human and cultural relationships to place, such that cultures are strengthened and revitalized alongside the lands with which they are inextricably linked.”

- Center for Native Peoples and the Environment, founded by Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer^{xii}

Community Engaged Cohorts

Cultivate works with three community engaged cohorts, Youth Food Justice Interns (high school students), Food Justice Apprentices (ages 20-24), and Community Advocates (resident leaders of Charlottesville neighborhoods affected by food inequities). These individuals are the drivers behind the community engaged research presented here.

2023 YOUTH FOOD JUSTICE INTERNS



Food justice means an undivided and unbiased distribution to anyone who breathes of food, water, and open resources.

GABRIELA TIM
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



A food justice leader is someone who provides leadership for people who can't produce food on their own and provide local guidance for all.

ZAMAR STENNIS
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



A food justice leader is someone who leads by example, helps beginners who want to start gardening, has a major voice, and helps people learn more about food security.

NARKADJA BURTON
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



A food justice leader is someone who makes sure everyone around them has access to fresh food especially in need no matter their income.

ZAIDAH DHAASI
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



Food justice means that all people have access to healthy food without worry about financial status. It means equity in opportunities for food for all people.

GRAHAM SELLMAN
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



Being a food justice leader is taking responsibility to help others who need food and help people understand which food is and isn't good for you.

HAIER WAYNE
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



Food justice means that anyone can get the proper nutrients from fresh produce that they need; a food justice leader helps to protect the right to have fulling produce for people of any age, race, or gender.

DINE BROWN
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



A food justice leader is someone who helps and supports in the garden.

AUBREY FERGUSON
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL




A food justice leader is always fair. They help people to access fresh and food and water and create resources to help low-income families.

RHONA DHAASI
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



Food justice means fresh food for everyone—that all people have the access to healthy food.

ZENAH RICHARDSON
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



A food justice leader is someone who is dedicated and determined to help those without access to fresh and healthy food.

AMANDA MCCLURE-GIBNEY
CHARLOTTESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



Being a food justice leader is having the right to access healthy, and nutritious food with no limitations.

ESTHERINA CALLOWAY
YOUTH FOOD JUSTICE INTERN LEAD

Cultivate Charlottesville trains future leaders in food equity by mentoring Youth Food Justice Interns during summer months. For 6 weeks, interns spend 20 hours per week in the garden and in discussion groups learning about growing food, food access, food insecurity, and food systems in Charlottesville.

Former Interns have gone on to become active advocates in the food justice movement through presentations to Charlottesville City Council, CCS School Board, and the 2019 Food System Conference in Savannah, GA. Former students have also joined Cultivate Charlottesville staff to continue to play an integral part in the food justice movement.

Community Advocates & Food Justice Apprentices

<p>“ Being a FOOD JUSTICE LEADER means advocating in collaboration with the community for equitable food access. ”</p> <p>LEAN LEON Food Justice Apprentice Lead City Schoolyard Garden</p>	<p>“ It is powerful to know that over 200 Black farmers and more community members created Booker T. Washington Park as a place of celebration and transformed the history of racism. ”</p> <p>BIENTIA TAYLOR Cultivate Team The Power to Grow</p>	<p>“ Urban agriculture and The Power to Grow means a lot to the community because it provides vegetables like corn and tomatoes and that's very important. It's healthy and leads to growth. ”</p> <p>MARY ANDERSON Community Advocate The Power to Grow</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow is important, especially to support kids get their best future. In my culture we say, "healthy body, healthy mind" and it starts with kids and fresh food. ”</p> <p>FARIDA UBASOVIA Community Advocate The Power to Grow</p>
<p>“ The Power to Grow in the garden is my sanctuary. Being a food justice leader is helping to create and implement policies that build equity. ”</p> <p>ROSA PARKER Community Advocate The Power to Grow</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow is making it so that we can grow a lot of fresh food and that matters! Sharing food makes people happy and gives help to our neighbors. ”</p> <p>ROSA KEY Community Advocate The Power to Grow</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow is important because urban agriculture will show youth how to garden and help our community have more access to fresh produce. ”</p> <p>ASHLEY FREEMAN Community Advocate The Power to Grow</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow means see a need, find a partner, empower others, plan a proposal, and SHARE THE HARVEST. ”</p> <p>MICHELLE GIBSON Community Advocate Lead The Power to Grow</p>
<p>“ The Power to Grow is about coming together to create a better future for everyone's sake with food to keep our families fed. ”</p> <p>EHRIAHUAL OJEADA-ROMERO Food Justice Apprentice Urban Agriculture Collective</p>	<p>“ Having a community garden at Booker T. Washington Park would be influential because it would give members of my community something for future generations to cherish for years to come. ”</p> <p>KJ HOWARD Food Justice Apprentice Food Justice Network</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow for me means being an ally as I support my community in fighting for equity, power and opportunity. ”</p> <p>ANYAH LINBACHER Food Justice Apprentice City Schoolyard Garden</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow is very amazing, influential, and impactful. Everyone should be able to experience urban agriculture. It grants freedom, growth, and connection. ”</p> <p>CALLISTA BARBOUR Food Justice Apprentice Integrated Systems</p>
<p>“ The Power to Grow means the power of choice, the power of food, and the power to build healthy and just communities. ”</p> <p>RICHARD MORRIS Farmer Sch. Cultivate Team The Power to Grow</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow is about roots and having a connection to community, our food, and building equity through community-led urban agriculture. ”</p> <p>JEANETTE ARE-RADER Cultivate Team The Power to Grow</p>	<p>“ The Power to Grow means acknowledging the history of agriculture for people of color in order for an entire community to take back their power and have the resources and opportunity to grow healthy foods. ”</p> <p>ALEEN CASEY Cultivate Team The Power to Grow</p>	<p>At Cultivate Charlottesville we believe that working together to grow gardens, share food and power, and advocate for just systems cultivates a healthy community for all. We are advocating for an urban farm at Booker T. Washington Park to give all neighbors the power to grow!</p>



The Power to Grow campaign for an Urban Agriculture Collective farm at Booker T. Washington Park
Twelve Frequently Asked Questions

1. What's the purpose?

The Power to Grow is a community engagement, awareness, and policy action campaign in Charlottesville with a goal of securing public space for urban agriculture, primarily led by and for residents of color that have often been marginalized in city land use.

The campaign will provide information about historical inequities in Charlottesville (specifically in regards to the Black experience & Black land loss), engage community in designing a vision for an urban garden in Booker T. Washington Park, and ask city council for an area of Booker T. Washington Park to be dedicated for community-based Urban Agriculture Collective site. This campaign is designed to illuminate the issue of land access and ownership as the foundation for economic and social wellbeing, especially in regards to urban agriculture and the Black Charlottesville community.

2. Why now?

This year Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC), a grassroots effort started by residents of public and subsidized housing, will have lost all three foundational farm sites that provided no cost produce to neighbors of up to 17,000 pounds in one season. While UAC is finding ways and spaces to grow, they may not be permanent sites and are not as accessible to the neighbors experiencing food insecurity.

Due to community advocacy in the city - the Charlottesville City Comprehensive plan prioritizes urban agriculture spaces in public areas. Charlottesville Parks & Recreation is gearing up to do a strategic plan and it is timely to have the community recommendation for a farm site at Booker T. Washington Park included in the plan.

Now is the time for The Power to Grow!

3. Why the site at Booker T. Washington Park?

Booker T. Washington Park has a long history in the Black community, and it is one of the many spaces in Charlottesville that is being gentrified where Black neighbors no longer feel welcome.

BTW Park holds powerful memories, was once the "Blacks Only" Park, a site of community advocacy, and hosted a horticultural fair with 200 Black grower exhibits. Community members want to restore this space to its legacy. The park is on the bus line and close to the 10th & Page, Westhaven, and Madison, neighborhoods where Urban Agriculture Collective works.

4. Can the City allow a nonprofit to manage public land?



Charlottesville Parks & Recreation has a precedent for partnerships with local nonprofits managing city land. Piedmont Botanical Garden has a 40 year lease with the city to care for 11.5 acres at McIntire Park. (McIntire Park was the “Whites Only” Park during segregation.)

Land recently purchased by the city adjacent to Azalea Park has been cared for by the International Rescue Committee New Roots Program and a lease agreement with New Roots is anticipated for that site as well. The YMCA is also a nonprofit operating on public land at McIntire Park.

5. Why would the city partner with Cultivate Charlottesville?

Cultivate Charlottesville has been partnering with the City to grow gardens and farm sites since 2007 through the Urban Agriculture Collective and City Schoolyard Garden programs. These programs harvest around 10,000 pounds of fresh produce each year to share with community members facing food insecurity, at no cost. Cultivate also hosts youth experiential learning in the gardens and centers community leadership through community engagement cohorts of interns, apprentices, and advocates.

The Power to Grow UAC Farm Site at Booker T. Washington Park will build on this sixteen year and trusted partnership.

6. What are the numbers? How much land will be used? How much produce will be grown? How many people will be affected?

Specific plans about site location in the park, site size, and site design will be determined in partnership with the Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan and will include significant community feedback.

We anticipate being able to grow at least 5,000 pounds of produce on each quarter acre plot. The produce will continue to be shared at no cost community markets hosted in partnership with Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority and Piedmont Housing Alliance. Our previous farm site at Kindlewood reached from 300–500 families each year.

7. If the land was previously a dump site, how will you make sure it is safe to grow food there?

Cultivate brings significant resources and partnerships to test and if needed, remediate the soil; they will work with the city as well as organizations such as Piedmont Master Gardeners and private companies to make the soil healthy. Ensuring the viability of the land before any project implementation is a priority. In this way, The Power to Grow campaign aims to give the land a new life, following previous generations who celebrated and enjoyed the park.

8. What would we have to give up to have an urban agriculture site there?

Cultivate and partners at UVA Sustainable Food Coalition, UVA Global Studies, and Trinity Episcopal Church are in the process of doing an observational assessment of how the site is currently being



used. Analysis of sports leagues and other potential uses will be conducted to ensure the best use of space across Charlottesville residents.

Based on this study and additional research through the Parks & Rec strategic planning process a site will be chosen to ensure use for growing and community engagement for a greater percent of the time.

9. Who will be responsible for clearing waste and paying utilities?

The City of Charlottesville has several contracts, agreements, and leases with partners that outline the use, care, and maintenance of public space. While each site has different guidelines, partners work with the city to ensure the land is managed with care and for sustainability. Cultivate anticipates being responsible for the majority of fundraising for site implementation.

10. Vandalism because it exposed with no houses around it

Cultivate has experienced minimal vandalism in their urban agriculture sites from neighbors although groundhogs and other animals will sometimes have a field day in the smorgasbord of the gardens.

Cultivate Charlottesville staff are skilled in how to deter pests and will apply lessons learned from other gardens. In the same way that the city cleared the invasive plants with goats to increase biodiversity, the garden will work to create a diverse ecosystem, using organic growing methods.

11. Why have public land use that may not benefit all Charlottesville residents?

Yes, it is true that the UAC Community Markets are specifically for residents facing food insecurity, and the goal of The Power to Grow campaign is to bring back the dynamic community of neighbors that helped to build the park, during and after segregation. This, however, is not uncommon for public parks. Sports playing fields need to be reserved. Not everyone in the community plays or can afford to play golf. The YMCA is member only access. The IRC New Roots site focuses on refugee families.

Use of a small section of Booker T. Washington Park for an Urban Agriculture Collective farm site falls in line with those uses, and in many ways brings equity to how space in Charlottesville is accessed. This is especially true with the pressures of development that are out of reach of many Charlottesville residents.

12. How can I get involved in supporting an Urban Agriculture Site at Booker T. Washington Park?

If you'd like to support an Urban Agriculture Site at Booker T. Washington Park you can: Sign the petition to show council your support; Donate to Cultivate and indicate Power to Grow in the subject line; Send an email to City Council expressing your support; or join Cultivate at their presentation to Council on Monday, September 18th during the 4:00pm meeting.

History of the Land: Booker T. Washington Park

1001 Preston Ave, Charlottesville, VA 22903

A HISTORY OF INJUSTICE

The history of Booker T. Washington park reflects the deeply racist history of Charlottesville and the surrounding land. This underscores the pervasive legacies of colonization, systemic racism, white supremacy, and racial injustice that have historically and continuously affected Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color. To truly acknowledge the history of the land, we must first recognize the original stewards of the land, the Siouan tribes of the Monacan and Manahoac Indigenous nations, who were forcibly displaced by European colonizers in the 1500s (Cultivate Charlottesville, The Land We're On). The system of violence and control enacted by white European settler colonization laid the foundation for the institution of slavery and the Atlantic Slave Trade.

Booker T. Washington Park lies on land that played a role in racist systems of harm and injustice as part of John H. Craven's 400-acre Rose Hill Plantation, perpetuating the institution of slavery and the forced, stolen labor of enslaved African people (The City As a Park, 98). As one of the large farms in the area, John H. Craven purchased the plantation in 1820 after coming to Albemarle County to manage Thomas Jefferson's Tufton Farm in 1800. While working at Tufton, Craven leased five hundred acres and forty-five enslaved individuals (Founders Online, National Archives). By 1821, Craven owned up to 1500 acres of land in Albemarle County including the Rose Hill estate, named and built for William Wirt, and a portion of the Pen Park plantation. The Rose Hill estate was razed in 1933 but was located on current day Westwood Road, off Rose Hill Drive in Charlottesville (Edward K. Lay Papers, UVA Special Collections; Founders Online, National Archives; Monticello, Neighboring Homes & Families).



Image 1: Rose Hill Estate (Edward K. Lay Papers, UVA Special Collections, 1930)

The 2020 Pen Park Cemetery Survey, conducted by archaeologists on behalf of Charlottesville City Council, revealed that the Craven family owned and occupied the 400-acre Pen Park plantation from 1819 to 1845. Records from the U.S. Census between 1820 and 1840 showed that John H. Craven enslaved between 44 and 53 African Americans, and tax records from 1830 indicated that he was taxed for 37 enslaved

individuals. John H. Craven and his descendants were buried on the property. During the cemetery survey, archaeologists discovered 43 unmarked graves on the Pen Park property. This area has been confirmed as burial grounds of African Americans who were enslaved by the Cravens and other families

who owned the property and potentially African American employees after slavery was abolished (Pen Park Cemetery Survey, 2020).



Image 2: Washington Park Map (Stowekeller, History of the Land)

After the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, wealthy white landowners such as the Cravens found they could not sustain ownership and production on such vast properties without enslaved labor. Real estate developers divided and sold the land for residential and industrial uses to companies such as Charlottesville Industrial and Land Improvement Company (The City As a Park, 98). The Cravens continued to own 35 acres around the Rose Hill plantation estate. In 1867, a total of 75 acres were taken from the Rose Hill plantation and divided into 23 lots along the Preston Avenue corridor. This included the upper portion of land previously known as “Kelleytown” and “Tinsleytown,” which, by the 1900s, would become neighborhoods for newly emancipated African Americans in Charlottesville (The City As a Park, 1998; Rose Hill Neighborhood Survey, 2017). The Rose Hill neighborhood was once part of the

Rose Hill plantation’s land (Rose Hill Neighborhood Survey, 2017). Another more southern portion, “the Grove lot,” remained in the Craven family until 1904, when the land was bought and sold to the City by James Hayden (From Private Privilege to Public Place, 1998). The Grove Lot was known as the “Pest House property” in the early 1900s, when the Scarlet Fever epidemic swept through the community. The site was proposed as a shelter to host people with contagious diseases (The City As a Park, 98; Stowekeller Timeline 2001). In 1916, the City of Charlottesville annexed 1,676 acres of county land, including what would become Booker T. Washington Park and the Rose Hill Neighborhood (From Private Privilege to Public Place, 1998; Rose Hill Neighborhood Survey, 2017).

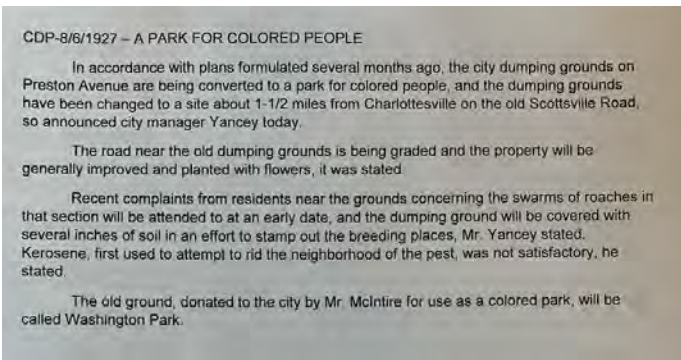


Image 3: Daily Progress Article 8/6/1927

As noted in a 1927 Daily Progress announcement, the Grove lot was also utilized as a dump site: “the city dumping grounds on Preston Avenue are being converted to a park” for African-American people (Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society Daily Progress 1927; Stowekeller).

In 1926, Paul Goodloe McIntire purchased 9.25 acres of the former plantation, including the Grove Lot, from the City of Charlottesville and donated the land back to the City as “a public park and playground” for the African-American community (The City As a Park, 98). **Booker T. Washington Park was designated as the first recreational space for Charlottesville’s Black community.** In that same year, McIntire donated 92 acres of land to the City for the development of another park, which was intended exclusively for use by white people. This park came to be known as McIntire Park. Newspaper headlines referring to McIntire and Booker T. Washington park read: “One for White and One for Colored,” reinforcing the unjust segregationist “separate but equal” policies of the time established by Plessy vs. Ferguson (From Private Privilege to Public Place, 1998). In the years prior, McIntire donated Lee Park (1917), Jackson Park (1919), and Belmont Park (1921), making up Charlottesville’s initial parks reserved for white people’s use only (The City As a Park, 98). McIntire was also responsible for funding a multitude of racist statues (Robert E. Lee, Thomas Stonewall Jackson, George Rogers Clark, and Lewis and Clark). These statues were rightfully taken down on July 10 and 11, 2021, thanks to the determined activism and advocacy efforts led by Charlottesville’s Black community.

A HISTORY OF RECLAMATION

Image 4: Survey of Washington Park showing the future of “The Barn” and tennis courts. Dated 1926. (The City As a Park, 1998 from Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society)



Central to Booker T. Washington Park’s history, the African-American community played a key role in transforming the land from a history of injustice to a history of reclamation. As Black folks navigated the unjust system of segregation, the ‘Colored Recreation Board’ was established in early 1934, ushering in a wave of renovations and improvements to the park (From Private Privilege to Public Place, 1998). The Black-led Recreation Board began attending the all-white Recreation Board meetings. Key leaders included Chairman Jerome Brooks, Vice Chairman Thomas Inge of Inge grocery store, and Secretary Rev William R. Strossner, Pastor of Mt Zion Baptist Church, Mrs. W. R. Strossner and Mrs. Minnie Tonsler (From Private Privilege to Public Place, 1998; UVA Special Collections

Parks and Recreation Papers, 1962).

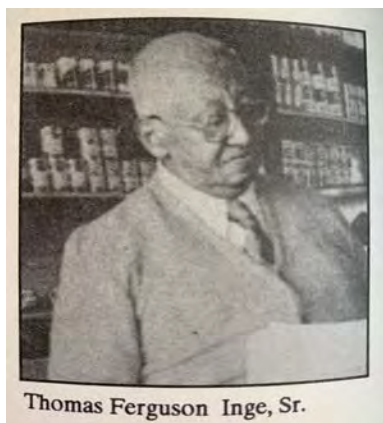
By the end of 1934, the “Colored Recreation Board” had fundraised and completed development of “The Barn” on the park property, despite the City’s unfair denial of the privilege to use the city armory for fundraising purposes, while simultaneously granting the privilege to the all-white Recreation Board

(From *Private Privilege to Public Place*, 1998). “The Barn” served a key role for the Black community, including a basketball gymnasium, music venue and meeting place (*City as a Park*, 98). Significant Park improvements led by Black community leaders were accomplished “at a time when no more than five percent of these facilities were designated for Black use nation-wide” (*From Private Privilege to Public Place*, 1998). Civic and athletic groups such as the Garden Club, the “Colored Elks” and the “Colored Mothers Club” contributed to the improvements of the park. In 1944, the park hosted a Victory Garden Exhibit showcasing over 200 exhibits of flowers, vegetables, fruits and canned goods created by Black gardeners and farmers (UVA Special Collections, Parks and Rec Papers).

Additionally, Parks and Recreation staff, directors and supervisors played an important role in shaping the early years of Booker T. Washington Park. The folks involved, according to UVA Special Collections Parks & Rec Papers during the years 1944–1956, included: Verna Gordon (playground Director 1950; pool supervisor 1956), Ada Goffney (wading pool supervisor 1952; pool supervisor 1956), Elizabeth Harrison (pool supervisor 1956), Margaret Stroud (park worker 1956; Black Recreation Director 1957), Geneva K Watson (Black Recreation Director 1947–56), Virginia Bell (park worker 1956), Clara Johnson (park worker 1956), Freddie Murray (park worker 1956), Maude Fortune (Recreation Dept staff 1944; Director of Recreation at Washington Park), Ann Brown (wading pool supervisor 1952), Viola Robinson (wading pool supervisor 1952), Richard Eubanks (sports director 1952), Mary Blakey (arts & crafts 1952), Kate Christian (Washington Park supervisor 1949), Andrew Arnold (sports director 1949), and Fredina Payne (Director at Washington park).

“From Porch Swings to Patios: An Oral History of Charlottesville’s Neighborhoods 1914 to 1984”

documents residents’ reflections of their time growing up in Charlottesville’s neighborhoods and their memories of Booker T. Washington Park. Ella Baylor, who grew up in “Kelleytown” and was “sharply aware of the needs of the Black community,” recalls: “Important to the community is Washington Park. Mr. McIntire gave the park to the Black people” (*From Porch Swings to Patios*, 44).



Thomas Ferguson Inge, Sr.

Image 5: Photo of Thomas Ferguson Inge, Sr. (From Porch Swings to Patios, p48)

Thomas Ferguson Inge, Sr. received the Inge grocery store on 4th St NW & West Main Street in Vinegar Hill from his father. He recalls growing up with Booker T. Washington coming to visit and staying with his family above the store due to “the absence of public boarding accommodations in Charlottesville” for Black people. Mr. Inge reflects on McIntire’s park donation: “he bought the old city dump which was to be improved for the Black people to use. He and my father decided it would be called Booker T. Washington Park, but the city ended up naming it after George Washington. Maybe that was because of George Washington Carver, I don’t know. That’s unwritten history” (*From Porch Swings to Patios*, 48–49).

A 1927 Daily Progress article declared: “the old ground [...] will be called Washington Park.” The “City as a Park” account references an informal City record that claimed the park to be named after Booker T. Washington and cited the name being in use by 1930 (The City As a Park, 98).

Karen Waters-Wicks recalls that “Virginia Daugherty questioned whether it should be named for Booker T. Washington in the late ‘80s, early ‘90s,” and it was officially renamed in 2001 at the African-American Cultural Arts Festival (Waters-Wicks; Stowekeller). The City record from August 20, 2001 reads: “Be it resolved by the Council of the City of Charlottesville that the City park known as ‘Washington Park’ on Preston Avenue is hereby formally renamed ‘Booker T. Washington Park’ in honor of the renowned African-American educator, philosopher, and social scientist.”

Image 6: Quote from Linwood Chisolm (The Daily Progress, 1998)

Booker T. Washington Park has experienced various phases of park improvement, due in large part to Charlottesville’s African-American community that lived nearby and advocated for necessary improvement to the park, especially during the years of segregation and the years beyond. In a 1998 Daily Progress article, Linwood “Chuck” Chisolm, a Charlottesville native states, “Everything that we had to do in the Black community, we did at Washington Park” (Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society).

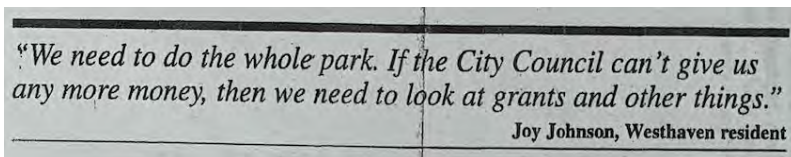
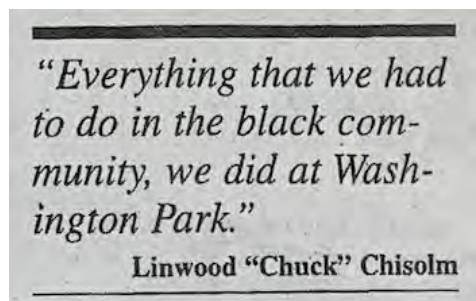


Image 7: Quote from Joy Johnson (The Daily Progress, 1997)

In a 1997 Daily Progress article, community advocate and resident Joy

Johnson was quoted advocating for necessary renovation and investment in Booker T. Washington Park, “We need to do the whole park. If the City Council can’t give us any more money, then we need to look at grants and other things” (Daily Progress, 1997, Albemarle-Charlottesville Historical Society).

At two different phases, in 1968 and 1998 pool construction marked two key milestones for Booker T. Washington Park. During these renovations, poisonous remnants from the old dump site resurfaced (Stowekeller). In 1999, Partners for Washington Park group set out to highlight the history of Booker T. Washington Park and raise funds for additional improvements (Albemarle-Charlottesville Historical Society). In an interview, Karen Waters-Wicks reflected on the importance of the pool’s development for the community and how the pool usage has begun to shift from a recreational amenity for the Black community to a swim team that is increasingly attracting white people’s attendance (Waters-Wicks, 2021).

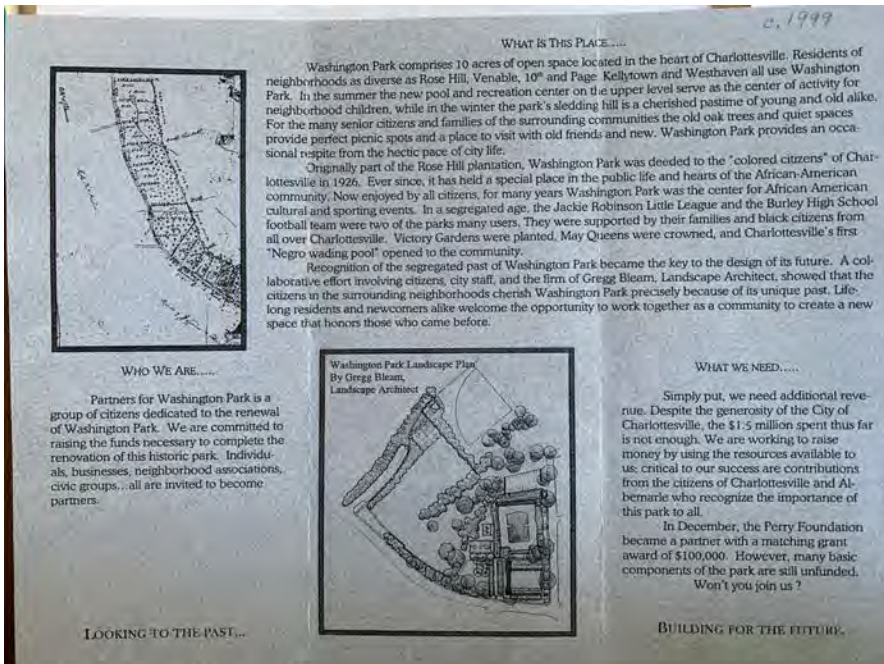


Image 8: *Partners for Washington Park Brochure, Albemarle-Charlottesville Historical Society, 1999*)

Booker T. Washington Park's history informs our understanding of past injustices that continue to impact present-day inequities for the Black community in Charlottesville. As we acknowledge the history of injustice on the land and honor the African-Americans who made Booker T. Washington Park what it is today, we continue the work to build racial equity across the Charlottesville community.

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Would you like to see an
Urban Agriculture Collective
farm at
Booker T. Washington Park?



We want to hear from you!
use this QR code to complete a survey about a potential urban farm at Washington Park



Urban Agriculture Collective Farming in Charlottesville

Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC) began as a resident-led community farm behind the Friendship Court apartments. UAC is now one of the programs of Cultivate Charlottesville, along with City Schoolyard Garden and Food Justice Network.

Since 2007, UAC Farm has grown and shared up to 17,000 pounds of fresh organic produce annually. UAC has:

- Hosted weekly Market Days with over 300 families
- Launched new plots at 6th St., South 1st St., and on West St.
- Shared fresh foods from fruit tree and berry orchards to fresh spring greens and fall sweet potatoes

Residents supported the farm in different ways by:

- Sharing labor in the fields
- Leading Community Market Days.
- Delivering produce door-to-door to homebound neighbors
- Offering guidance as board members and community advisors

In recent years, UAC began losing access to multiple farm plots, to housing necessary redevelopment. Without long-term access to urban land, thousands of pounds of food will be lost and hundreds of families affected.



The Power to Grow

Looking Back to Grow Forward

Charlottesville's Booker T. Washington Park has a legacy as a thriving hub of the African-American community.

For decades, Black Charlottesville residents played a key role in transforming the land from a history of injustice to a history of reclamation.

In 1944, for example, the park hosted a Victory Garden Exhibit showcasing over 200 displays of flowers, vegetables, fruits, and canned goods created by Black gardeners and farmers.

Want to get involved?

Let's come together to build an urban farm, bring back land lost, and move food justice forward!

We want to hear from you!

- Complete the survey through the QR code or at www.cultivatecharlottesville.org.
- Access UAC produce at a Market Day beginning in June with days, times, and locations here: <https://cultivatecharlottesville.org/urban-agriculture-collective/>
- Participate in planning through paid community circles. Sign up with Quentia

quentia@cultivatecharlottesville.org



Photo Courtesy of City of Charlottesville Parks Division from the Collection of Nan Crow

Looking Back to Grow Forward

Charlottesville's Booker T. Washington Park has a legacy as a thriving hub of the African American community. For decades, Black Charlottesville residents played a key role in transforming the land from a history of injustice to a history of reclamation. Let's come together to build an urban farm, bring back land lost, and move food justice forward!



Vision for an Urban Agriculture Collective Farm at Booker T. Washington Park

When asked about potential benefits, residents said they believe a UAC Farm in Booker T. Washington Park, would:



BUILD COMMUNITY & INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS



INCREASE LAND EQUITY



INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY TO FRESH PRODUCE



CULTIVATE FOOD EQUITY



PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING -YOUTH & ADULTS



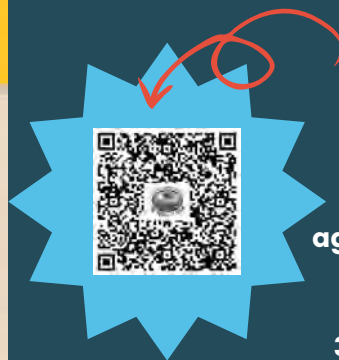
INCREASE GARDENING & CONNECTION TO NATURE



CELEBRATE CULTURE & SELF-DETERMINATION

SIGN THE PETITION

1. Stand in support of an Urban Agriculture Collective farm site at BTW Park.
2. Stand in support of increased urban agriculture land, especially for residents facing food insecurity.
3. Stand in support of including Food Equity Goals in the City Strategic Plan.



The Power to Grow

Resident Survey Results_May-June 2023

344

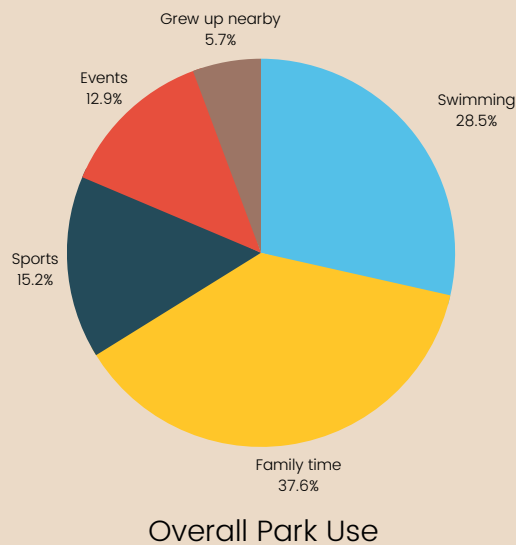
Total Surveys

299

Total Residents

6

Neighborhoods

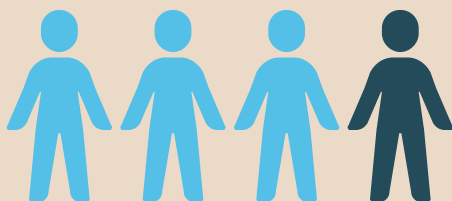


95% OF THOSE SURVEYED WERE FAMILIAR WITH WASHINGTON PARK

Nearly all residents surveyed reported spending time at the park, whether as a child growing up in Charlottesville or with their own children and grandchildren. Booker T. Washington Park continues to be used by many individuals for swimming, festivals, cookouts, sports, and spending time with family.

Food Accessibility In Charlottesville

Do you believe there are fair and reasonably priced fruits and vegetables that everyone in Charlottesville can access?



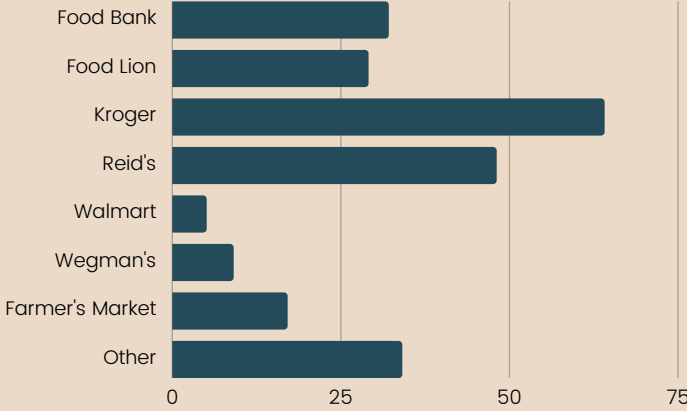
3 in 4 residents do not believe that fresh produce is accessible to everyone in Charlottesville.

74% of residents surveyed said "No, fresh produce is not accessible to everyone in Charlottesville."
26% of residents surveyed said "Yes, fresh produce is accessible to everyone in Charlottesville."

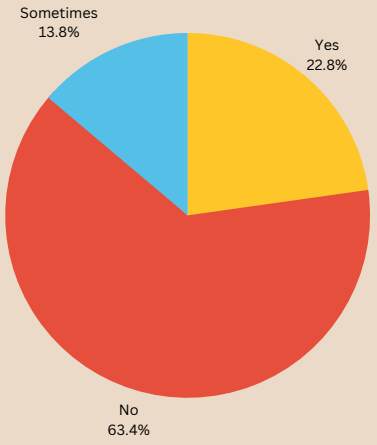
"[AN URBAN FARM AT BOOKER T. WASHINGTON PARK] WOULD GET PEOPLE HEALTHY FOOD AND GET PEOPLE TO COME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY." Rose Hill Resident

Where do you get your fresh produce?

The majority of those surveyed said that they get their produce from Kroger or Reid's. While Reid's is a more central shopping option, it offers a limited selection of fresh produce. Kroger, meanwhile, is 1.5 - 4 miles away from the neighborhoods surveyed.



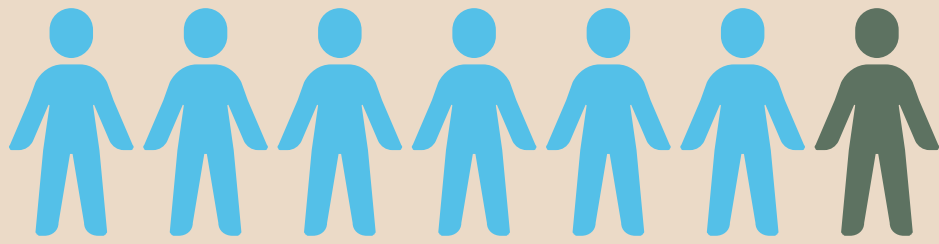
Do you face challenges in getting fresh produce?



Surveyed individuals reported only some challenges in getting fresh produce. 23% of individuals said they have some trouble but the majority (63%) stating that they did not face regular challenges.

20% of those facing challenges in acquiring fresh produce specifically mentioned issues with transportation or the cost of produce.

6 IN 7 OF THOSE SURVEYED SUPPORT THE DISTRIBUTION OF FRESH AND FREE PRODUCE TO THE RESIDENTS OF PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

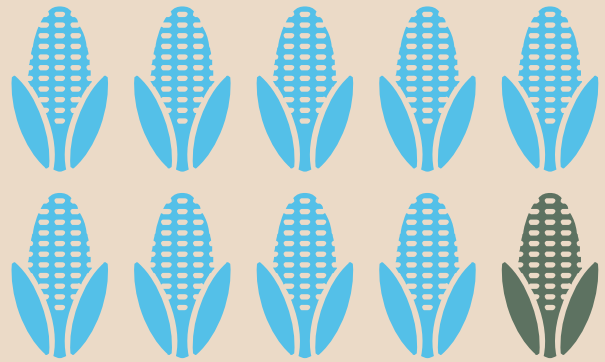


95% answered "Yes" when asked about distributing fresh and free produce to these Charlottesville neighborhoods. Only 4% said that they did not support this distribution..

An Urban Agriculture Collective farm in Booker T. Washington Park

93%

Believe a UAC farm in
Washington Park would
benefit the community.



When asked about potential benefits, residents said that they believed a UAC farm in Washington Park would:



INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY
TO FRESH PRODUCE



TEACH PEOPLE HOW TO
GROW THEIR OWN FOOD



ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY
GATHERING



PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR YOUTH TO LEARN



CREATE A SPACE FOR
VOLUNTEERISM



EMPOWER BLACK AND
BROWN FOLKS

**WHEN ASKED ABOUT CONCERNS
ABOUT PUTTING A UAC FARM
SITE IN WASHINGTON PARK,
93% STATED THAT THEY HAD
NO CONCERNS.**

Of those who did have concerns:

- 6 individuals mentioned vandalism
- 2 expressed concern about loss of park amenities
- 3 were worried about wildlife eating produce
- 5 answered "Yes" with not further explanation.

These results are from accumulated surveys conducted by Cultivate Charlottesville from May 2023 to June 2023.

Survey Methods & Key Findings

PURPOSE

The intention of the "Power to Grow" survey is to determine whether the local community supports the addition of Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC) farm in Booker T. Washington Park. This survey is also intended to demonstrate whether there is a need for an urban farm to create additional food access in order to present a case to Charlottesville City Council.

METHODS

The majority of surveys were conducted door-to-door by Cultivate Charlottesville Community Advocates from May to June 2023. Neighborhoods surveyed include: Rose Hill, 10th & Page, Venable, Westhaven, Friendship Court, and 6th Street. Additional survey data was collected at UAC Market Days, The Jefferson School Juneteenth celebration, and a few online surveys.

KEY FINDINGS

- **The majority of those surveyed believe that fresh produce is not accessible to all Charlottesville residents.**
- **Most residents did not experience challenges in getting fresh produce.**
 - Some residents did mention that quality and quantity of produce could be limited due to prohibitive factors such as limit of federal assistance, high cost, lack of transportation, and limited selection in small markets such as Reid's.
- **The majority of residents support free and fresh produce to residents of public and affordable housing.**
- **The majority of residents believe that an Urban Agriculture Collective farm at Washington Park would benefit their community.**

GLOSSARY

Cultivate Charlottesville is a non-profit in Charlottesville that is committed to building an equitable and sustainable food system. This work is done through programs that provide garden-based and experiential learning, amplify community leaders, and advocate for food justice.

Urban Agriculture Collective (UAC) is a program of Cultivate Charlottesville that focuses its programming on providing produce at no-cost to residents of public and affordable housing. UAC operates three urban farm plots in the city at West Street, 6th Street, and CATEC.

The Power to Grow is part of a multi-organizational effort laid out in the Food Equity Initiative to make sure that residents of housing redevelopments have access to fresh produce.

Community Advocates are a cohort of community leaders that work with Cultivate Charlottesville to strengthen their advocacy skills and ensure that community voice is centered in this work.



Community Vision

WHAT IS YOUR VISION
FOR AN URBAN
AGRICULTURE
COLLECTIVE FARM
AT BOOKER T.
WASHINGTON PARK

Roundtable Overview

102

Participants

Participants included grassroots community members, non profit partners, city department staff, and Food Justice Network staff and partners.

125

Comments

Notes were taken on key points of agreement at each table and recorded on newsprint by staff at each table.

8

Roundtables

Roundtables were encouraged to explore their vision for an urban farm site at Booker T. Washington Park - any concerns or benefits.

Vision for an Urban Agriculture Collective Farm at Booker T. Washington Park

When asked about potential benefits, residents said they believe a UAC Farm in Booker T. Washington Park, would:



BUILD COMMUNITY & INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS



INCREASE LAND EQUITY



INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY TO FRESH PRODUCE



CULTIVATE FOOD EQUITY



PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING -YOUTH & ADULTS

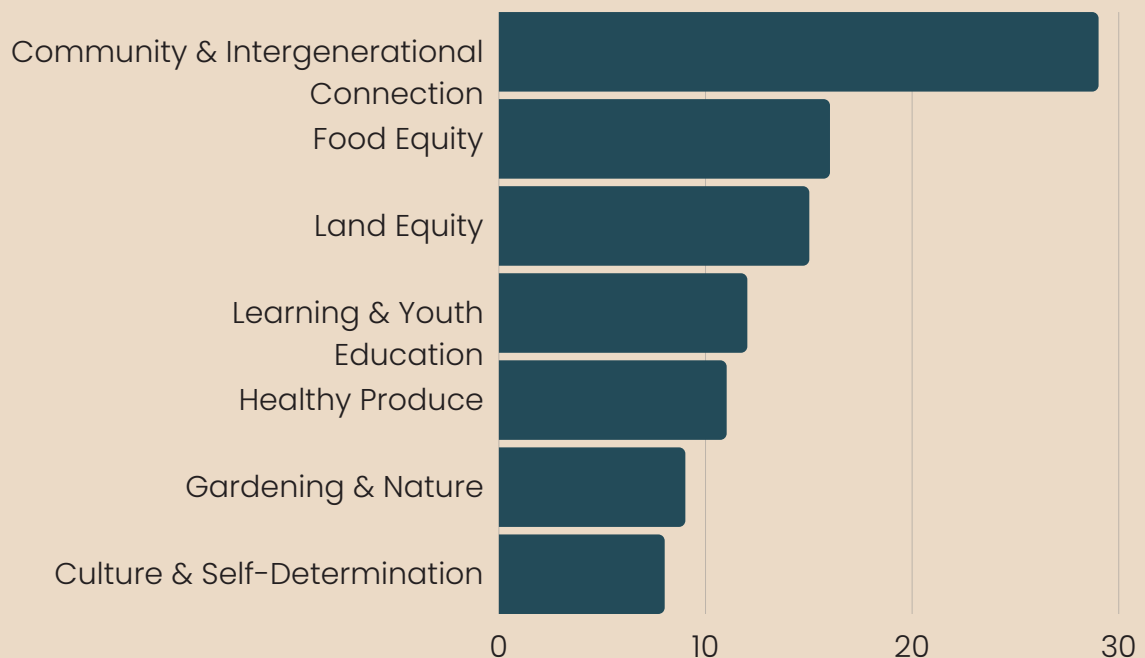


INCREASE GARDENING & CONNECTION TO NATURE



CELEBRATE CULTURE & SELF-DETERMINATION

COMMUNITY VISION FOR AN URBAN AGRICULTURE COLLECTIVE FARM AT BOOKER T. WASHINGTON PARK



Community & Intergenerational Connection

1

Community coming together around the table to build health and be in nature.

2

Chance to build something here and for community members to build on BTW Park legacy.

3

Bring families together across generations and build community unity.

4

The opportunity to teach the benefits of a community coming together for a common good.



Food Equity Systems Change

1

In the Black Community our heritage includes this tradition of food sovereignty.

2

Addressing Barriers to Good Health: transportation to grocery stores, walkability, accessibility.

3

There aren't many grocery stores in the area. A garden would provide access to healthy, fresh produce.

4

Make visible the story of enslaved people's gardening traditions of and knowledge (i.e. hair braiding to carry seeds across Atlantic).



Land Equity & BTW Park History

1

Land-based connection in face of gentrification and development.

2

It could provide a place for community discussions about the history of land loss for Black farmers.

3

I am most inspired by the history and idea of a farm that could tie to the past. Those who helped develop the park- to combine that legacy with today.

4

It would be good to partner with Parks & Rec to use public land for public good, especially for Black and brown neighbors.



Learning & Youth Education

1

The opportunity to teach the youth about nutrition and healthy eating.

2

Regain lost knowledge about correct harvesting, processing of plants.

3

Exposure and education about what growing food looks like.

4

Opportunities to learn how to preserve the surplus.



Increased Access to Healthy Produce

1

Access in the center of the city to fresh food.

2

There aren't many grocery stores in the area. A garden would provide access to healthy, fresh produce.

3

We could have fruit trees and berries and bring back some of the perennials that were at Kindlewood.

4

Jefferson School was where we went to school - they had good food - mashed potatoes and string beans, meat loaf, all made from scratch.



Gardening & Nature Connection

1

My uncle had the most beautiful garden - vegetables, apple, pears, and cherry trees. Everyone would come and he would give something from the garden to each person.

2

If you can work in the same dirt together - the garden can be freedom. Nature can heal.

3

Starting from scratch and building the soil.

4

Building climate resilience by creating a farm at BTW Park.



Culture & Self-Determination

- 1 Intergenerational community – power of providing for oneself, self-determination
- 2 Garden as facilitator of community conversations, organizing, networking and cultural celebrations.
- 3 Self-determination around which crops are planted and shared at no cost community markets.



Survey Highlights

- 1 74% said that fresh produce is not accessible to all Charlottesville residents
- 2 23% of residents did experience challenges in getting fresh produce.
- 3 95% support free and fresh produce to residents of public and affordable housing.
- 4 93% believe that an Urban Agriculture Collective farm at Washington Park would benefit their community.





" [AN URBAN FARM AT BOOKER T. WASHINGTON PARK]
WOULD GET PEOPLE HEALTHY FOOD AND GET PEOPLE
TO COME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY."

Rose Hill Resident