

# Food Forests

Phase 3 Engagement Workshop and Survey Feedback Report  
November - December 2023



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# BACKGROUND

The City of Saskatoon (City) is engaging community on two food forest demonstration sites in Boughton Park and Leif Erickson Park.

The food forest demonstration project is part of the implementation of the [Pathways for an Integrated Green Network](#) and [Pathway to a Sustainable Urban Forest](#), to establish safe and accessible edible landscapes across Saskatoon, enhance our green network, and contribute to the city-wide tree canopy. Several sites were considered using criteria such as land availability, neighbourhood food insecurity and public accessibility. Based on the results, Leif Erickson Park and Boughton Park were selected as the highest priority sites and designs were developed incorporating site-specific design constraints, subject matter expert recommendations, and community feedback.

Building on the introduction of the project within phase 1, where the food forest demonstration sites were discussed with impacted groups to identify site-specific considerations and to determine site-specific community support, followed by phase 2 survey where we asked for feedback on draft site designs with communities and user groups, phase 3 focused on community stewardship and maintenance.

For phase 3, a workshop was conducted with interested groups and residents to evaluate their level of interest in stewarding the food forest and understanding key considerations that go into managing a food forest. The draft food forest demonstration site designs--which were amended based on the feedback received during the two earlier phases of engagement--were shared with the participants at the workshop as well as in the corresponding workshop survey.

This report offers a summary of the feedback heard through the Phase 3 food forest stewardship workshop and survey.

## Phase 3 – Stewardship Workshop and Survey

Administration conducted a workshop on November 6, 2023, from noon till 4:30 p.m. at Station 20 West, for all the community members who had indicated interest in volunteering with the food forest sites during Phase 1 and Phase 2. The workshop was followed by a self-administered online survey from November 8-27, 2023, for those who were unable to attend the workshop.

In response to the early feedback received from Phase 1 and Phase 2, the design of Boughton Park food forest and the Leif Ericsson Park food forest was amended; these draft designs were shared with the participants during the workshop and corresponding survey, as well as updated on the respective Engage Pages for both the parks.

The workshop was focused on discussing the possibilities of community stewardship to support the food forest demonstration sites in both the Boughton Park and the Leif Erickson Park in future and followed the world café style for discussion. Participants who attended the workshop were distributed in 3 groups and during the assigned time for each theme, a round table discussion was facilitated by the City representatives to gather input from the participants.

The topics of the workshop were centered on six themes:

1. Maintenance
2. Planting and Picking
3. Ongoing Success
4. Stewardship
5. Agreement
6. Costs

A survey was also designed to reflect the same six themes and discussion topics presented at the workshop, allowing participants to select their preferred roles of leading or volunteering as a part of the stewardship group in future. They were also able to choose which demonstration site they preferred to lead/volunteer in future and demographic questions. Since it was circulated to all the community members/organizations who had expressed interest in the food forest from phase 1 and 2, it gave an opportunity to community members who were unable to attend the workshop, to provide their feedback as well as to the workshop participants to suggest additional views.

## **Intended Audience**

The purpose of the workshop and survey was to seek input on the stewardship roles with neighbourhood communities/user groups directly connected or impacted by the proposed food forest sites at Boughton Park, in the Holiday Park neighbourhood, and at Leif Erickson Park, in the Westmount neighbourhood.

## **Marketing Techniques**

The workshop and survey were promoted through direct emails to Community Associations, garden collectives and schools, user groups and representatives from the neighbourhoods surrounding each food forest demonstration site. During Phase 1 and 2 engagement, survey respondents were asked whether they would like to potentially volunteer to support the food forests in the future; those who indicated interest were also included in the direct emails.

## **Data Limitations**

The workshop was focused on those groups/organizations/individuals who showed early interest in the food forest initiative. Those invited to participate in the workshop were organizations with food-security mandates, neighborhood Community Associations, and residents who included their email addresses during Phase 1 and 2 engagements when asked if they would like to potentially volunteer in the future. Some residents and organizations with interest in supporting the food forests may not have been included in the invitation to the workshop given the limitations of engagement. While the information gathered from the workshop and the associated survey, may not be considered statistically valid, it provides an indication of the public's perspective about food forest stewardship interests and their willingness to support it.

# SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP AND SURVEY RESULTS

## Demographics

25 participants attended the workshop in person at Station 20 West, while 29 surveys were received. Both the workshop and survey results included participation from neighbourhoods across the city, Community Associations, garden collectives and schools, user groups and representatives from the neighbourhoods surrounding each food forest demonstration site.

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<b>Neighbourhoods</b>	<b>Groups/Associations/Organisations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Westmount</li><li>◦ Holiday Park</li><li>◦ Mount Royal</li><li>◦ Caswell Hill</li><li>◦ Mayfair</li><li>◦ Confederation Park</li><li>◦ King George</li><li>◦ West Industrial</li><li>◦ Haultain</li><li>◦ Sutherland</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Holiday Park Community Association</li><li>◦ Holiday Park Garden</li><li>◦ Westmount Community Association</li><li>◦ SOS Trees Coalition</li><li>◦ Saskatoon Food Bank Garden Patch</li><li>◦ Wild About Saskatoon</li><li>◦ Saskatchewan Environmental Society</li><li>◦ Saskatoon Foodbank and Learning Center</li><li>◦ Meewasin Valley Authority</li><li>◦ Christ Church Anglican</li><li>◦ CHEP Good Food</li><li>◦ Riversdale Community Fridge</li><li>◦ Re-Generation Land Commons</li><li>◦ One School One Farm - WAS</li></ul>

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## Structure

The workshop and survey consisted of 25 questions specific to stewardship with respondents asked to provide their opinion on the questions designed for the six themes:

1. Maintenance
2. Planting and Picking
3. Ongoing Success
4. Stewardship
5. Agreement
6. Costs

Participants were also asked to indicate their interest in taking the lead in the food forest stewardship initiatives or if they preferred to only volunteer in future. Two participants expressed an interest to lead the stewardship initiative, while two were unclear if they wished to lead, and 18 expressed interest to volunteer for the food forest stewardship (e.g. for on-the-ground or event-based volunteering).

## Results

### High-level Takeaways:

- It is clear the community wants this to succeed but are also wary of added responsibilities as volunteers/community members stewarding the food forest.
- Stewardship group should not be restricted to a specific neighborhood or community but be city-wide.
- Roles, responsibilities, and stewardship expectations shall be clearly specified along with a succession plan.
- Stewardship agreements should be in place between the community and City.
- A consistent focus on the need for education and training, either using professional services to educate and train the community or City provides the necessary trainings.
- Emphasis on the use of all available mechanisms to promote education among all age groups, from school kids to seniors. Hiring professionals where required.
- Emphasis on signage and accessibility of information with a focus on clarity of information. Focus on the languages used in the signage.
- Community is quite willing to promote the food forests through community events, newsletters, harvest festivals and other means.
- Create a safe welcoming space for indigenous communities, focus on culture inclusion, promote communication and relationship building with the indigenous community.
- Partner with multiple groups to build a sustainable stewardship process.
- Some participants felt that financial compensation to members of the stewardship group should be considered, while others felt volunteers should not be compensated in this way.
- Focused efforts to manage surplus from the harvest.

A summary of feedback received during the workshop and surveys for each topic of discussion is described below by respective themes and further categorised by relevant subtopics.

### Topic 1: Maintenance

*What maintenance roles are community members interested in taking on to support the food forest sites? How often / to what degree?*

#### MANAGEMENT

<p><b>GENERAL INPUT</b></p>	<p>Some viewed that the stewardship group should have complete responsibility for all the activities that go on at the food forest with support provided by the City in case of lack of capacity.</p> <p>They asked that shaded structures be provided in the seating areas along with adding barbeque areas.</p> <p>Discussions included installing public art and murals, developing a children’s play area that is more natural, and to use Permaculture principles at the food forest. (<i>Permaculture principles focus on agricultural ecosystems intended to be sustainable and self-sufficient, and that do not waste resources.</i>)</p> <p>Education was a common theme that came up in various discussions, where the participants emphasized that visitors and stewardship groups should be educated</p>
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	<p>on the types of species growing in the food forest, along with their water requirements and any other maintenance measure they should be aware of.</p> <p>Fund management was discussed, and participants identified the importance of ensuring stable funds were always available, with options for community groups to apply for community funding opportunities. In addition, groups identified that the definition and purpose of the community group should be clearly defined.</p> <p>Few participants asked for compensation to be considered for the members of the stewardship group, in the form of paid roles.</p> <p>Participants recommended motion activated lighting to enhance safety and security of the food forest sites. (However, adding lighting was not recommended by CPTED).</p> <p>There were some discussions on the potential for wildlife grazing, and a reference to Purple Martin houses / bird houses.</p>
<p><b>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT</b></p>	<p>Participants had several ideas on how they could involve the community and promote the concept of the food forest, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Involving gardening groups. Having an arrangement for swapping plants with other gardening groups.</li> <li>○ Having a group of people from different gardens/communities that meet regularly to discuss different subjects (what works, what doesn't, plant swap, recipes).</li> <li>○ Connect with Community Associations, community garden collectives, adjacent schools, identifying and reaching out to interested groups.</li> <li>○ Volunteering and hosting schools/ classes at the food forest site.</li> <li>○ Coordinating planting bees at the food forest site.</li> <li>○ Conduct planting events with the community and schools to build public awareness, interest, and a better connection to the site.</li> <li>○ Planning and hosting events (e.g., work bees, barbecues, community jam/pickle sessions that are open to public and being present on those days).</li> <li>○ Conduct monthly community association meetings and encourage community participation during specific periods of the year (e.g., Sept-June) to advise and discuss about the food forest.</li> <li>○ Promote information about other food forests that the City has gathered over the concept and development phase of the food forest, with the community groups to enhance awareness.</li> <li>○ Promoting planting or harvesting events on all the social media platforms.</li> <li>○ Set up info sessions, presentations, annual meetings.</li> <li>○ Consider plans to expand the site over a period which would stagger the age of trees and provide more produce.</li> </ul>

**WATERING**

<p><b>IRRIGATION</b></p>	<p>Most participants preferred to monitor the irrigation system and inform the City if any issues arise.</p>
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	<p>Watering schedules with volunteers or contracts were proposed, while some emphasized recording water use to avoid over watering.</p> <p>Participants suggested having an above ground water irrigation system, with provision for storm rainwater collection.</p>
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**WEEDING & MULCHING**

<b>GENERAL INPUT</b>	<p>This subject was further categorized into mulching, weeding and education opportunities. The participants were more focused on having a fixed weeding and monitoring schedule that required weeding to be carried out every 1-3 weeks, or even 2-4 weeks.</p>
<b>MULCHING</b>	<p>Most participants stressed on the quality and quantity of mulch used and believed it should be more often than once in 5 years. Both the survey and workshop responses asserted that a 5-year schedule for mulching is too long and needs to be shortened.</p> <p>Recommendations varied from organizing work bees and spreading mulch when needed, to having a clear monitoring and mulching schedule that's spread over 2-3 years. An additional idea is to have a storage bin for mulch for volunteers to have access, and having the City add more mulch each year.</p> <p>Some expressed concern regarding fire risk due to unmanaged mulch, while few stressed on the need to review and learn from similar past experiences. University of Saskatchewan was a suggested resource for such lessons.</p>
<b>WEEDING</b>	<p>Some participants indicated the need for a clear weeding schedule and were willing to weed once per week.</p> <p>Some held the opinion that the community should determine if there was a weed and if it was noxious.</p> <p>Some concerns were expressed over pesticide control and risks of contamination of mulch, plants that have cultural or medicinal uses but are also considered weeds.</p>
<b>EDUCATION, VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY</b>	<p>Clear signage should be installed, with signs including different languages and their translation. An opportunity for community to help develop and guide the different languages and stories around the plants.</p> <p>The group emphasised accessibility and suggested that the language and visuals used should be easy to follow. They also suggested including the Indigenous names for the plants and their stories.</p> <p>Participants also proposed the use of QR code for people to scan and choose their language to read about the plant/weed on their devices.</p>



	<p>Weeding and mulching should be included into the education cycle for long term maintenance. In addition, some also proposed having easy to follow directions to identify which plants are considered “weeds”. Participants emphasised promoting education to understand and identify the noxious weeds.</p> <p>Participants proposed a long-term educational collaboration on water usage, with the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.</p>
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**PRUNING**

<p><b>GENERAL INPUT</b></p>	<p>The participants were focussed on the risks associated with the pruning, but were also inclined towards promoting education, visibility, and accessibility.</p> <p>Majority of the participants determined that pruning should be carried out by a certified professional with fruit-tree expertise. This was in addition to pruning by the City’s Park department. A fraction preferred that the stewardship group should carry out the pruning.</p> <p>The frequency of the City’s pruning cycle was a concern for respondents who felt 13 years was too long a time.</p> <p>Among other suggestions proposed, some expressed that the stewardship group be given funds to hire a professional to teach the stewardship group and help them with knowledge transfer. Alternately, arborist-trained group members should be allowed to carry out minor pruning, under the supervision of a professional fruit-tree expert. One respondent believed a member who is trained and can present proof of training and experience should be allowed to prune, while another response proposed a yearly training plan for the community, alternated between the two demonstration sites to promote education and quality of work.</p>
<p><b>RISKS IDENTIFIED</b></p>	<p>Participants highlighted the risk of injury, as improper pruning can cause damage to trees (should not exceed 3 years for the trees), while highlighting there are lesser risk with shrubs.</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION, VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY</b></p>	<p>Some participants believed that local experts should be sourced to carry out the pruning or professional training should be provided to the community (for example, Master gardener pruning training).</p> <p>Further emphasis was made on setting clear guidelines on the pruning process, roles and responsibility, nature of species and timing. They also stressed on utilising the available expertise in the community as well as collaborating more with the University and educational institutions to foster community ties.</p> <p>In addition, setting up clear signs in different languages and presenting stories was discussed.</p> <p>Including a QR code for ease of accessibility was proposed.</p>

## WASTE

<p><b>SAFETY AND SECURITY</b></p>	<p>Participants were concerned about litter and hazardous items (e.g. discarded needles, etc). Recommendations included posting information signs and installing a needle collection box near the sites.</p> <p>Safety information was shared with the group regarding who to contact about needle collection and concerns. It was proposed that signages with contact information should be available on site.</p>
<p><b>COMPOSTING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT</b></p>	<p>Much of the discussion was focussed on having a composting system set up at site and even having a third-party contractor or Saskatoon Compost Coaches to manage the composting if the stewardship group lacked capacity. Participants specified that the process, cost and payment, roles and responsibilities and way forward should be clearly defined to ensure transparency and clarity.</p> <p>Some preferred setting up onsite compost bins (rodent proof), and to leave fallen leaves on the ground to act as a natural mulch and provide habitat for insects.</p> <p>Participants asked to consider partnering with schools or surrounding community to promote and facilitate composting. To promote initial onsite composting, consider collecting the compost from other locations/ schools nearby. Discussion also focused on waste segregation for composting as there will be some woody and some soft materials- provide compost space for woody plant materials.</p> <p>Some proposed composting just the perennial/herbaceous plants using the on-site compost (because woody material like branches take a long time to break down) and to consider assigning this as a part of the stewards' role.</p> <p>Participants believed that litter should be picked up as required, especially during the summer months, while some preferred to follow a defined litter removal schedule.</p>
<p><b>PETS</b></p>	<p>Participants were specific that rules and restrictions around pets in the food forest areas should be clearly defined, especially for walking the pets or collection of pet waste.</p> <p>Clear signs regarding pet policies and disposal of pet waste should be displayed at the food forest site.</p>

## Topic 2: Picking and Planting

*What picking and planting roles are community members interested in taking on to support the food forest sites? How often / to what degree?*

## HARVESTING

<p><b>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p>	<p>Participants were very specific about having clearly defined harvesting rights, roles, and responsibilities for the stewardship group.</p>
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	<p>Some were not enthusiastic about having a “free for all” harvesting privilege and believed that there should be clear boundaries around who can harvest, and at which period, managed by the stewardship group and supported by the City.</p> <p>They saw a challenge on relying totally on volunteers or the public to harvest, without having a clear harvesting plan in place.</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION, VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY</b></p>	<p>Participants were specific about having educational signs to help with harvesting and suggested studying the Meewasin signage (an example could be to include recipes on signs).</p> <p>Signs should help people know when the fruits are ripe (chalkboard, bulletin board) and should be clearly marked (signage/advertising) that it is an open space/you can pick it. Provide clear notifications and instructions on what can be picked and harvesting best practices along with harvest timelines.</p> <p>Some proposed adding a full link to a website instead of using QR codes as some community members may not understand how to use QR codes.</p> <p>Create a food forest app to highlight the plants and garden.</p> <p>Provide visual signage using QR codes/website/chalk board/white board/word of mouth etc.</p> <p>Some preferred to report to the City for posting when harvesting opportunities are present (i.e., using the City food forest web-based bulletin board or posting to social media and advertising platforms such as Kijiji, Facebook marketplace, Instagram, twitter etc.). Another option is to post on an on-site physical community bulletin board about current harvesting opportunities.</p>
<p><b>SOCIAL OWNERSHIP</b></p>	<p>Participants were enthusiastic about ideas to promote the food forest. Some suggestions were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To conduct potluck using fruits from the garden,</li> <li>○ Arrange informal programs with Community Association and community gardens,</li> <li>○ Promote harvesting using the community social media groups,</li> <li>○ Incorporate more culture through different community-based activities,</li> <li>○ Conduct cooking classes (e.g. at Station 20),</li> <li>○ Mini-harvesting events/announcements focused on specific fruits such as Saskatoon festival and referred to Blueberry Festival held in St. Walburg.</li> <li>○ Donating to schools or food bins in the neighborhood.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ABUNDANCE</b></p>	<p>Participants would like to see a process established to manage excess harvests, either as a sharing box, or food banks. They also expressed that the City should be notified when there is surplus harvest that has not been collected from the site, so it can be taken for donation.</p> <p>Some suggested that locations should be identified that could be set up as pick up points for excess harvests, while some suggested sending the surplus to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sharing Box – Free for the picking, then give to organizations that need it (foodbank, EGADZ, native circle - ensure it is close to an accessible spot).</li> <li>○ Food Bank/Soup Kitchens: Consider using the services of their volunteers and partnership, commercial kitchen.</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICE</b>	Participants were keen on establishing opportunities for participation, through promoting work with other groups for harvesting and planting (collaborate with University of Saskatchewan Agriculture etc.), or even work with groups like Saskatchewan Polytech to create an App.

### **PLANTING & REPLACEMENTS**

<b>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<p>Participants believed they should alert the city if diseased or dying trees are identified so, they can be removed immediately by the City or a trained professional to avoid risking the spread of disease.</p> <p>Some also preferred to communicate with the City if they felt trees needed to be replaced, if additional planting was needed or recommended and that any additional planting should only be undertaken with the support and funding from the City.</p> <p>On the other hand, some preferred that anyone should be allowed to plant and should meet up at fixed intervals to remove any dead plants.</p>
<b>EDUCATION AND TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<p>Participants were focused on promoting educational and teaching opportunities, through community organizations such as non-profits, churches, schools, and daycares.</p> <p>Educational opportunities to include planting, processing, harvesting, canning, building a women’s business hub such as a large kitchen, processing units, and promoting the food forests at schools as a teaching opportunity. Participants also believed the concept of food forests and harvesting can be promoted at daycare/ school to promote the concept of gardens.</p> <p>In addition, the participants suggested that newcomers to Canada can also be educated on food forests, the permitted fruits to eat, harvesting best practices, and how and when to pick.</p>
<b>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</b>	<p>Most participants stressed on the use of services from a professional arborist and learn the skill of trimming a fruit tree, tree, and shrub sizes as well as maintenance practices.</p> <p>They believed the stewardship group should be educated by means of training on the topic of weeds, types and nature of weeds, weeding process etc. so that the people knew what they are picking.</p>
<b>SEASON AND HARVESTS</b>	Participants advised on closely following the season and monitoring what should be picked and to guide future planting.

	<p>They also queried if all the fruits and pollinator plants growing at the site would be edible. Education might be needed if the site has non-edible plants, especially non-edible 'look alike' plants that could be confused with something edible.</p> <p>Further discussion focused on how we keep the plants edible and if there was a standard list of edible plants.</p>
<b>USE OF TECHNOLOGY</b>	Develop an app to show different stages of the growth of plants as well as information about weeds.

### PICKING

<b>GENERAL INPUT</b>	<p>Participants discussed that the stewardship group could promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Education by 'word of mouth' during harvest.</li> <li>○ SEED Collection at the community level by maintaining a SEED Library.</li> <li>○ Community Events. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Connecting with local groups to conduct programs.</li> <li>○ Fruit wine/cider making.</li> <li>○ Recipe nights.</li> <li>○ Harvest Festival.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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### Topic 3: Ongoing Success

*What roles are community members interested in taking on to support the ongoing success of the food forest sites? How often / to what degree?*

<b>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:</b>	<p>Participants believed that we need to promote a sustained approach to build the process and develop a clear succession plan, so that if anyone leaves, someone steps up to fulfill the roles.</p> <p>Preference was to undertake an annual review process to identify and learn from experiences and review municipal newsletters for food forest experiences across the country.</p> <p>Participants also stressed that the roles and stewardship group of the association should be formal and suggested it to be like that of a Community Association or Community Garden Collective.</p> <p>Partner with community associations to assign a liaison or connect with the community association to tap into their existing volunteer base, funding, promotion, and events.</p> <p>As part of the roles and responsibilities discussion, the participants preferred that a volunteer schedule be set for a specific dates and times and to consider potentially accessing summer students to support the stewardship activities.</p> <p>Recommended that the roles be paid positions and the members of the stewardship group have assigned titles (ex: coordinators such as volunteer</p>
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	<p>coordinator, maintenance coordinator to support larger group). They suggested to review similar models that are used by other organizations.</p>
<b>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b>	<p>Participants believed that the City should plan and set up workshops and training on a set date and set time – advertise for volunteering (example: Weeding Wednesdays).</p> <p>They also expressed that the City should teach planting, and other skills, or source local experts (students or adults) who can share the knowledge. Other suggestions included paying summer students to be a part of the stewardship group, using libraries, and high schools in that area.</p> <p>Participants suggested providing the volunteer hours to students for their School Baccalaureate programs (IB requirements), or university programs for credit hours.</p> <p>They also proposed to connect with organizations that may be interested in food forests such as Prairie Harm Reduction, libraries, etc.</p>
<b>PROMOTION</b>	<p>Participants had several suggestions on how the food forest sites could be promoted to general interest and commitment for the sites.</p> <p>The suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conducting an Annual Harvest Festival.</li> <li>○ Community potlucks to bring people together.</li> <li>○ Strawberry Festival during the month of June, hosting non-food related events in the space.</li> <li>○ Demonstrations of processing food – using a camping stove to show how to make juice, jams, preservatives, pickles etc.</li> <li>○ Active neighborhood promotion through the Community Association.</li> <li>○ Installing artefacts at site – provide ownership (paintings, local art). In beginning, partner with community group to paint benches, install artwork to promote food forests while they are still establishing.</li> <li>○ Foster community ownership before the forests are fully established.</li> <li>○ Running social media groups as well as maintaining social media pages to promote the site.</li> <li>○ Posting success stories/ posts on social media, encouraging the community members to share/repost the stories within the community social media groups.</li> <li>○ Coordinate with the City to develop a communication and marketing strategy using multiple avenues and for signage/messaging.</li> <li>○ Coordinate with City to Design and develop ads/posters/pamphlet/flyers/leaflets for those who are not engaged in social media. The stewardship group would distribute it in schools, churches, libraries, community associations, etc.</li> <li>○ Create a welcoming space for the Indigenous Peoples in the city. Focus on culture inclusion, promote communication and relationship building with the indigenous community (example, a Cree language school could be a stewardship group partner).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reach out to the Indigenous community, Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, already managing a food forest and involve them as a part of the stewardship group partners.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ACCESSIBILITY AND VISIBILITY</b></p>	<p>Accessibility and visibility were a common topic that came up in all the themes.</p> <p>Participants proposed to install:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Educational signage so that people are aware of how to use food forest. For example, about pests or common issues for people to note and report.</li> <li>○ Signs that promote maintenance/volunteer activities (e.g., this is the time that weeding is going on, invite community to join, etc.).</li> <li>○ Signage guiding visitors to help themselves with the harvests.</li> <li>○ A community Bulletin board at site or use other means of creating more visibility such as canvas, posters, baskets with signs or regularly on the City webpage to promote the food forests.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SURPLUS HARVEST MANAGEMENT</b></p>	<p>A concern highlighted by the participants was regarding the surplus foods if left unpicked.</p> <p>They suggested to establish a system in place for the period when no one is harvesting and to collaborate with interested groups such as Food Banks, Community Fridges (in some communities they are in libraries), West Side Community Clinic, CHEP, Friendship Inn, etc. to pick up the surplus.</p> <p>Some suggested to set up baskets of fruits. Transportation of the surplus food from the food forest site to the donations centers was briefly discussed and if the community/stewardship group would be willing to transport it between locations. Alternate options would need to be considered for transportation if the stewardship group lacked resources.</p> <p>Promote in community hubs through advertisements.</p>
<p><b>REPORTING CONCERNS</b></p>	<p>Participants wanted a clearly defined process for reporting concerns and situations. They also preferred to have predefined report templates that is user friendly, to communicate any information about the food forest to the City. They also were willing to regularly monitor the site and communicate any issues to the City.</p> <p>Participants were interested in having regular meetings with the City, to discuss issues, challenges, lessons learnt, success stories, etc.</p> <p>In addition, the participants stressed two-way communication between the City and the stewardship group. One idea was to provide a direct email access to stewardship group for efficient communication.</p> <p>Community monitoring by conducting regular site walks to check on the plants, monitor for early detection of any blights/disease. Some participants viewed that the stewardship group should access and monitor the food forest weekly.</p>



## Topic 4: Stewardship Group

*Who should be allowed to participate as part of a food forest stewardship group? How should the stewardship group be selected if more than one group is interested in maintaining a food forest site? Should the stewardship group be affiliated with the Community Association, community garden, and/or another community organization?*

<p><b>GROUP COMPOSITION/ AFFILIATION</b></p>	<p>Most participants preferred that the stewardship group should allow representatives from education institutions, organisations/ non-profits, and any resident of Saskatoon to participate.</p> <p>They also preferred an open group that was not restricted to a particular community or neighbourhood and should be city wide.</p> <p>Most participants expressed that there was a need to understand the number of stewardship groups that would be involved, whether single or multiple. If multiple groups were interested in maintaining the food forest, then the general opinion was that all interested groups should form a partnership so that there was just one stewardship group per food forest site. Some even suggested that tasks be clearly segregated and assigned within such a stewardship group to sustain the group for a longer period.</p> <p>Participants also suggested to evaluate the interested parties, such as non-profit groups, schools, community associations, community gardens, nursing homes, university and schools, master gardeners etc. and to empower the stewardship group to recruit more interested individuals to the group.</p> <p>Several participants wanted to understand who will initiate formation of the stewardship group, who would step up to take up the role, and if the stewardship group responsibility should be assigned to the community association. But since the community associations already have their defined roles and stretched to capacity, it was suggested that the stewardship group coordinate with the community associations and community gardens to benefit from their knowledge resource, and actively maintain communication links with them.</p>
<p><b>BOARD FORMATION</b></p>	<p>Participants asked to consider establishment of a food forest stewardship board (with representatives from organizations, the City, and volunteer from each site) with clear mandate and decision-making powers.</p> <p>They also proposed that a larger board could coordinate across sites more efficiently, roles could be delegated to volunteers, and resources could be pooled.</p> <p>Another option that the participants asked to consider was if the stewardship group should be part of the portfolio of an already established community group such as CHEP or the Food Bank.</p> <p>Participants expressed that if an official board is set up, then a representative from the City should be at the board and were interested to know if businesses want to be involved (either on the board or on the ground as volunteers).</p>

	Few reasserted that time commitments should be clear and asked to consider the possibility of compensation for the board members.
<b>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<p>Clearly defined and outlined roles and responsibilities for the stewardship groups, including the volunteers.</p> <p>Participants generally felt that a core group of volunteers (10 core volunteers) dedicating 5 hours per month should be sufficient and recruit more volunteers to carry out specific tasks as a part of the different stewardship activities.</p> <p>They also understood that the nature of activities would vary over the years as the food forest sites become more mature, hence the number of hours would also vary according to the number of volunteers available and kind of activities planned, (e.g. planting, weeding, watering if needed, communications with the wider community, organizing harvest festivals, promoting education, art projects and installations, etc.).</p>
<b>GENERAL INPUT</b>	<p>Review the needs and structure of a compensation model for such a group. The participants discussed the pros and cons of having paid positions, the cons mainly being that it does not build an ongoing community.</p> <p>Other discussions centred on education and capacity building, use of artefacts and murals to educate, sourcing CHEP interns to train, learning from past projects, identifying ways to enhance participation and promote ownership, building community initiatives engaging children, youth, and seniors (e.g. Little Green Thumbs, BBQ's, harvest days etc.).</p>

## Topic 5: Agreement

*Do you have any ideas on what should happen if the agreement isn't fulfilled or if the stewardship group no longer has capacity to continue maintenance? What type of agreement term is appropriate for a stewardship group? Should the stewardship group be required to provide proof of comprehensive general liability insurance?*

<b>GENERAL INPUT</b>	<p>Roles and responsibilities of City vs community was discussed. There was a preference to connect with an organization and/or multiple partners, and to look at existing gardens as an example/model (CHEP).</p> <p>Some also preferred to define the agreement by expertise and interest and maintain diversity in the agreement based on expertise (e.g. harvest, volunteer engagement, plant monitoring, promotions) .</p> <p>Participants suggested that there should be an annual review of the agreement with a possibility of extension. The agreement should specify the roles and responsibilities clearly, succession plans, out-clause, mediations/conflict process, alignment with community associations, allow flexibility, and aid knowledge transfer. Develop a mutual agreement on "core activities" for both the City and community. Other suggestions were to have a maintenance agreement and to establish a team.</p>
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<p><b>NON-FULFILLMENT OF AGREEMENT</b></p>	<p>In a scenario where the terms and conditions of the agreement are not being fulfilled or the stewardship groups is lacking resources, some participants preferred the stewardship groups to coordinate with community members to seek new volunteers or reach out to schools, religious groups and other local groups including business groups to take over, while some preferred that the parks department from the City should step in as a temporary measure until a new stewardship group can be formed.</p> <p>Some preferred that the City should take over in such a scenario and should assume basic maintenance of the area.</p>
<p><b>TERM, COST, AND INSURANCE</b></p>	<p>Some participants preferred the agreement should be renewed yearly while some preferred a fixed term of a certain number of years such as 2-3 years.</p> <p>Most participants were not in favor of the stewardship group providing a proof of comprehensive general liability insurance and considered this a barrier. A small minority preferred that it should be required.</p> <p>Since the roles of the stewardship group are voluntary, the participants believed that requiring payment for insurance could create a financial strain on the members. This might also reduce the number of interested participants from joining the stewardship group and discourage volunteers from participating.</p> <p>Some preferred that the City should provide general liability insurance or cover the cost of the same.</p>

**Topic 6: Costs and Materials**

*What tools/equipment would a stewardship group require to support maintenance? Do you think the stewardship group should be compensated financially? If yes, how should funding be provided?*

<p><b>TOOLS/EQUIPMENT</b></p>	<p>Basic tools and equipment were identified as potentially needed, such as: rakes, shovels, trowels, clipper, wheelbarrow, watering cans, buckets, pitch forks, hoses, hand held sprayers, leaf rakes, landscaping rakes, spades, pruning shears, rakes gloves, tiller, general gloves, compost bins, pruning equipment, ladders, edge trimmer, buckets, bags, tools for weeding/maintenance including storage, tool shed, etc.</p> <p>Use of professional arborist to manage pruning.</p> <p>Use City funds to educate the community, volunteers, hire professionals to transfer skills to the community. Could use master gardeners who need professional hours to support the group.</p> <p>Develop a clear succession plan.</p>
<p><b>COMPENSATION</b></p>	<p>Most participants preferred that a fund management be set up annually as a part of the stewardship agreement that will take care of setting up signage, bags/boxes for storage and transportation of surplus, tools and equipment,</p>

	<p>compost/mulch, legal advice, access to professional services, planting in future, honorariums, sink funds, reserve funds for potential vandalism, weather events, etc.</p> <p>Few preferred funding to be provided as and how it was needed, while few did not see the need to have such a funding, and some asked to allow donations and sponsorship through local businesses.</p> <p>The participants did emphasize the need for clear guidelines for the access, use and availability of the funds.</p> <p>Few participants viewed that financial support should be provided in the form of paid positions to get groups established, or to have one paid coordinator position, while few also believed that such positions should be hired by the stewardship group vs. City position. However, several believed that if it's a paid position then it should be for summer students, and funds/grants instead be used for educational/training/tree replacement purposes.</p>
<p><b>ESTIMATED COSTS TO THE STEWARDSHIP GROUP</b></p>	<p>No specific figure was established towards an estimated cost of managing the stewardship activities, as the participants believed it would vary depending on the activity. Prices ranged from none to \$5,000.</p> <p>Participants did view that annual costs may go towards tools and equipment, hiring professionals such as an arborist, or to manage a disease outbreak, security of the equipment, sourcing rentals and supplies for events, advertising, and marketing etc.</p>

## Other

*Is there anything else you think the City should consider further that will help to make the Food Forest stewardship successful?*

Some topics were mentioned by the participants as a part of the various themes at the workshop survey but were not discussed in detail:

- Provide space to plant herbs, crops, and nuts (acorns and hazelnuts).
- Plant trees and shrubs of a decent size of each variety so that people can see success right away.
- Provide a mechanism to allow for donations to go towards future plantings.
- Foster community ownership.
- Carry out campaigns to gather volunteers. Allow volunteers to plant.
- Food forest should be a comfortable place to visit and enjoy. To make it a part of the community that people would want to spend time in. Provide for landscaping, pathways, benches, or seating, etc.
- Revive the Saskatoon Food Forest Initiative Facebook groups that has 500+ members and convert this to a stewardship group. Assign moderators to the page. (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1896664180568590>)
- Food Forest should be completely managed by the City if the community is not interested to help. The food forest should not be in a location where the community is unwilling to commit, or the site should be moved.
- Bylaw for pesticide use.

- Make language more inclusive (QR Codes) and include languages such as Cree or Arabic on signs.
- Make the food forest site more accessible for wheelchairs.
- Consider community drop off spots.
- Harvest rights need to be clear.

## NEXT STEPS

The Food Forest project team will incorporate the lessons learned through the engagement process to:

- finalize the food forest pilot designs (including irrigation system, fruit tree plantings, naturalization and park upgrades);
- establish education, communications, and signage.
- inform a proposed stewardship approach(es).