

Resources and Community Gardens - Completing the Loop

A closer look at community gardens in King County

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Background

- Community gardens provide environmental and social benefits for municipalities
- Cities have an opportunity to encourage the success of community gardens which would benefit individuals and the community at large
- Right now, community gardens in King County are largely undocumented and misunderstood

Objective/Questions



Internship and Methods

- I partnered with King County Wastewater Treatment Division (KC WTD) in their Resource Recovery section to answer questions about community gardens
- The project had 2 phases:
 - Create a GIS map of all the community gardens in King County (Figure 1)
 - Interview community garden coordinators about governance structure, access to resources, and interest in biosolids



Figure 1: GIS map of all the gardens shown as green dots, within the King County service district, which is denoted in red.

Findings

- 3 factors affect community garden success
1. Governance structure
 2. Resource allocation
 3. Garden intention
- There are 6 dominant governance structures of gardens in King County: School, Non-Profit, Community, City, Church & P-Patch
 - Certain governance structures, like city gardens, didn't have the same resources as others because of lack of time and staff bandwidth to apply to grants or fundraise
 - Intention of gardens can increase community involvement and gardener retention



Figure 2: A community garden located in North Seattle

Significance

- Municipalities can support their community gardens by providing resources like compost, and educational opportunities
- Increasing community gardens in a community, increases social and environmental benefits

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my incredible supervisor and mentor Erika Kinno, my Biosolids team Ashley and Cat and my faculty advisor Sally Brown (also all the wonderful people I got to talk to about growing food!)