



Garden for Growth Program

Frequently Asked Question

Who “qualifies” for the Garden for Growth Program?

- Any individual or nonprofit organization may lease a land bank property for the purpose of creating an agricultural space. The entity entering into the lease must be a legal entity – so informal block clubs do not qualify. If a block club is interested in entering into a gardening lease it will have to choose one member to enter into the lease with the Land Bank.

What type of garden is permissible?

- Any types of gardening or agricultural activities qualify as long as they are not illegal and do not violate local zoning codes. This includes but is not limited to vegetable gardens, flower gardens, native plant gardens, educational gardens, etc.

What is the cost to lease a property?

- The cost of the program will be \$25 for a one-year lease term or \$75 for a three-year lease term. If you are interested in leasing multiple adjoining lots each one will cost \$25. This is true regardless of the size of the lot (although the Land Bank reserves the right to determine which lots qualify for the program).

How can I find a property to garden in my neighborhood?

- The entire Michigan Land Bank inventory of property is located at <http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/mlbfta/>. By utilizing the attribute search at the bottom of the page you can narrow down your search to a specific city or even down to a street where addresses are available. Once you locate a property you are able to map the property by clicking on “Map It”. This allows you to view a satellite image of the area surrounding the property you mapped. You will also see other available Michigan Land Bank properties outlined in blue making it easy to locate any of our properties in your area of interest.

What are the special considerations for future property?

- If the leasee has already leased the property for a year and would like to purchase the land *for a similar use* then s/he will receive \$25 off the purchase price.

Can I purchase the property rather than lease it?

- Land Bank has chosen to lease its properties through the urban gardening program rather than sell the lots because:
 - The community garden may exist for only a few consecutive years
 - If the property is sold then the owner will have to pay taxes on the land. This can be difficult for community groups to coordinate and will often result in the property being foreclosed.

If an individual would like to purchase the property and is not the adjacent owner to the property, s/he can still do so through our residential lot application.

If the lot is adjacent to an occupied home, the lot will be offered to the adjacent homeowner first.

If the adjacent homeowner is applying for the urban gardening lease, the Michigan Land Bank would prefer the applicant to purchase the property through our side lot program which offers the property for \$100.

May the customer build a fence on the property?

- Not a permanent fence, but temporary fences are ok. Be sure, however, to check with the local zoning codes before doing so. Most municipalities will require a fence permit even for a temporary fence.