

Garden-keeping in the city:

Incentives & opportunities for greenspace transformation in Winnipeg's inner city

by Brody Osadick

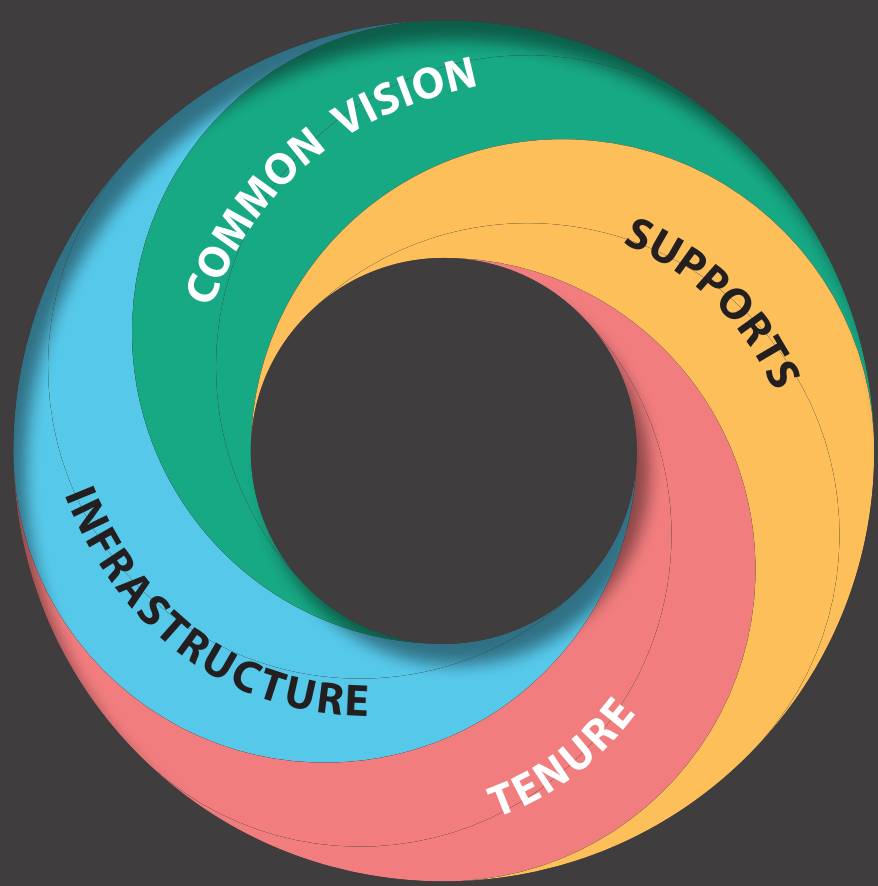
Research Questions

1. What barriers do resident groups encounter to keep gardens active in park areas?
2. What role do the City of Winnipeg and resident groups have to keep gardens active in park areas?
3. What park and vacant sites in Winnipeg's inner city neighborhoods are suitable to sustain garden use?
4. How might the City's role in garden-keeping differ between parkland and vacant land?

Research Methods

- a. Conversations with public and nonprofit sector greenspace coordinators in Winnipeg.
- b. Greenspace suitability analysis of Winnipeg's inner city neighborhoods.

Garden-Keeping Criteria

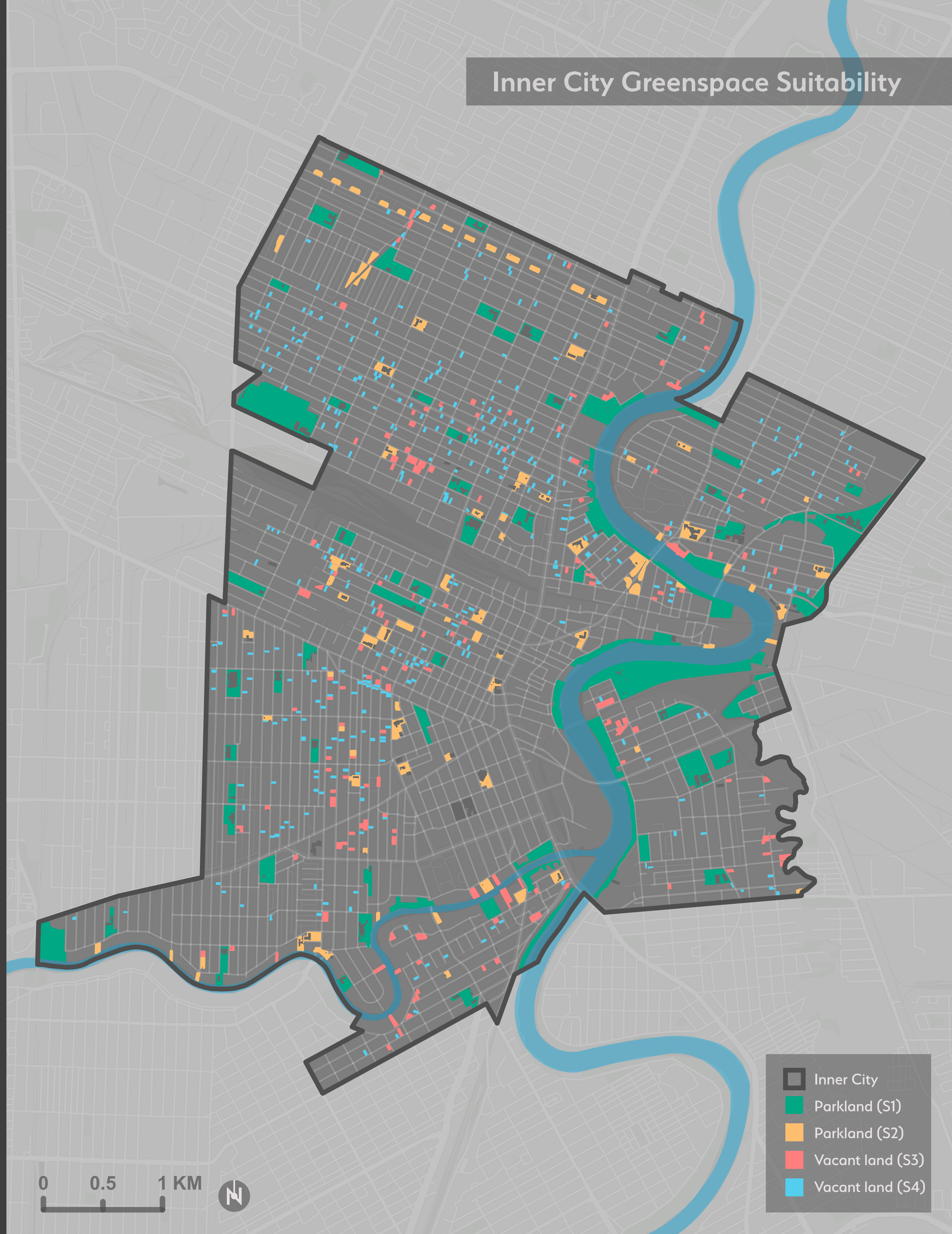


Garden-Keeping Incentives

	Parkland	Vacant Land
VISION	Amend OurWinnipeg, Complete Communities, and Zoning By-law to (1) ensure each neighborhood has land protected for community garden use, (2) allow for adequate garden structures and systems, and (3) permit the sale of goods produced on parkland and vacant land.	
INFRASTRUCTURE	Identify park and vacant land for community garden use. All potential greenspaces shall be available and accessible online to residents and resident groups. Resident groups and associations responsible for community engagement efforts prior to receiving technical support in site planning, design, and management from the City of Winnipeg.	
TENURE	10-year ground lease with an opt-out clause for both experienced resident groups and City of Winnipeg. Opt-out includes a fixed clean-up cost, or relocation to grounds of similar or greater quality.	Property tax reduction/exemption subject to property owners who lease vacant land to resident groups for community garden use. Reduced rate dependent on length of lease.
WATER SUPPORT	Water incentives should be based on the size of the garden operation. For small operations, the City should supply water jugs and perhaps water source for isolated locations. For medium-large operations, the City should invest into connecting to water main pipes near the garden.	Similarly, for small operations, the City should provide stipend to resident associations whom rely on adjacent property owners to fill water jugs. For medium-large operations, City should provide deliver/refill water jugs periodically or invest into connecting to water main pipes near the garden.
SOIL SUPPORT	For every 100 square feet of garden space, the City of Winnipeg will deliver -20 yards of compost materials periodically, including woodchips and food waste. Bonus material available for groups who donate food/plants, provide educational programming, or provide any other service that the City deems as beneficial to the community.	For every 50 square feet of garden space, the City of Winnipeg will deliver -20 yards of compost materials periodically, including woodchips and food waste. Bonus material available for groups who donate food/plants, provide educational programming, or provide any other service that the City deems as beneficial to the community.

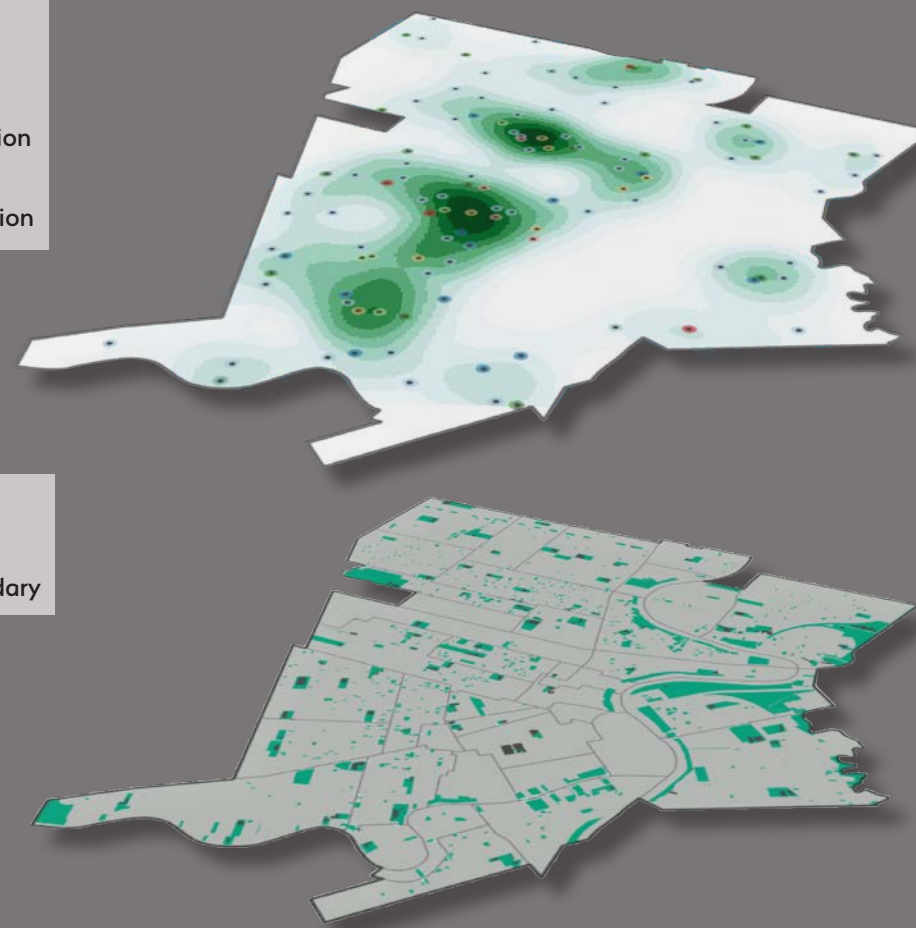


Inner City Greenspace Suitability



Inner City Social / Green Infrastructure Density

- School
- Senior Centre
- Resident Association
- Recreation Centre
- Newcomer Organization
- Health Centre
- Indigenous Organization



Source: City of Winnipeg Open Data

Greenspace:Population Ratio

- ≤ 3 m² per capita
- ≤ 10 m² per capita
- ≤ 30 m² per capita
- ≤ 50 m² per capita
- ≤ 225 m² per capita
- Inner City
- Outer City



Source: City of Winnipeg Open Data

Executive Summary

The traditional act of growing food and plants as a group of people is often considered a temporary land use by academia and planning professionals in Canada. Slowly, but surely, practitioners, planning scholars and politicians around the world are beginning to contemplate the possibility of permanent land allocation for urban agriculture and community gardens. This study outlines actions City government and resident groups can take to integrate community growing into long-term greenspace strategies to address the shortage of greenspace in many dense urban areas.

Interviews in this study with greenspace coordinators help frame the challenges of recruiting and retaining residents to keep community gardens active. These challenges include establishing a common vision for growing, finding the available space and people, securing the land over time, and building the capacity to operate and support the garden site continually. This study uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to conduct a park and vacant land suitability analysis to determine how and where the four garden-keeping challenges might be applied in the context of Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods.

The suitability analysis illustrates how park areas tend to increase in size and overall availability as distance to the Downtown core increases, leaving some areas in the inner city underserved with greenspace. More vacant land seems to be located in these areas already short of greenspace, which create larger patches of conditionally suitable space for community gardening. Incentives to keep gardens active in these areas might involve informal year-to-year arrangements, or formal agreements involving funding, site selection, land tenure, or operational support.