

## **Start planning your 2009 community garden NOW**

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by Jaime Zaplatosch, [Chicago Gardening Examiner](#)

It's October. Today is a crisp one at that. Why would you be thinking about NEXT year's gardening season? Well, if you are interested in starting a new community garden in a Chicago Park District Park near you, it IS time to do some planning.

The "Community Gardens in the Parks" is a new one that allows Chicagoans to grow vegetables or ornamentals in public spaces - our parks. Many of our urban dwellers live in apartments or condos with little or no available green space (or sunlight) to let them exercise their green thumb. The Park District, though, has thousands of acres of space to share with its residents. What a great match.

There are several parks that already have existing community gardens, and MANY more that would welcome new ones! To find out if there is a Community Garden in the Park near you, check out the [Chicago Park District's website](#). If you don't see a garden in your park, you can start one. All you have to do is register with the Chicago Park district. In exchange for having a registered community garden, the Chicago Park District offers interested gardeners guidance, suggestions, training, garden supplies and free plants, seeds and bulbs. What a deal! And next year you can apply for a funding grant for your garden from the Parkways Foundation.