

Novato Community Garden Project

Building A Healthy Community From the Ground Up!

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Novato discusses land for community garden

NOVATO, CA--The Novato Community Garden Project has had preliminary discussions with City of Novato staff regarding leasing city property to build the first of a network of community gardens.

The site for lease is off of Novato Boulevard, west of the city's Dogbone Meadow Park. As part of the agreement, Novato Community Garden Project (NCGP) will pay for all costs to develop the site, including full reimbursement to the city for any administrative and services fees. NCGP hopes to sign a Memorandum of Understanding in September to begin the process.

"We are very pleased with the cooperation and support of the city," said Veronica Valero, Chair, NCGP. "Due to recent budget cuts and a budget deficit, we fully understand that the city will not be able to provide financial support to the project. However, by providing the lease, Novato is showing its strong support of the garden project and all the benefits that it will bring to the community."

City council members have voiced their excitement about the garden, and the structure of the agreement.

Novato Mayor Pat Eklund said, "I am excited about having a Community Garden in Novato and hope that our community members will help make this happen. This is a wonderful partnership between the city and the community to have a garden area, especially for those residents who cannot grow their own vegetables, flowers and plants."

City Councilmember Jeanne MacLeamy said, "Due in great measure to strong leadership, dedicated volunteers, enthusiastic City staff and Council, and thorough planning, I anticipate that the Community Garden project will be an exceptional model of public-private collaboration that will be fully self-sufficient from planting to harvest."

Valero says that NCGP will raise necessary funds through a mix of fundraising efforts. It is currently working with The North Bay Shakespeare Company to raise funds by promoting a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on September 14, at 6:00 p.m. at the Hamilton Field Amphitheater Park on 601 Hamilton Parkway.

NCGP estimates that the costs to open the garden will range between \$50,000 to \$60,000. After signing a Memorandum of Understanding, it will continue its efforts to generate funds to build the garden, design the site plan, and acquire insurance in order to sign a lease agreement.

About the Novato Community Garden Project

The mission of the Novato Community Garden Project is to build and support a network of community gardens that enable people from diverse backgrounds to grow food and foster community in a sustainable manner. The Community Garden Project is a sponsored project of MarinLink, a California nonprofit corporation, exempt from federal tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended.

For more information on the garden project, and the North Bay Shakespeare company event, contact the Novato Community Garden Project at 415-897-2302 or visit:

www.NovatoLiveWell.org/communitygarden.

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