

FARM/GARDEN SITE EVALUATION AND RECORD KEEPING LIST

This is a list meant to help you evaluate the suitability of an urban site for your needs and document information relevant to the operation of your site. Please refer to the [digital version of this checklist](#) to access potentially useful resources.

Feel free to disregard items that may not align with your activities or goals.

There are many people in the TC metro who have successfully worked through these items.

Please don't hesitate to reach out for assistance finding information or strategizing about how to approach challenges! (kara@rtcinfo.org)

LAND SEEKER NAME:	ORGANIZATION/BUSINESS NAME:
LANDHOLDER:	SITE ADDRESS:
Land Tenure and Site Stewardship	Notes
Own, lease, or borrow; individually or collaboratively (If leasing or borrowing, for how long is the lease/land use agreement?)	
Title and/or deed (Are there any covenants, liens, easements, rights-of-way associated with the lot?)	
Land costs (What will the financing or rent costs look like?)	
Tax costs (How much will the real estate taxes cost?)	
Stewardship/maintenance (Who will be responsible for site stewardship/maintenance throughout the year and what will associated costs look like? If leasing, work out an agreement with the landholder.)	
Insurance costs (How will you access the required insurance and how much will it cost?)	

Other	
Location	Notes
Site access (How close is the site to transit, bike lanes, sidewalks, parking? Will existing infrastructure allow for tool/product transport, etc.?)	
Site accessibility (Does the site provide--or potential to provide--infrastructure/space to accommodate grower and equipment needs, visitors?)	
Surrounding land use (What are the surrounding land uses? Are there any that may impact your site? How might your activities impact surrounding sites?)	
Neighborhood & neighbors (Who are the site neighbors? Do they seem open to your planned activities?)	
Community and neighborhood institutions (What libraries, schools, churches, stores, district councils, community gardens, etc. are nearby that could support or partner with you?)	
Zoning (What zoning district is the site in? Are the activities you aim to do [farming/gardening, selling products, composting, etc.] allowed in the zoning district?)	
Standards/Permits (In your zoning district, what standards do you need to follow for your planned activities? What permits are needed?)	
Services/Utilities (Do you have reliable access to the services you need on site [e.g., cell phone reception, internet]?)	

Proximity to processing facility, commercial kitchen, etc. (Do you need access to nearby processing facilities to meet your goals? If so, how close/accessible are they from your site?)	
Proximity to markets (How close/accessible is your market to your site?)	
Proximity to public restroom (Is there a public restroom within a reasonable distance from your site?)	
Other	
Infrastructure	Notes
Water access (Is there an existing connection to a water line? If not, can you access water from a nearby hydrant, a neighboring lot, etc.?)	
Water access timing (When during the year are the turn on and shut off dates for the water you access?)	
Water distribution (How will you distribute water throughout your site? If needed, would it be feasible to have automatic waterers, hoses, splitters, timers, etc.?)	
Storage (Is there an existing garage or shed for storage? What storage will be needed?)	
Greenhouse(s)/High Tunnel(s) (If you plan to add growing structures, where would they fit on the lot [consider local zoning and standards]?)	
Raised beds (If adding raised beds, where will they go? [consider local zoning and standards, generally try to keep away from edges/traffic sight lines])	

Chicken coops or other livestock structures (If you plan to add structures, where would they fit on the lot [consider local zoning and standards]?)	
Fences and gates (If constructing fences or gates, where will they go? [consider local zoning and standards, follow setback and visibility regulations])	
Compost containers (If adding compost containers, where will they go? [consider local nuisance ordinances and standards, generally try to keep away from lot edges/traffic sight lines])	
Pathways (Where are pathways, or where might you want to add some? Are they accessible?)	
Electrical capacity (Is there access to electricity? Can it support your site's energy needs?)	
Other	
Land	Notes
Environmental history (What have previous uses of the lot been and how might that affect your ability to grow?)	
Overall size (sq. ft.) (Does the lot size align with your production and/or programming goals?)	
Usable growing space (sq. ft.) (How much of the lot is actually usable for growing (account for existing or planned walkways, storage, etc.)?)	
Shape (Does the shape of the parcel accommodate your needs?)	
Expansion potential (Is there room to expand your growing space if that's a future goal/possibility?)	

Topography (Are there slopes? What direction do the slopes face? Where might water collect or drain, and how might that impact the watershed?)	
Soil type(s), class(es), and quality (What are the nutrient levels, pH, contaminants relevant to your work?)	
Existing vegetation (Are there any plants that would pose significant challenges for your goals?)	
Other	
Climate	Notes
Sunlight hours/day (note any structures, trees, etc. that may shade lot, note areas with partial sunlight)	
Rainfall	
Plant Hardiness Zone	
Micro-climates	
Growing degree days	
Other	
Service Providers Used	Name/Phone:
Public utilities	
Driveway/sidewalk/right-of-way maintenance	
Plumber	
Electrician	
Roofer	
Contractor	
Phone/Internet	

Other	
Housing	Notes
Existing dwelling?	
Potential Housing Sites (zoning permitted)	
Types of Dwellings Permitted	
Apprentice/Farm Labor Housing	
Nearby Housing Opportunities	
Other	
References/Other Site Evaluation Checklists	Personal Resources
Getting Started with Urban Farming	