

Sustainable Community Development Project

Nurturing the Environment, Soul, Community and Economic Self-Sufficiency

Project Objective

Work with several non-profits to develop urban and rural agricultural program that enhances the quality of life, wellness and economic self-sufficiency for special needs and low-income communities. Long-term goal to seek to reach near break even on program operating costs from program revenues generated from agricultural product sales, farmers market, and respite care fees.

Phase One Priorities

Below are key priorities for next 6 to 9 months:

1. Identify and secure land parcels (2 to 10 acres) in metro Phoenix, metro Tucson, Gila River Indian Community and Flagstaff/Williams.
2. Complete US and international survey of urban agriculture and rural farms that target special needs and low-income groups.
3. Prepare 25 grant applications to foundations, healthcare agencies and federal agencies to help fund phase one of program.
4. Establish land trust to help acquire and leaseback land for use by non-profits.
5. Complete studies of how horticultural therapy and animal therapy can enhance the quality of life and wellness of special needs population. Special emphasis will be placed on plants and animals that are revenue generating (i.e. chickens vs. horses for animals)
6. Develop business plan for implementation of phase one farm at one or more land parcels.
7. Prepare best practices overview of urban agriculture and rural farms that target special needs and low-income groups that highlight opportunities and pitfalls that need to be addressed.
8. Develop respite care strategy that will use combination of farming, horticultural therapy and animal therapy to provide care for special needs youth and adults while simultaneously providing respite care for caregivers of special needs youth and adults.
9. Meet with ASU, U of A, NAU, local governments, foundations, healthcare agencies and federal agencies to review research findings, implementation plans, grant applications, etc.
10. Prepare series of white papers related to sustainable community development project that reinforces lead non-profits role as state leaders in this project.