**Finding A Vacant Lot for a Garden**

The City has some online GIS maps available to the public that can help you find vacant lots. Go to:

***www.cityofrochester.gov***

1. On the City's Home page, just under the black toolbar, fine the magnifying glass and click on it. When you do, a line will open up; you’ll see everything drop down to accommodate it.

2. Put your cursor at the ‘S’ in Search and type in ‘nbd’; a list of titles will drop down below. Click on ‘NBD Map Gallery’. The page should come up within a second or two. Scroll down until you see the first three apps show and then start to use the scroll bars built into the screen. Take a minute or two to scroll through the whole selection. There are 15 different apps, all based on the City’s GIS mapping system.

3. Look for ‘Vacant Land Management’. Click on it and the page will fill in. In the search bar in the top left corner, enter the address you want to be the center of your search. Use something like where you live or work, or your closest water source, or where most of your volunteers live.

4. In the blue bar at the very top of the screen, there are a few icons towards the right side and one of them has three lines with a geometric shape at the end of each line. That’s your legend: click on it and it will show you what all the colors mean. The City can only give permits for green lots outlined in blue. Green means it's a lot without any buildings on it and the blue line means it is owned by the City. Choose a few.

5. Back out of this app by clicking on the NBD Map Gallery tab (top of your page) and look for another app called 'City Owned Real Estate' and click into it. In the search bar at the top left of the screen, enter in each address you are interested in, one by one. Once you zoom into each lot, refer to the sidebar that shows what the fill colors mean. Applications will be accepted only for a blue colored lot. It's not a guarantee that it will get approved by Real Estate, but it will get you many steps closer than if you don't do this.

6. Choose a few lots that appeal to you and are coded blue/Status TBD. Then and go out and do a drive-by. How much shade does it have? Do you think you can garden on it? Maybe it’s paved. Maybe it’s next to a real busy corner store that gets a ton of customers parking on it and a lot of garbage. Scope it out.

7. When you find a lot that you think will work for you, fill out an application and send it back to me via email scan (NOT a photo of it, please) to my address below, via regular mail, or drop off in person to City Hall, Rm 223B. I will do a bit more research on it, pass it on to Real Estate for final approval and then send a copy of the signed permit to you. This could take anywhere from two to seven business days. Please note: If you are choosing a lot >4,000 square feet, you will be required to submit a plan of the garden on paper. The approval process will be lengthened if you delay in providing a plan.

More notes:

• Once the permit is issued in your name, you are responsible for mowing, maintenance and garbage

pickup for the entire lot. (Not just the area where you are gardening.)

* You cannot sell what you grow, be it flowers, food, tubers, etc on an annual or 5-yr permit.
* First-time permit holders will be allowed to take out a permit for one lot only their first year.
* Attending a Garden Permit Orientation is required before your garden permit is approved.

If you have any questions or don’t have access to a computer, my contact information is below.