



Planting the Seed for Sustainable Communities



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Executive Summary

What does the word “environment” mean? This question evokes a lot of different images and thoughts. So to better understand the word “environment,” the Hispanic Austin Leadership Environment Team asked ourselves two questions: “What does the environment mean to us, and how can we make a positive impact on our environment?” As we discussed a potential answer to these questions, a common solution presented itself: We need to maintain and improve our environment. Therefore, sustainability was our answer.

Sustainability is the potential for long-term maintenance of well-being, which has environmental, economic and social implications. One of the characteristics of a sustainable community is to improve the minimum standard of living. Thus, residents must have access to resources that meet their basic needs: affordable healthy foods, financial institutions, parks and walkable communities. Many Greater Austin residents live in an environment with no access to these resources, which does not foster sustainability, so we decided to implement a project that would provide access to resources while promoting sustainability.

Specifically, we chose to concentrate on a lack of access to healthy and affordable foods. To address the issue, the Purple Carrot Project was created. The Purple Carrot Project is a community gardening project that has been implemented in the East Austin area surrounding the LBJ High School and Liberal Arts and Science Academy campuses. Three gardens have been built in the community with the help of community volunteers who were also educated on the importance of sustainability.

Our HAL Environment Team defines our environment as the community in which we live, how we access resources and how we interact with others and our surroundings. We have created a project that not only has a positive impact on the natural environment, but also benefits the physical and social environment of the community. We have planted the seed for sustainable communities to ensure that our children and grandchildren inherit a tomorrow that is at least as good as today, but we hope it will be better...do you?



Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

Team Leader: Amy Hurt

The team leader is responsible for overall management of the team and the project. This includes maintaining a timeline and setting up meetings with different people and organizations relevant to the project. Another key role of the team leader is to ensure the team is always on task and meeting deadlines. The overall success of the project is the responsibility of the team leader.

Researcher: Pilar Castillo

The role of the researcher is to investigate areas in which the project will have the most impact. Another responsibility is researching how the project will be received and maintained by the community. The researcher gathers information and materials for the project.

Finance Officer: Joe Lopez

The role of the finance officer is to ensure financial success of the project. The finance officer is responsible for creating and maintaining the budget by collecting receipts for monies spent. The finance officer works closely with the researcher to ensure the project is using the most cost-effective strategies and materials. This person is responsible for gathering any type of monetary and in-kind donations from the public.

Project Administrator: Alejandra Gonzalez

The role of the project administrator is to gather and record all information for the project. This person is responsible for the project binder that is presented to the community. The project administrator handles and disseminates all information for the project.

Marketing and Sales: Pete Longoria

This person is responsible for the overall marketing of the project and is also responsible for any type of media coverage of the project. This person works directly with the finance officer to work on fundraising and grant activities.



Schedule of Events

HAL Team Meetings

September 2010: Defined roles for each member of the team.

October 2010: Discussed team topic.

November 2010: Decided to partner with the Liberal Arts and Science Academy (LASA).

December 2010: Decided on the Purple Carrot Project — a community gardening project.

January 2011: Discussed materials to present at the Resource Fair at LASA on February 15. Discussed the plan for the Gardening & Resource Fair the Purple Carrot Project would host at LASA on March 5.

February 2011: Finalized planning for the fairs.

March 2011: Discussed next steps for the Purple Carrot Project.

October 2010

Meeting with community leaders to discuss environmental issues in Austin

Vanessa Sarria, Executive Director of the Community Action Network

Armando Rayo, VP of Engagement at Cultural Strategies

Karl Rabago, VP, Distributed Energy Services at Austin Energy

Follow up meeting with Armando Rayo

Attended Town Hall Meeting Hosted by Austin/Travis County HHSD

Discussed policy and environmental changes that will make it easier for residents to eat healthy and be physically active.

November 2010

Attended Austin 21st Century Forum

Topics of these forums focus on the benefits, economic impact and opportunities for sustainability.

December 2010

Meeting with Liberal Arts and Science Academy (LASA)

Met to learn more about the environmental curriculum and service learning program.

Discussed the possibility of a partnership for the team project.

Meeting with Lucia Athens Chief Sustainability Officer of the City of Austin

Met to hear about her vision for sustainability in Austin .

Lunch Meeting with LASA

Formed partnership.

Discussed the goals and mission of the Purple Carrot Project.

January 2011

Meeting with LASA

Met LASA's new principal, Mr. Lipton to discuss our plan and mission for the Purple Carrot Project.



Schedule of Events

Gardening

Planted first garden at LASA under the instruction of Master Gardener, Dick Pierce.
Attended Part 2 of the gardening class at the Zion Baptist Church garden.

Attended Austin 21st Century Forum

Topics of these forums focus on the benefits, economic impact and opportunities for sustainability.

AISD Environmental Stewardship Committee Meeting

Presented the Purple Carrot Project to the committee to build awareness and support throughout AISD.

February 2011

Univision

Met with Fely Garcia and representative from the American Heart Association to describe the purpose of the Purple Carrot Project.
Alejandra Gonzalez was interviewed by Leslie Montoya, in the studio and at the LASA garden site.

LASA Resource Fair

The Purple Carrot Project provided dinner and invited community members to the March 5 event.
The Purple Carrot Project recruited volunteers for the school gardens.

Gardening

The Purple Carrot Project planted a garden at East Communities YMCA.

March 2011

Univision

The interviews aired 4 times leading up to the March 5th Gardening & Resource Fair.

Fundraiser

Ay Caramba! Tacos y Café hosted a taco drive with proceeds benefitting the Purple Carrot Project.

Gardening and Resource Fair

Community resources attended giving out information on healthy living, healthy eating on a budget and sustainability.
Planted a second garden at the school.

April 2011

Gardening

Will plant 2 additional gardens at the East Communities YMCA.



Impact of Project

Community gardens offer many benefits to the natural environment, the physical environment and the social environment. Green vegetation cools the climate in urban areas by reflecting as much as 20-25% of the sun's radiation. Gardens can reduce pollutants in our air by absorbing carbon dioxide. Community gardens promote a healthier lifestyle by increasing access to healthy and affordable fruits and vegetables. They also promote community involvement by offering a focal point for neighborhood organization. Additionally, they provide a safe place for interaction with peers, and a garden and the food the garden provides is more cost effective than purchasing organic foods from the store.

The Purple Carrot Project is a community gardening project working to provide access to healthy and affordable fruits and vegetables while educating the community on the importance of sustainability. In an effort to implement a project that would itself be sustainable and live beyond the HAL class, the Purple Carrot Project was created in partnership with the Environmental Club at the Liberal Arts and Science Academy (LASA) and later with the YMCA of Austin.

Over the past three months, the Purple Carrot Project has planted three gardens — two at LASA and one at the East Communities YMCA. The LASA campus and East Communities YMCA are both located in an area where community members have limited access to healthy and affordable produce. Over 800 herbs and vegetables were planted in these three gardens, and it's estimated these gardens will produce hundreds of pounds of produce this year alone.

The Purple Carrot Project also hosted a gardening and resource fair at LASA promoting community gardens, sustainability and healthy lifestyles. Members of other Austin organizations who presented at the fair include: St. David's Healthcare, Austin Water, Whole Foods and Carousel Pediatrics. The third garden was planted during this fair so that community members could learn how to plant and maintain a garden. Four of the families who attended the event left with plants and seeds to build their own gardens.

The goal was to promote community ownership of the gardens and awareness of the Purple Carrot Project. Between the three gardens and resource fair, close to 100 community members participated and signed up to volunteer at the gardens. To further promote the project, Leslie Montoya of Univision interviewed one of the team members, and that interview aired four times reaching 41,000 people.

The Purple Carrot Project has planted the seed for sustainable communities in the LASA/LBJ neighborhood. The next step is to see sustainability grow within that community as well as others. Two additional gardens will be planted at the East Communities YMCA in April, and the team is working on a proposal for Home Depot to raise another \$5,000. The Purple Carrot Project will continue to make an impact on the Austin community, helping to ensure the community has access to healthy and affordable food.



Community Resources

Armando Rayo
VP of Engagement
Cultural Strategies

Lucia Athens
Chief Sustainability Officer
City of Austin

Karl Rabago
Vice President Distributed Energy Services
Austin Energy

Sari Albornoz
Grow Local Co-Director
Sustainable Food Center

Vanessa Sarria
Executive Director
Community Action Network

Gina LaMotte
Founder/Executive Director
UpLift Austin

Liberal Arts & Science Academy
Principals Sanchez and Lipton
Stacey Hopper, Student Wellness and Service
Learning

Kinny Ochoa
Youth and Family Director
East Communities YMCA

Dick Pierce
Citizen Gardener Instructor
Sustainable Food Center

Kristy Hansen, M.Ed., CHES
Obesity Prevention Program Coordinator
Austin/Travis County HHSD

Univision Television Group
Fely Garcia, Mktg & Community Affairs Manager
Leslie Montoya, Newscaster

Davey Tree

Will Miller
Pro Supervisor
The Home Depot #6553

March 5th Gardening and Resource Fair Supporters & Participants:

Whole Foods
Carousel Pediatrics
Austin Water
St. David's Healthcare
Wells Fargo
Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living



Project Budget

Revenue

Chamber Donations	500	
Ay Caramba! Tacos y Café	200	
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Lopez	23.13	
Mr. & Mrs. Pilar Castillo	23.15	
Mr. & Mrs. Pete Longoria	23.13	
Total Revenue		769.41

Expenses

Garden Supplies	467.61	
Marketing	111	
Food	123.95	
Supplies	66.85	
Total Expenses		769.41
Net Income		0

Donations

Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living	1100	
St. David's North Austin	500	
Home Depot	200	
Wells Fargo Business Banking	150	
Dick Pierce	100	
HEB	30	
Total Donations		2080



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Stefan Molina
HAL Environmental Team Mentor
CasaBella Architects

Ron Rendon
Executive Producer
Charlie Uniform Tango

Andrew Martinez
President/C.E.O
Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce

Lopez Family
Alina, Matt & Natasha

Dick Pierce
Citizen Gardener Instructor
Sustainable Food Center

Zoe Yin
Co-President Environmental Club
LBJ/LASA

Wallis Robinson
Co-President Environmental Club
LBJ/LASA

Stacey Hopper
Student Wellness and Service Learning
CAC Co-President
Liberal Arts and Science Academy

Fely Garcia
Marketing & Community Affairs Manager
Univision Television Group



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