

Desert Meadows Park

A community service project
by the garden club for the
enjoyment by all in our community



Green Valley Gardeners

A Service Club Made Up of Gardeners

Concept

- Multipurpose botanical garden
- Health benefits for both body and mind
- Place to experience *'Magic'* of Sonoran Desert



Today's presentation

- A little history
- Why is this a GVG project?
- Expectations
- Community response
- Grants???
- An invitation
- Questions?



Who wants this land?



- 1972 original Fairfield recording to DM1
- 1978 deeded to GVCC (GVR)
- 1982 sell attempt
- 1983 back to DM1
- 1985 county?
- 2000 GVG?
- And again in 2013

Conceived as a Park

- Kiwanis' McKinley 1981
 - Proposed a park
 - Walking trails
 - Bird sanctuaries
 - Enrolled Allen Ogden of GVG
- GVR to DM1 1983
 - Stipulation it remain a park
 - Approached GVG 2000
 - Obtained an \$8000 grant 2004
 - Walking trails & picnic areas



Rumblings

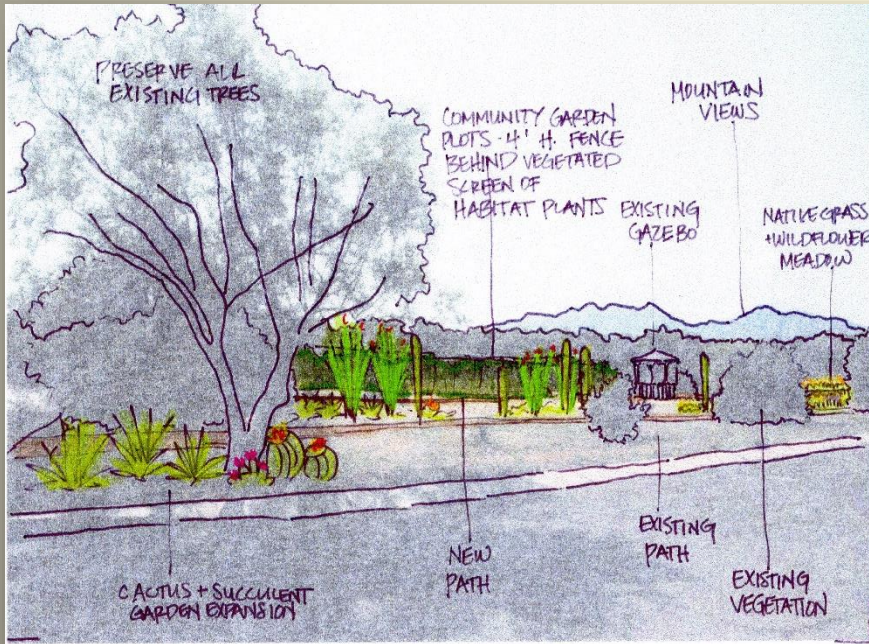
- On the GVG board since 2009
 - Property considered 'ideal' central location for second community garden
- DM1 dilemma 2012
 - Lack of volunteers
 - No funds
 - Discontinued water service
- Early 2013 DM1 and GVG talk
 - GVG: must have garden plots
 - DM1: must manage entire property – *including 'dog poop'*



Why would GVG do this?

- Consistent with GVG Mission
- Consistent with GVG Objectives
 - Excellent opportunity to demonstrate a variety of arid land plants
 - A project of civic beautification
- We have had a strong demand for a community garden centrally located in Green Valley
- Nice piece of property suitable for the development of a unique botanical park

Jessie's Reaction



- Lots of potential!
- Existing assets
 - Trees
 - View
 - Scale of the space
- Existing constraints
 - Trails at perimeter rather than incorporated
 - Neighborhood considerations
- Needed attention from knowledgeable volunteers
- Design to see and experience beauty of Sonoran Desert

What to expect? And when?

- A long-term GVG commitment
 - Each year the park will look better than the last
 - The park will become a neighborhood – *a COMMUNITY* – asset
- Year one
 - Major investment by the Green Valley Gardeners
 - Significant hardscape work
 - Improve picnic areas, existing structures, existing trees and the cactus garden – lots of clean-up and painting
- Year two
 - Street appearance: screen garden, improve meadow
 - Our goal: Desert Meadows Park is recognized as a community asset, attract grant funds

January 2014

- Jessie Byrd created a conceptual design
- DM1 POA approved GVG plan
- GVG approved budget
- Long-term, renewable license agreement
- County permits
- Water service with new 1-inch meter
- Clean-up began

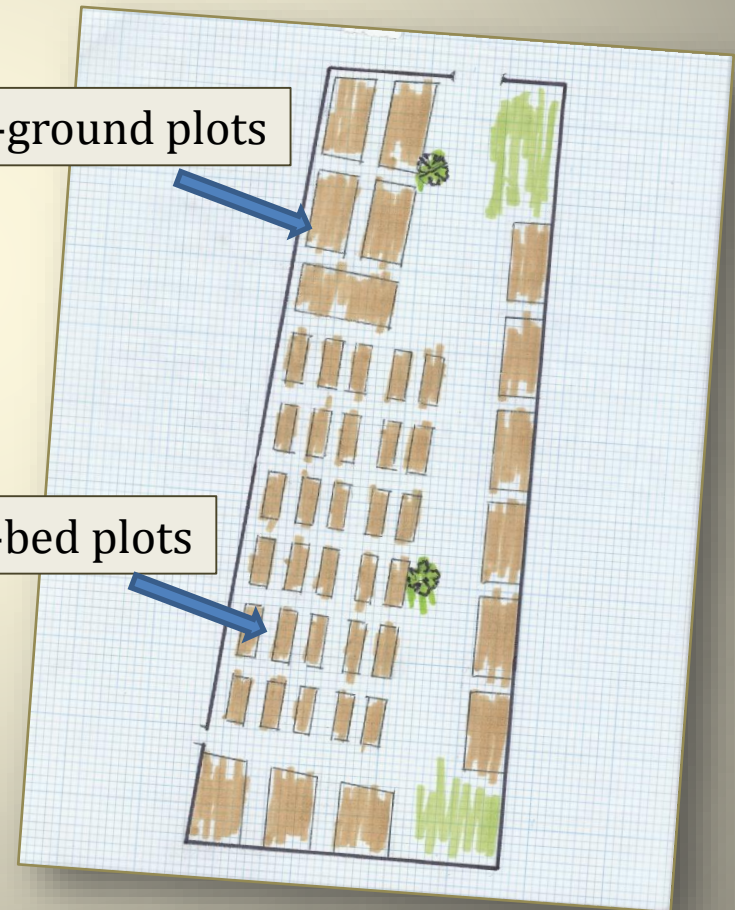


The Design

Multiple committees

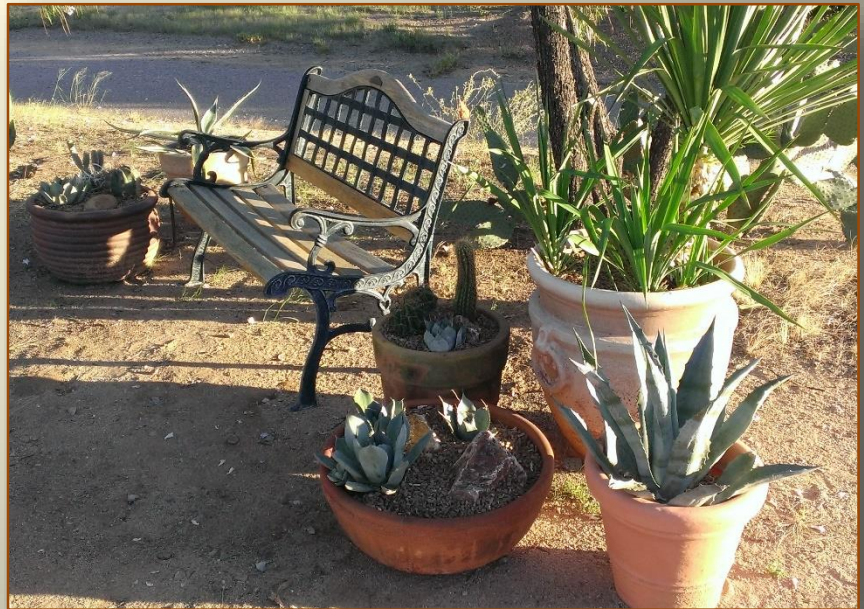
14 In-ground plots

30 Raised-bed plots



Schedule

- Priority of work
 - Food
 - Food bank demand increases in summer, but donations decline
 - Exercise
 - Parks lower healthcare costs
 - Over 65, 3X's/week for 30-min
 - = \$500 per year
 - Gathering/socialization
 - Trail currently links 3 neighborhoods



Community Donations

- Monetary
 - Plants
 - Pots
 - Dirt
 - Trees
 - Boulders
 - Mulch
 - Bench repair
 - Bat house
 - 1800+
- GVG volunteer hours





Partnerships

- Desert Meadows 1 POA
- Long Realty
- Trees for Tucson
- PPEP YouthBuild
- GV Volunteer Clearing House
- Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society
- Community food banks
- Prestige Assisted Living



Cactus Rescue

- TCSS organizes cactus rescues throughout year
- GVG/TCSS members rescued cactus for park
 - Ten saguaro are now standing tall in cactus garden
 - Also collected and planted golden hedgehog



- Park an 'on-job training' classroom
- 10 students per week
- Program runs September thru April
- Commitment, reliability, skills, confidence, teamwork

PPEP YouthBuild





'Magic'
of
Sonoran
Desert



Grants

- Key learnings
 - Project value
 - Volunteer value
 - Sustainability
 - Non-profit collaboration
- Grant status
 - A Finalist for 'Game Changer'
 - Freeport-McMoRan Foundation



Park Location

- La Huerta street
- Just North of Prestige Assisted Living
- Easy access from
 - I-19 exit 63
 - East Continental
 - South Abrego
- Your invitation – next Thursday at the park!





Questions?

www.greenvalleygardeners.com