The mission of Groundwork Milwaukee is to bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement and management of the physical environment by developing community-based partnerships that empower people, businesses and organizations to promote environmental, economic and social well-being.
GWMKE is part of the **Groundwork USA** network of independent, not-for-profit, environmental businesses called Groundwork Trusts.

GWMKE is a land trust.

GWMKE is locally organized and controlled.

2017 marks GWMKE’s 10 year anniversary!

We are a program of the National Parks – and we have incredible partnerships with the Forestry Service and the EPA.

GWMKE has a collaborative culture – we work with community partners!
So...What does that mean exactly?

Through programming and conservation, we are able to focus on the environment and certain equity:

People and places
Water
Food
Job training
FOOD SECURITY: Urban Agriculture & Community Gardening
Milwaukee Grows

Informational guide on the importance of locally grown food and community gardening.
WHY LOCAL?

- Local foods **support the local economy** - The money spent with local farmers and growers is reinvested with businesses and services in your community.
- Local food is **fresher** - because the food spends less time in transit from farm to plate, it loses fewer nutrients and incurs less spoilage.
- Growing locally provides a **safer food supply** – the fewer steps between the garden bed and your table decreases the chance for food contamination or foodborne illnesses.
- Local foods produce **less waste** – less food is wasted in distribution, warehousing, and merchandising.
- Local foods benefit the **environment** – minimizing transportation, greenhouse emissions, and waste leads to a smaller carbon footprint.
- Local foods **preserve greenspace and farmland.**
- Local food production builds better **connected communities** – growing or purchasing food locally leads to positive interactions between individuals and creates personal networks between the growers and consumers.
WHY FRESH?

- **Nutrients**: Fresh vegetables do not have cholesterol, are high in fiber and are sources of many nutrients including: potassium, folate, Vitamin A & Vitamin C

- **Hydration**: Fresh fruits and vegetables have a higher water content and therefore offer natural hydration that is important for cellular health.

- **Enzymes**: Enzymes help with digestion and nutrient absorption by breaking down the food into absorbable parts that our bodies can use. Enzymes have to be removed from fresh food for it to have a shelf life.

- **Reduced Sodium**: Fresh food has less sodium than frozen meals.

- **Toxins**: Storing foods in plastic, microwaving a meal in the package or adding chemical flavorings or colors can infuse unwelcome toxins into a meal.

- **Less Expensive**: Freshly prepared food is cheaper than prepackaged food. Freshly grown food is less time-intensive, and more affordable for consumers.
WHY URBAN?

- **Increased Food Security**: Food security is having access to and being able to afford nutritious, safe food—and enough of it. Not everyone has access to affordable, healthy food.
  - Urban farming provides affordable, healthy produce and/or form of income.
  - Urban farms which settle in food deserts can be a source of nutritious food for nearby residents.
- **Sense of Belonging**: Urban farming is a way to bring residents together to establish a sense of community among people who are otherwise independent and, in some cases, isolated.
- **Interaction**: Local food systems bring more community interaction into people’s daily lives.
- **Efficient use of land**: Urban gardens often replace rundown and abandoned buildings, or vacant land that would otherwise be unused.
- **Friendly to the Environment**: *Industrial agriculture is a major source of fossil fuel pollution*
  - Petrochemicals are used to fertilize, spray, and preserve food. Plastics made from oil are used to package the food, and gasoline is used to transport food worldwide.
  - Urban farming decreases our use of oil by minimizing the transport footprint and using organic cultivation methods.
BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY GARDENING

*Community Gardens* provide individuals and communities with many great benefits and advantages unique to the *Community Gardening* experience including:

- Social
- Community Health
- Educational
- Economic
- Environmental
- Community Building
Social

- Community gardens promote teamwork, sharing, communication, conflict resolution, patience, and other useful social skills including:
  - Social maturation of youth.
  - Self-involvement to community involvement.
  - From consumers to cultivators and stewards.
  - Several generations are able to come together to work on a meaningful project.

- Community gardens cross over all societal lines including age, ethnicity, language, religion, economic standing, mental and physical abilities.

- Community gardens are a huge social learning experience, offering participants an opportunity to learn a great deal about individuals and communities, interactions between communities, and the larger human community.
  - Social interaction within a garden nurtures individuality and a sense of community.
Community Health

- Community gardens are one of the positive forces to help **counteract the drastic food deserts within the community**.
- Community gardening teaches community members about the process and benefits of growing fresh food.
- Community gardening frequently can **reduce chronic stress**.
Organic vs. Conventional

- **Organic food**
  - Organic agricultural crops are grown from organic seeds without synthetic fertilizers, chemical pesticides, irradiation or genetic engineering.
  - Has lower levels of pesticide residue.
  - Helps reduce the carbon dioxide emissions and fight the global climate change.

- **Conventional food**
  - Many chemicals used in conventional farming have been shown to be detrimental to human, animal and environmental health.
  - These synthetic substances are sprayed on crops or used in soil which may contaminate farmland in addition to local streams and waterways.
Educational

• Community gardens offer many educational opportunities for youth and adults, with direct application to all educational levels and many interests or job ladders:
  - Science
  - Health, nutrition and physical fitness
  - Arts and Humanities
  - Social Studies
  - Math, Engineering, Architecture, Landscape Architecture
  - Business Planning and Management

• After school programs involving community gardens provide youth with a hands-on learning experience which demonstrates the importance of growing food locally and being environmentally conscious.
Economic

• Community gardens produce food and develop plans which support the economy and the underserved populations of the community, while reversing the trend of natural resource depletion.

• Economic Benefits of a Community Garden:
  - Enhanced quality of life within the community
  - Greater productivity in the workforce
  - Ultimately strengthens the economy of the greater community.
Environmental

• Community gardens provide a number of environmental benefits:
  - Release oxygen
  - Provide cooling
  - Prevent soil erosion and rain run-off
  - Absorb organic materials destined for landfills
  - Enhance soil fertility
  - Increase pollination
  - Teach alternatives to petrochemical soil amendments

• Community gardens help mitigate the impact of climate change.

• Community gardens teach gardeners the importance of being good stewards of the earth, leading to enhanced awareness of the world outside the garden.

• The environmental consciousness gained from community gardening leads to more recycling, composting, and conservation.
Community Building

- Community gardens teach the **value of interaction and collaboration** with other individuals, with benefits rippling through the greater community.
- Direct interaction between a collection of community gardens helps **strengthen relationships between communities**, scientifically and socially:
  
  **Scientific**
  - soil content
  - climate
  - what is grown
  - when and why

  **Social**
  - what is grown and why
  - how it is prepared
  - how it is displayed
  - culture and historical considerations.
What is MKE Grows?

MKE Grows: Groundwork Milwaukee's Urban Garden Network manages over 100 gardens throughout Milwaukee, all of which are exclusively led by community volunteers.

- The majority of gardens are located on city-owned vacant lots.
- As a land trust, Groundwork Milwaukee acquires land for the purpose of community gardens and resident engagement.

PURPOSE: to establish a single point of contact and streamline the process for establishing community gardens and sustainable urban agriculture on city land.
Our Role

WE SEEK: to connect the dots between all the efforts that make up Milwaukee's local food system and to build partnerships around local food production and food security.

GOALS: providing leadership, education, policy analysis, and project development support for the City of Milwaukee's community-based food system.

We’re working to improve access to healthy foods in these neighborhoods by:

- Providing liability insurance of up to $1 million
- Deploying our Green Team youth employees as a labor force to build and maintain community gardens throughout these neighborhoods
- Creating the Community Garden Cluster Program which seeks to promote higher garden efficiency through garden networking
- Hosting workshops such as "Starting a Community Garden", "Super Foods" and "Grow Your Own Groceries"
The new Urban Farm Collaborative at Maglio Companies

Student volunteers from local colleges joined forces with the Urban Farm Collaborative to clean up hoop houses at Maglio Companies, 4287 N Port Washington Road on Saturday, March 24.

This collaborative project combines the forces of Groundwork Milwaukee and Riverwest Food Pantry. Groundwork's Green Team will work with volunteers and shoppers from the Riverwest Food Pantry to grow fresh, organic produce for food pantry shoppers, creating a more dignified, nutritious and satisfying shopping experience.

By engaging food pantries in Milwaukee's robust urban agriculture movement, the collaborative will increase the quality and consistency of the produce sought by pantry shoppers. The site will also provide a location to incubate for-profit farmers and track data to better assess the economic viability of urban agriculture.

To get involved, contact Nick@groundworkmke.org or Mary@riverwestfoodpantry.org

Kilbourn Gardens
Sign Up for a Garden Bed Online

The community garden in Kilbourn Park now has garden beds available to rent to community members. Some of the beds in the garden are being updated, but all the beds available are listed on the garden website. Many improvements and upgrades are scheduled for the garden this summer — it's going to be an exciting summer to get involved in Kilbourn Gardens! Gardeners can sign up for beds and pay the annual fee online.

Get Involved:
groundworkmke.org/kilbourn-garden/

Think Spring

RIVER REVITALIZATION FOUNDATION
2134 N. RIVERBOAT ROAD 53212

Volunteer Times
MONDAY: 2 - 4 PM
FRIDAY: 1 - 4 PM
SATURDAY: 9 - NOON
RIVERREVITALIZATIONFOUNDATION.ORG

HAVE FUN OUTDOORS!
NEW! Urban Farm Collaborative Site
More Information

- Website: [www.groundworkmke.org](http://www.groundworkmke.org)
- Phone Number: (414) 763 – 9947
- Office Address: 1845 N. Farwell Ave. #100, Milwaukee, WI 53202
- Email:
  - MILWAUKEE GROWS
    Daisy Romero, Program Coordinator, [Daisy@groundworkmke.org](mailto:Daisy@groundworkmke.org)
  - GENERAL INQUIRIES
    Matt Rudman, Associate Director, [Matt@groundworkmke.org](mailto:Matt@groundworkmke.org)
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:
Milwaukee
Workforce Development
Steps to Success

Young Farmers
Ages 8-14
Community Based
Addressing:
Summer Slide,
Literacy Skills,
Social Skills

Green Team/Blue Team
Ages 14-18/High School Age
Green Team is part of the
Milwaukee Urban Gardens
program.
Blue Team is part of the
Urban Waters program.
Provides:
General Assessment, Basic
Skills, Industry Requirements

Green Corp
Ages 18-25/Young Adults
Green Infrastructure (G.I.)
projects contracted through
the city
MMSD G.I. Training
Certifications:
OSHA 10, TSA, Intro to
Rainwater Harvesting
Transitional Employment:
Entrepreneur, Forestry
Department, DPW,
MMSD/Partners

Empowered
Ages 25+
Team of Cohorts
12-15 Week Training
Program - $250
Focuses on setting up a
business and step by
step directives.
Leads to Green
Infrastructure Careers/
Entrepreneurship
Experiential, Exceptional, Exciting Programming!
Groundwork’s challenges – the 3 M’s.

Money
Funding for our core mission requirements.

Marketing
Getting the word about Groundwork Milwaukee and what we do in the community.

Manpower (Capacity)
The last 2 years we have seen amazing growth, how do we keep going?
Groundwork’s accomplishments (as of Jan 2016)

- GWMKE has completed more than 284 conservation and environmental projects
- GWMKE has planted 4,487 trees
- GWMKE has planted 1,433 shrubs
- GWMKE has planted 28,642 bulbs and perennials
- GWMKE has cleaned up, conserved or restored 20,272 sq. ft. of riparian habitat

- GWM has actively involved 1,765 youth, 2,558 adults, and 165 seniors (ages 60+)
- GWM has acquired more than 11,136 volunteer hours
- GWM has partnered with 30 schools
- 203,163 individuals benefit from our projects and programs
- GWM maintains 96 garden/orchard sites
Want to join us?

• Subscribe to our Newsletter – it’s the best way to find out what we are up to and how you can get involved.

• Friend us on Facebook & Follow us on Instagram!

• Sign up to volunteer – in the gardens, on the river, or at our events!

• Join our board or a committee.

• Donate, donate, donate – because without generous financial support from our community, we could not do the good work that we do!