



**Metropolitan Water  
Reclamation District  
of Greater Chicago**



# Leasing MWRD Property for Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

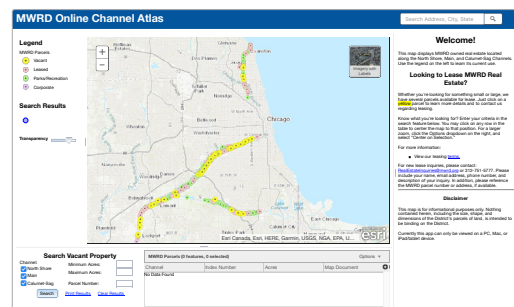
More than 10% of Cook County residents and 20% of children across the United States experience food insecurity, which is a lack of consistent access to adequate and nutritious food. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (“MWRD”) strives to play its part in the fight to end hunger by managing flooding, protecting water quality, and making its land available for open space and urban agriculture—all of which can help to promote equitable food access.

In particular, leases for public recreation and open green space are priorities of the MWRD, which can include urban agriculture and community gardens. There are two main opportunities to pursue these types of uses on District property:

## 1. Partner with a Local Government Agency

The District leases its property to many different local government agencies, such as municipalities, park districts, and forest preserve districts, for public recreation and green space. Several of these local partners have established successful community gardens, including the Chicago Park District and the City of Evanston.

**Step 1:** Visit the interactive map on the MWRD website that shows the property currently leased to local governments for public recreational purposes (green parcels): <https://gispub.mwrdd.org/ChannelAtlas/>



**Step 2:** If you identify a parcel that you may be interested in for community gardening, please contact the MWRD real estate division at [realestateinquiries@mwrdd.org](mailto:realestateinquiries@mwrdd.org) and we will connect you with that municipality to facilitate participating in (or establishing a new) community gardening program.

## 2. Lease Vacant District Property for a new Urban Agriculture/Community Garden Project

The District also leases vacant parcels to private entities, including not-for-profit organizations.

**Step 1:** Visit the interactive map on the MWRD website that shows vacant properties available for lease (yellow parcels): <https://gispub.mwrdd.org/ChannelAtlas/>

**Step 2:** If you identify a parcel that you may be interested in leasing for urban agriculture/community gardening, please contact the MWRD real estate division at [realestateinquiries@mwrdd.org](mailto:realestateinquiries@mwrdd.org) and we will provide more information about that parcel and walk you through the leasing process.

**Step 3:** For an overview of the basic leasing requirements, please see our Leasing Guide Factsheets on the MWRD website: <https://mwrdd.org/doing-business/real-estate>

