

From Farm to Table, and from Frying Vat to Fuel Tank

Organic Food/Garden Initiative

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Goal: To grow local markets and increase participation in organic food and medicinal herb gardening.

Assets: Already in place within the community are numerous resources, in the form of people (expertise, growers, consumers), organizations (schools, farmers market), and natural resources (land, sunshine, water, seeds). Momentum exists already, but school administrations and elected officials need to get involved. The stakeholders include all consumers and the youth.

Update: The group has adopted three focuses: community gardens, community greenhouse, and sustainable agriculture. Its participant list has grown, and now includes a board member of the American Community Garden Association. A fundraiser for the Community Gardens has been held at the Montessori School.

A number of people have been meeting to develop a community greenhouse for a locally based produce market.

Related Effort:

- Silva Creek Garden Committee. Seeks to establish a botanical garden as part of the redevelopment of the Waterworks site on Little Walnut currently being studied by the Gila Conservation Education Center. Contact: Karen Danhauer, 534-1075.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly Community

Contacts:

Rebecca Summer (Bicycling), 388-8666 or becsummer@gmail.com

Frank Drysdale (Walkability & Accessibility), 534-9658 or fdrysdale@yahoo.com

Goal: To take back the right-of-way for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders.

Needs: buy-in and neighborhood inventories from the public works department, links to existing advocacy groups, and lobbying of all kinds.

Resources: Silver City already has two strong advocacy groups established: the Bicycle Advocacy Group (BAG) and the Walkability/Accessibility Advocacy Group (WAAG). The Health Council is a resource, and there are good links with the NM Dept. of Transportation. The county and city comprehensive plans both advocate better infrastructure to support pedestrians and bikers.

Next Steps: Focus on safe biking and walking for children by identifying specific problem areas, especially near schools; working to obtain easements; building paths and trails; adding bike paths to city plans; requesting the improvement of markings; and regular cleaning of existing bikeways and streets.

Community Radio

Contacts:

Gary Clauss, 388-5997 or garyclauss@zianet.com
Kyle Johnson, 535-2860.

Goal: To establish a user-supported, commercial-free radio station as a voice for the community.

Needs: Between \$20,000 and \$350,000 in capital; estimated annual operating costs of \$50,000; volunteers; and either non-profit status or another group or coalition of non-profits.

Assets: Resources already in place include technical expertise, volunteers, and support from the community. Students, youth, the Hispanic community, and other underserved communities are seen as stakeholders.

Update: The group held a kick-off meeting June 27th and recently has been meeting every other Tuesday at 6:00 pm at the home of Gary Clauss. It is in the process of incorporating and obtaining non-profit status, developing by-laws and naming board members. Members have also been raising funds, obtaining approximately \$70K in financial commitments. In addition, the group has been in contact with the Federal Communications Commission to work towards getting a broadcast license. It recently launched a web site at www.gmbr.org.

Local Energy Sustainability

Contacts:

Tom Gibbons (Biodiesel), 534-5050 or tommYGibb@hotmail.com.

Mattie Johnson (Alternative Energy), 388-3133 or mattie@materialgood.com

Goal: To develop an efficient and effective local renewable energy system.

Update: This group has evolved into two separate efforts.

The **Biodiesel Cooperative** seeks to make biodiesel fuel available to drivers, either by converting waste vegetable oil or by purchasing biodiesel from larger producers. Members are investigating the optimal process for producing the fuel as well as options for a location and a legal structure. A business plan is being developed and initial contributions of capital are being collected.

The **Alternative Energy Group** is composed predominantly of local businesses interested in promoting sustainable energy design and building practices. The group is developing a promotional brochure and considering the possibility of a demonstration building project or house tours illustrating alternative energy practices. Action is also being considered to bring incentives for alternative energy development to New Mexico similar to those already available in California.