

## History Talking Points

### Over of the Mayor's EO - 43

- On August 21, Mayor Adam's released [Executive Order 43](#) that requires city agencies to review their city owned and controlled land for potential housing development sites. The Department of Parks and Recreation was identified as one of the agencies along with others.

### History

- 1998 - Giuliani put 114 community gardens up for auction claiming that garden sites had to be sacrificed to meet the city's housing shortage, specifically affordable housing.
- But the City's affordable housing arguments were made in bad faith. Internal documents from the Giuliani administration make clear that its main concern was not to create "low and middle-income housing," but to maximize revenue.
- The Mayor's Office had created a false choice: housing or community gardens, it's one or the other. But the reality was that many gardeners opposing the auction were also fierce advocates for affordable housing—and had worked tirelessly for the public good in their stewardship of City-owned land.
- These issues only came to partial resolution in 2002 after years of advocacy and intervention from the New York State Attorney General's office, supported by Mayor Bloomberg.
- The vast majority of community gardens in New York City do not have permanent status. Despite the organizing wins of the late 1990s and early 2000s, most community gardens are still vulnerable to displacement under the current rules.
- In 2015, Di Blasio made plans to build housing on over 40 city-owned sites which were operating as community gardens citing the need for affordable housing. Eventually 36 of those were preserved as gardens.

### GreenThumb

- Presently, GreenThumb's Community Garden License Agreement states that the City can terminate its agreement with community gardens at will.
- Of the **562** gardens registered with GreenThumb, just **4% ( 22 gardens )** enjoy parkland designation, one of the highest protections available for open space. This status must be granted through designation from the City; simply being owned by the Parks Department is not sufficient.
- Once deemed parkland, the land is governed by the "public trust doctrine," a centuries-long judicial precedent that "imposes a duty to hold public land for the benefit of the people and restricts the ability of local governments to sell or convey certain land or change its use, including parks."

## Call to Action

We demand that Mayor Eric Adams issue a clear directive exempting community gardens on city-owned land from Executive Order 43, reaffirming their protection, and ensuring that any land review process fully recognizes the irreplaceable value these spaces bring to our city. View our call to action [here](#).

## Campaign Slogans:

1. Preserve Our Gardens, Protect Our Future: Tell Mayor Adams to Stand with Community Gardens!
2. Community Gardens: Not a Trade-Off, But a Treasure—Demand Their Protection Now!
3. Gardens Are Essential, Not Optional: Call on Mayor Adams to Safeguard Green Spaces!
4. Community Gardens Aren't Negotiable—Tell Mayor Adams to Protect, Not Displace!
5. Community Gardens: Demand Permanent Protection Today!
6. Gardens Are for All: Insist That Mayor Adams Preserve and Strengthen Our Green Spaces!
7. Stand with Our Gardens: Ask Mayor Adams to Ensure Green Spaces are Protected !

## Upcoming Meetings:

- [Council Of Gardeners](#) - Tuesday, September 24th | 6:15 PM | [Zoom](#)
- [Greenthumb Harvest Festival](#) - Saturday, September 28th | 12 pm - 4 pm | El Jardin del Paraiso in Manhattan - 710 E 5th St, New York, NY 10009

## Social Media Toolkit

- Video for Instagram Page [post](#)
- Slides for Instagram Page/ Story [post](#)
  - Captions:
    - 🌱🔥 History has shown us that community gardens are under constant threat. From Giuliani's auctions to De Blasio's housing plans, our green spaces have fought hard to survive. Let's not let Mayor Adams's new directive put them at risk. Stand with us to protect our community gardens! #PreserveOurGardens
    - 🌱💚 From Giuliani's auctions to De Blasio's housing plans, our gardens have seen it all. Now, with Mayor Adams's new directive, it's time to take action. Tell him to protect and strengthen our community gardens, not to displace them. 🌻🔥 #PreserveOurGardens
    - 🌻🏢 Community gardens are not just green spaces—they're vital to our city's fabric. With Executive Order 43 potentially endangering these gardens, it's time to speak up! Demand that Mayor Adams safeguard our urban oases and prevent their displacement. 🌳💪 #PreserveOurGardens
    - 🚫🌱 Don't let history repeat itself! We've seen community gardens sacrificed for development before. We must ensure that Mayor Adams's new review process respects and protects our vital green spaces. Act now to keep our gardens safe! 🇺🇸🌿 #PreserveOurGardens

- Green Guerillas [Website](#)
- Green Guerillas Campaign Landing [page](#)

## **Campaign Partners**

### **[Loisaida United Neighborhood Gardens \(LUNGS\)](#)**

Loisaida United Neighborhood Gardens (LUNGS) was formed in 2011 as a grassroots community gardens-based organization to unite the many volunteer-run community gardens in Loisaida, the Lower East Side and the East Village. LUNGS works to promote, protect and preserve gardening and greening through cooperation, coordination and communication. We believe that permanent community gardens and public greenspaces are necessary for a healthy New York.

### **[NYC Community Garden Coalition \(NYCCGC\)](#)**

Founded in 1996, New York City Community Garden Coalition's mission is to promote the preservation, creation, and empowerment of community gardens through education, advocacy, and grassroots organizing.

*Last update: Sept 24, 2024 at 3:36 pm*