



**SAFE PLACES,
ACTIVE SPACES!**

COMMUNITY GARDENS

MINI

A Playbook for Transforming Public Spaces in Your Neighborhood



**ACTIVATING
OPEN
SPACES
AT NYCHA**



THIS MINI PLAYBOOK IS A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES INTERESTED IN ACTIVATING PUBLIC SPACES WITH COMMUNITY GARDENS

Every community deserves neighborhood public spaces that are safe, and this mini Playbook offers tools for one of the ways communities can directly shape change in their public spaces using City resources and processes.

This mini-guide is an excerpt from **Safe Places, Active Spaces!** – available free online – where you will find information on a variety of ways to transform public spaces to improve your community’s safety and well-being. In the full playbook, we focus on the agencies that manage public housing (NYCHA), streets and sidewalks (DOT and SAPO), and parks and gardens (NYC Parks).

No matter where you are in your journey towards resident-led neighborhood improvement, we hope you will find helpful tips and resources to assist you.

Public spaces:

Outdoor spaces that are accessible to the public

Neighborhood activation:

A coordinated effort from public entities working with communities to improve neighborhood safety and well-being through changes in the built environment, programs/events, and policy

VIEW THE FULL COMMUNITY PLAYBOOK:
nyc.gov/safe-places-active-spaces

HOW CAN A GARDEN ACTIVATION PROJECT ADDRESS MY COMMUNITY ISSUE?

Community Gardens and Greening

What is a community garden?

Community gardens are shared green spaces where people work together on preparing, planting, harvesting and maintaining the garden.

How do community gardens address community issues and bring community benefits?



Increase access to healthy food and outdoors



Promote community pride and stewardship

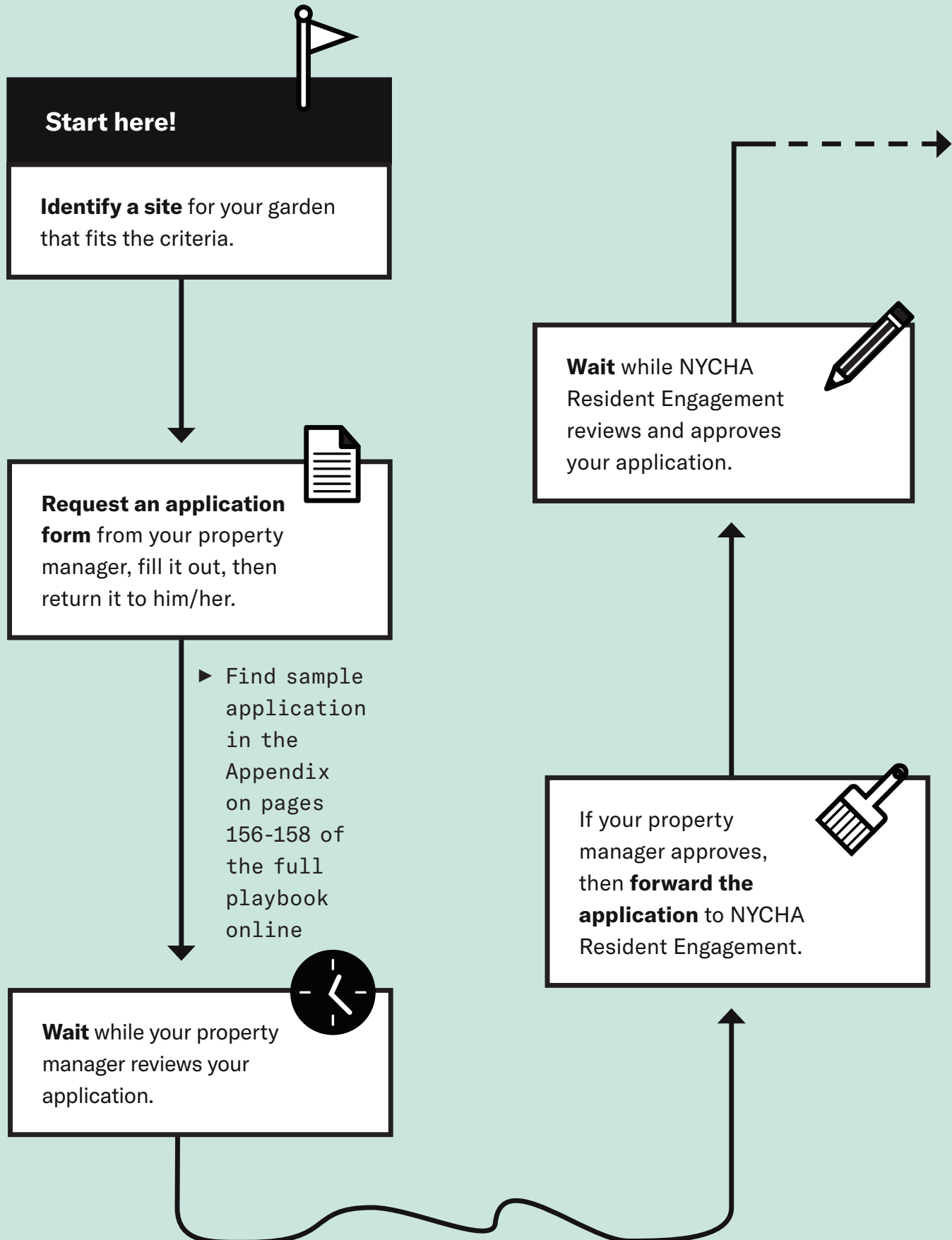


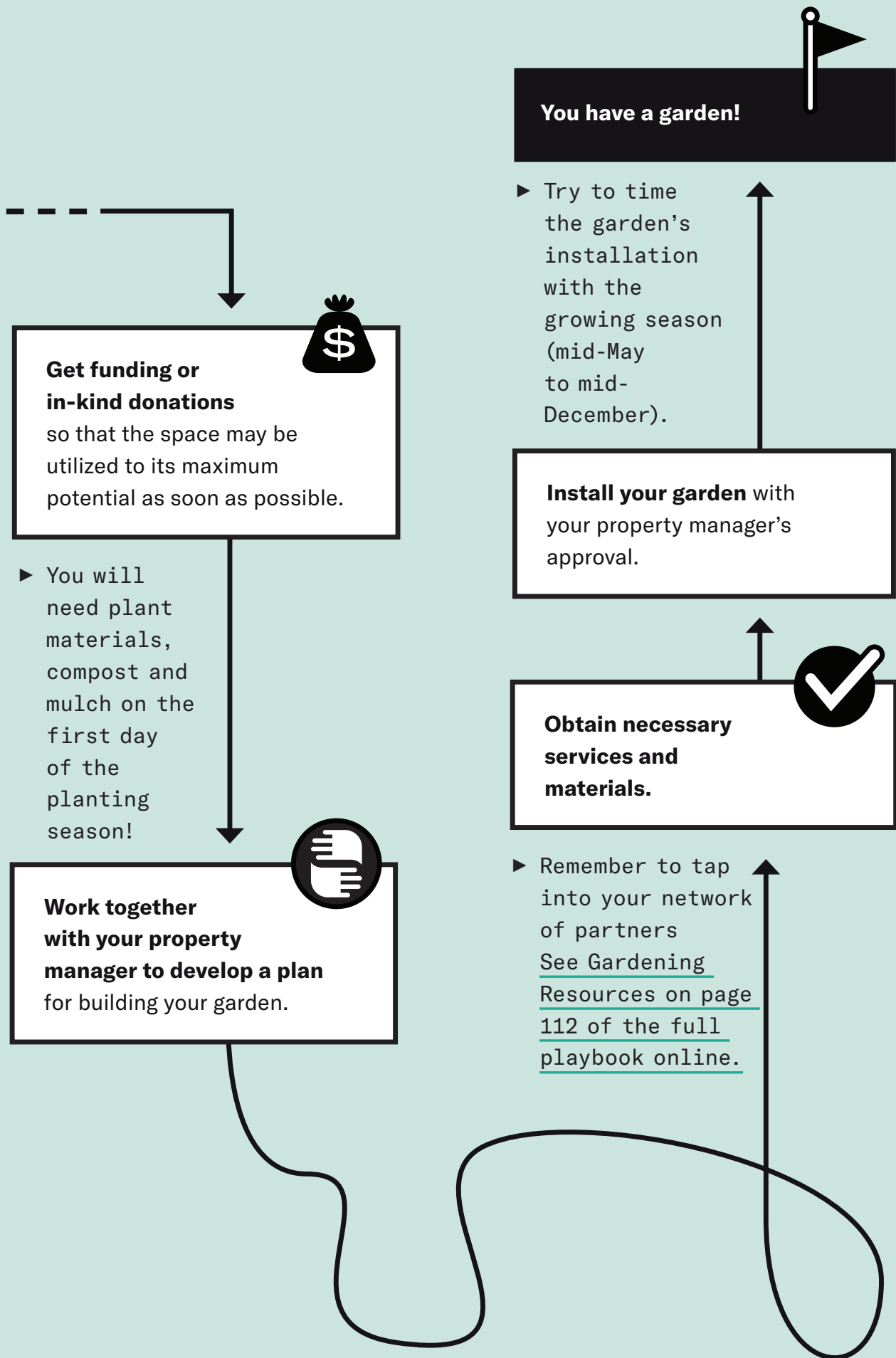
Support relaxation & reduce mental fatigue

“IT WOULD HELPTO HAVE
A NICER ENVIRONMENT.
WHEN ITS PRETTY
AND BEAUTIFUL I
FEEL PEACEFUL.”

Morrisania resident at focus group, July 2017.

Community Gardens at NYCHA





New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) provides housing for low- to moderate-income residents throughout the five boroughs of New York City.

How Do I Activate Open Spaces at NYCHA?

You can activate open spaces at NYCHA through programs and events, public murals and art installations, and community gardens.

Partner up. NYCHA recommends that you connect with resident associations, youth councils and other approved partners to help guide and support you. Many approved partners are borough based and some are citywide.

Reach out to NYCHA early.

To find approved partners, contact NYCHA Resident Engagement at

resident.engagement@nycha.nyc.gov

and go to NYCHA's Resident Economic Empowerment & Sustainability (REES) page

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/residents/rees.page>

for more information. You can find a list of approved partners linked at the bottom of the REES page under "A New Experience for Partners."

Key Information

For more information on resident associations, youth councils, and how to get involved as a resident, visit NYCHA's Engagement page online:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/residents/getting-involved-as-a-resident.page>

You may be able to get money for certain NYCHA projects through Tenant Participation Activity (TPA) funding. TPA funding is provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to NYCHA

to support specific resident engagement and self-sufficiency activities. It is provided to Resident Associations for approved activities.

Some approved reasons for funding include skills training programs, Family Days, health programs, and supplies for resident associations.

For more information on TPA funding, visit NYCHA's Tenant Participation Activity page online:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/residents/nycha-tpa.page>



Programs and Events at NYCHA

What to Know Before You Start

- All gardens on NYCHA property must be registered with and approved by the property manager. There is an annual re-registration process.
- Check in on what already exists with the property manager and NYCHA Resident Engagement.
 - There might be multiple gardens organized by existing groups.
 - If you want to start a garden, NYCHA encourages you to first join an existing group.
- Check in with the Resident Green Committee, available at a limited number of developments.
- Check with NYCHA to see if any future building construction is proposed for your site. You can start by contacting the Deputy Director of Gardens, Juan Santiago, at Juan.Santiago@nycha.nyc.gov.
- NYCHA does not provide financial support for gardens. All funding, volunteers, and resources must be provided by community partners (residents and/or community based organizations).
- It's helpful to have a plan, a few volunteers, and tools before building planter boxes or buying plant materials. Speak with your property manager about access to water and for assistance with weeding, tools or storage needs.
- Maintaining a garden is a labor of love, but labor nonetheless. It takes time and lots of sweat, dedication, and a long-term commitment to grow a beautiful, bountiful flower or vegetable garden.
- Keep in mind that gardens are seasonal and many residents find that the process starts fresh every year.

Stay Connected. For updates on our criminal justice initiatives follow us on Twitter at **@CrimJusticeNYC** and visit **nyc.gov/criminaljustice**.



Above: A flourishing set of garden beds at Ingersoll Houses' Garden of Eden. Photo credit: Myrtle Avenue

This is an excerpt.
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nyc.gov/safe-places-active-spaces

