

# Proclamation



*Jane Castor, Mayor*

**WHEREAS**, gardening instills in people a greater respect and care for our environment and natural resources, and gardeners have a passion for nurturing the beauty and resources of the earth and they produce the food which feed and sustain our citizens, and it brings pleasure to those who engage in it, and **Community Gardening Month** was established in 2009, and is held annually each April; and

**WHEREAS**, **community gardens** are plots of land, often located in urban areas that are utilized by individuals and groups for private gardens that benefit the people caring for them, and they vary to include areas where people are growing fruits, vegetables and herbs, a place to create attractive plants and flowers for pleasure and community improvement, and larger areas that are cultivated for land preservation with the goal of maintaining natural beauty, and the environment is greatly impacted through gardening by returning nutrients back into the soil including through composting; and

**WHEREAS**, community gardening is an initiative for direct engagement with key stakeholders including government officials, nonprofits, businesses, philanthropy, and academia, and in Tampa, Florida, many urban community gardens have been created utilizing abandoned or vacant properties, turning them into productive gardens that benefit the community, adding to the quality of life of our citizens by providing opportunities for exercise, social engagement, fresh and nutritious foods, and education; and

**WHEREAS**, the **Coalition of Community Gardens, Inc.** was established in 2015, and it is a network of community gardens and other allied entities formed to support community gardening, build infrastructure, share knowledge and resources, and advocate for related public policies, and the organization is hosting its **6<sup>th</sup> Grow Gardens Conference** on April 6, 2024, at the Tampa Heights Community Center; and

**WHEREAS**, community gardening is an initiative for direct engagement with key stakeholders that include government officials, nonprofits, businesses, philanthropy, and academia, and community gardens are included in the **City of Tampa's Sustainability and Resiliency Roadmap**, and the City is leading the partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture, the Coalition of Community Gardens, the University of Florida's (USF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences' Extension Office, the USF's Patel College of Global Sustainability, the Community Foundation, and Tampa's AmeriCorps Green Team.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida do hereby proclaim April 2024, as

## **"COMMUNITY GARDENING MONTH"**

in the city of Tampa, Florida and urge all residents to join me in recognizing the beauty and benefits found in our city because of community gardens and consider becoming involved in a local community garden or establish one to enhance a neighborhood.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 26<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024.



*Jane Castor*  
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Mayor