



## Finding A Vacant Lot

The City has some online GIS maps available to the public that can help you find vacant lots. Go to:  
[www.cityofrochester.gov](http://www.cityofrochester.gov)

1. On the City's Home page, in the search bar at the top, type in 'nbd map gallery' and click the magnifying glass to the right.
2. In the options that come up, choose 'NBD Map Gallery'. It should be the first one, or very close to the top. Once the page fills out, you'll be looking at 17 or 18 different apps, all based on the City's mapping system. Use the scroll bar to the right and look for 'Vacant Land Management'. Click on it.
3. It will take only a few seconds for the screen to populate. Look for the search bar at the top left and enter the address you want to be the center of your search. Use something like where you live or work, or your closest water source, or where most of your volunteers live.
4. In the blue bar at the top of the screen, there are a few icons towards the right side and one of them has three lines with a geometric shape at the end of each line. That's your legend: click on it and it will show you what all the colors and symbols mean. *The City can only give permits for green lots outlined in blue.* Green means it's a lot without any buildings on it and the blue line means it is owned by the City.
5. Back out of this app by clicking on the NBD Map Gallery tab and look for another app called 'City Owned Real Estate'. In the search bar at the top left of the screen, enter in each address you are interested in, one by one. Each City owned lot will be colored in; the legend to the colors is in a side bar (right side of screen). Applications will only be accepted for a blue colored lot. It's not a guarantee that it will get approved by Real Estate, but it will get you many steps closer than if you don't do this.
6. Choose a few lots that appeal to you and are coded blue/Status TBD and go out and do a drive-by. How much shade does it have? Do you think you can garden on it? Maybe it's paved. Maybe it's next to a real busy corner store that gets a ton of customers parking on it and a lot of garbage. Scope it out.
7. When you find a lot that you think will work for you, fill out an application and send it back to me via email scan (NOT a photo of it, please) to my address below, via regular mail, or drop off in person to City Hall, Rm 223B. I will do a bit more research on it, pass it on to Real Estate for final approval and then send a copy of the signed permit to you. This could take anywhere from two to seven business days. Please note: If you are choosing a lot >4,000 square feet, you will be required to submit a plan of the garden on paper. The approval process will be lengthened if you delay in providing a plan.



More notes:

- Once the permit is issued in your name, you are responsible for mowing, maintenance and garbage pickup for the entire lot. (Not just the area where you are gardening.)
- You cannot sell what you grow, be it flowers, food, tubers, etc on an annual or 5-yr permit.
- First-time permit holders will be allowed to take out a permit for one lot only their first year.
- Attending a Garden Permit Orientation is required before your garden permit is approved.

If you have any questions or don't have access to a computer, my contact information is below.

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