

Community Gardens

Division:	Parks and Recreation	Approved by:	Council
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Policy Statement

Community gardens grow food, beautify the city, strengthen communities, and contribute to the self-reliance of the people who work in them, and improve the environment.

The City of Toronto will work to increase the area of the City devoted to community gardening and the number of participants in community gardens.

Community garden sites will be identified in each Ward in consultations with local Ward Councillors.

Reports

Reports on community garden activities will be presented to the Economic Development Committee, with copies directed to the Toronto Interdepartmental Environment Committee.

Definitions

Community gardens are safe, beautiful outdoor spaces on public or private lands, where neighbours meet to grow and care for vegetables, flowers and native species, and where the gardeners take initiative and responsibility for organizing, maintaining and managing the garden area.

Procedures

1. A community group member will initiate contact with the Community Gardens Coordinator.
2. The community group will identify potential sites with help from the Coordinator. The community group will send the Coordinator a formal written request for a specific site.
3. The Coordinator will investigate title history of the site to determine ownership, and other conditions for use.
4. The Coordinator, the Area Supervisor and staff from the Department of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism will review the site ensuring stakeouts for electrical, gas or telephone lines have been carried out.

5. The Parks Manager for the area and the District Director of Parks and Recreation will review a report on the site prepared by the Coordinator. The implementation process must be completed within a nine month period.
6. Community consultations occur through the public meeting process with the guidance of the Parks and Recreation Manager for the area, the Supervisor, the Community Gardens Coordinator and the area Ward councillor.
7. Design section staff will be sent the groups proposed design and will consult with the community group on the design.
8. Financial requirements and sources of funding will be confirmed and approved by the Coordinator and the Manager of Parks and Recreation. Funding may be provided to assist with resources like fencing, water hook-up, signage and compost delivery.
9. Completed Community Garden permit and regulation form requires the signature of the Director of Parks and Recreation.
10. The community group will send a list of materials required and a timeline to the Coordinator to ensure the community group is prepared.
11. The community group and the Coordinator will agree on a date to begin work.
12. Public Works will be notified, if necessary, of the date to resolve any issues such as water access.
13. The coordinator will provide orientation about community gardening in the City as well as ongoing advice and technical support.
14. A seasonal community gardening permit and regulations will be issued and reviewed on an annual basis.

