

COMMUNITY GARDENS POLICY

Definition

The Board recognizes community gardening as a valuable recreation activity that can contribute to community development, environmental awareness, positive social interaction and community education. The Board will collaborate with interested groups in assisting the development of community gardens.

For the purposes of this policy, a community garden is defined as a community environmental education program operated by a non-profit society. The program has the following features:

- A piece of land is utilized by the society to produce food and flowers for the personal use of society members.
- A community education program is in place which encourages the involvement of schools, youth groups and citizens who do not have an assigned plot in gardening activities.

Clause One

The Board will support the development of community gardens in Vancouver through the following means:

- Providing access to information on the development and operation of community gardens.
- Assisting interested groups in searching for suitable land for the development of community gardens. This inventory must include City-owned land, land controlled by other government agencies, and privately owned land.
- Assisting in the development of user agreements with the owners of sites chosen.
- Assisting with the development of a community environmental education program.

Clause Two

If it is determined that park land is the most suitable site for community gardens, the following conditions will apply:

- The garden is developed at no cost to the Board, except that prior to the first season, the Board will, at its cost, prepare the site for planting by removing grass, ploughing the soil and adding compost.
- A community consultation process indicates neighbourhood support for the garden.
- A garden site plan must be drawn up and approved by the General Manager. The plan must include the layout of the plots and indicate any proposed structures or fences.
- A non-profit society agrees to develop and operate the gardens according to a users agreement which will specify the term of use, management responsibilities, user fees and access procedures including the following specific terms:
 - 1) The term of the user agreement will not exceed five years.
 - 2) Allotments of space must be made from a waiting list on a first come first served basis.
 - 3) Membership in the Society, and the opportunity to be allotted a plot, must be open to any resident of Vancouver.
 - 4) No pesticides are to be used.
 - 5) Allotment fees charged by the society must be approved by the General Manager.
 - 6) The Society must adhere to maintenance standards set by the Board.
 - 7) No barriers to general public access to the site can be erected.

Although located on Parks with the prior approval of the Park Board, Community Gardens are operated by volunteers from the community.