

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 05-01-09

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Effective Date 2009 04 08

Supersedes

TAB: PROPERTY AND FACILITIES
SECTION: USE OF PUBLIC PROPERTY
SUBJECT: COMMUNITY GARDENS SITE SELECTION

POLICY STATEMENT The City of Mississauga supports and encourages the development of community gardens on parkland and other public property.

PURPOSE The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria for the selection of appropriate sites for community gardens, and to establish a protocol for obtaining public comment prior to approving the community garden.

Community gardens provide access to lands for City residents who may not have access to land of their own, to come together to grow vegetables, herbs, fruit and flowers.

Community gardens benefit individuals by:

- providing fresh, safe, and affordable herbs, fruit and vegetables;
- helping to relieve stress and get people active;
- providing social opportunities;
- reducing age and cultural barriers;
- providing educational opportunities on how to grow, harvest and prepare food.

Community gardens benefit the community as a whole by:

- promoting safer communities through increased activity in parks and other public property
- improving the look of neighbourhoods;
- reducing pollution and connecting people to nature;
- providing a common meeting area where people can learn and share with each other.

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SCOPE

This policy applies to all City-owned land and to all community gardens located on City-owned land.

The opportunity to establish a community garden on City-owned land is restricted to not-for-profit groups.

DEFINITION

Community gardens are community-based, food focussed gardens which involve individual plots for participating gardeners as well as a collective 'community plot', the produce of which is donated to a local food bank. These gardens are clearly signed "Community garden" and defined through fencing or other landscape material. The gardens provide opportunities for socializing and also include educational workshops on related issues of importance to participating gardeners.

REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY GARDEN

Groups wishing to establish a community garden on City-owned land must submit a written request to the Manager of Parks, Recreation and Parks Division, Community Services Department.

In order to determine site selection the request must include the following information about the proposed community garden:

- the approximate area covered by the community represented by the group;
- the size of the proposed community garden; and
- the geographic location of the proposed community garden in the City.

Requests will be assessed by Parks and Forestry staff, in consultation with staff from:

- Community Services Planning and Heritage Section;
- Community Services Development Section;
- Corporate Services Realty Services Section;
- Transportation and Works Department; and
- the Ward Councillor.

Final approval is required by the Commissioner of Community

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CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY GARDEN SITES

Services (the Commissioner).

Community gardens will be approved only when:

- the establishment of the community garden is consistent with the City's overall plans for the land;
- the site is suitable for successful gardening;
- the establishment of the community garden is appropriate for the particular community; and
- where feasible, follows universal accessibility design.

The following factors will be considered in assessing a request for a particular site:

- the location of the site in relation to the community represented by the group (the site should be within this community);
- the City's current and future use of the site;
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles;
- access to public transit and availability of parking; and
- the suitability of the site for gardening:
 - the site must be clear of all utilities;
 - access to water is recommended;
 - the site must receive a minimum of six hours of direct sunlight during growing season;
 - a soil test must be performed and the site must be suitable for food production.

PUBLIC INPUT

If the assessment of the site indicates that the proposed community garden is feasible, the community will be consulted.

In consultation with the Ward Councillor, ratepayers and special interest groups and other community members will be identified and will be notified in writing of the proposal. In addition, notification of a public open house to obtain public comments and input regarding the proposed community garden will be mailed to

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all residents living within 120 metres (394 feet) of the property boundary where the proposed garden site is located.

Public input will be considered by Staff as part of their assessment in selecting and approving the site of the Community Garden.

REFERENCE: GC-0196-2009 2009 04 08

LAST REVIEW DATE:

CONTACT: For more information, contact Parks, Recreation and Parks Division, Community Services Department.