
TO:	GENERAL COMMITTEE
SUBJECT:	COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM DELEGATED AUTHORITY
WARDS:	ALL
PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT:	W. LOEVENMARK, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL PLANNER, EXT. 4743
SUBMITTED BY:	B. ARANIYASUNDARAN, P. ENG., PMP, DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING
GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL:	A. MILLER, RPP, ACTING GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL:	M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Community Garden Program Policy attached as Appendix "A" to Staff Report ENG008-19 be approved.
2. That the Director of Engineering or delegate be authorized to make minor updates to the Community Garden Program Policy in order to remain compliant with other City Policies and legislative changes.
3. That the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management be granted delegated authority to authorize the site selection of new community gardens based on the Community Garden Site Selection Process attached as Appendix "A" to Staff Report ENG008-19.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

4. Urban agriculture is the practice of growing, processing, sharing and distributing food within a city. The concept recognizes the universal importance of food and seeks to improve access to healthy, local food. A complete urban agriculture system includes not-for-profit and for-profit systems and educational components. The City currently contributes to Barrie's urban agriculture system through several not-for-profit initiatives including the Community Garden Program, Food Forests, and creating pollinator habitat. The City also enables some for-profit elements, such as the Barrie Farmer's Market.
5. Since 2009, Council has approved three community garden locations (with the most recent being Shear Park in 2018) and repeatedly provided direction to explore options for other suitable locations and implement new pilot project gardens based the availability of non-tax based external funding and sponsorship.

6. The City's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Implementation Plan identified seven broad goals, each with associated actions. There are two recommended actions relevant to community gardens:
- Goal 1: Maintain Public Health and Safety - Action 1.6: Partner with Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit to address climate change considerations in food-security communications and programming.
- Action Plan Task: Identify new community garden location opportunities**
- Goal 7: Build Community Resilience - Action 7.6: Create naturalized and edible landscape on City land using existing resources. Recommended indicator: # of community gardens.
- Action Plan Task: Increase the number and area of volunteer community garden plots on City parkland.**

ANALYSIS

7. The request for delegated authority to open new community gardens arose as a result of previous direction from Council to actively continue to investigate additional sites for new community gardens.
8. Council directed staff to obtain external community funding and sponsorship for the continued implementation of the Community Garden Program. In March 2018, the City was approached by the community group Urban Pantry requesting to sponsor the development of five new community gardens on public lands, to be completed by 2020. In order to select the location of the first new garden, staff developed a site selection criteria and developed a short list for public review. The candidates included Eastview Park, Queens Park, Blair Park, Shear Park and Bear Creek Park. Shear Park was identified as the preferred option and was approved by Council in September 2018. Construction of the Shear Park Community Garden was completed on May 4, 2019. Four more locations remain to be opened with funding through a Trillium Foundation Grant, subject to Council's approval process. Instead of seeking Council approval for each new location, it is recommended that an internal process with delegated authority be implemented to facilitate the growth of the Community Garden Program. Providing the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management delegated authority to select new community gardens will streamline the overall implementation process.
9. Many municipalities use an internal review process and a management based approval process through delegated authority (received from their Council), to open new community garden locations. Staff have reviewed several municipalities and have determined that the municipality with the most relevant process is the City of Mississauga's Community Garden Site Selection Policy.
10. Staff recommend the adoption of a Community Garden Site Selection Process (refer to Appendix A) to guide the process of opening new community gardens under a new delegated authority process. This policy was based on the Mississauga Policy and incorporates Barrie's specific needs. The key elements required to determine the location's suitability and the extent of public support are addressed in the policy. The policy would provide delegated authority to the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management.

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11. As Urban Pantry has already approached the City regarding the implementation of 5 new locations, that organization will not be subject to the application process. For future expansion, beyond the current project with Urban Pantry, the site selection process will be supported by an internal process which would include an application form to be submitted by an applicant proposing a new garden location. Approval of the application would be contingent on the ability of the applicant to provide independent (non-municipal) funding to pay for the construction and equipment for the new community garden, however the City would provide annual operating support, as described in the financial section. Staff would complete an internal review process, working with applicants to select a suitable location and review the proposed garden location with the local community.
 12. The delegated-authority approach allows staff the flexibility to receive and respond to community garden requests in a timely manner. The establishment of site selection criteria through the proposed Site Selection Process, ensures that there is a transparent, objective assessment of potential locations. This criteria is meant to give Council and residents confidence in the site selection process.
 13. The Community Garden Policy was created and approved by Council in 2009 and revised in 2011. The Policy has been re-considered in light of the proposed delegated-authority approach and several changes are recommended to update the policy, as per Appendix A:
 - a) The Policy has been reformatted into a standardized policy structure and restructured to organize specific responsibilities more clearly.
 - b) The scope of the policy will extend to land which the City leases to external parties; these parties may give permission to use their leased lands for community gardens.
 - c) Allotment and collective garden models are now identified and defined.
 - d) Gardeners are identified as being individuals or organizations.
 - e) The terminology of Garden Coordinator has been changed to state "Garden Lead" to avoid confusion with municipal staff roles relating to coordination of the Community Garden Program.
 - f) Pesticide use has been identified as being subject to the Ontario Pesticide Act.
 - g) Marijuana (cannabis) has been identified as a plant species which is not permitted in community gardens.
 - h) The policy has been amended to require a minimum of one accessible plot to be included in all community gardens, where feasible. No preferred construction standard is being proposed at this time as staff will be working with Urban Pantry to install a single type of accessible plot, which is currently being used in Owen Sound, and obtain feedback from the users after the season is complete. At this time, turf is considered an accessible surface and is being applied to the garden area but is not ideal for community garden beds due to seasonal precipitation impacts. Future consideration will be given to funding for stone-dust surfacing or seeking hard surfaces where raised garden beds can be developed. Raised garden beds will be reserved for gardeners with some level of need. Staff are developing a preliminary criteria to determine who may qualify for a raised bed with the assistance of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and Barrie's Accessibility Coordinator for presentation to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for endorsement. The criteria will be reviewed in the fall of 2019 with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to evaluate the level of demand and to determine whether it is possible to broaden the criteria for the 2020 season. Should no requests be received by Service Barrie for registration for a raised bed by June 1 of each year, the raised beds will be opened to the general population for rental.

- i) The City of Barrie reserves the right to close gardens for renovations or relocation or remove gardens at staff discretion.
- 14. The Community Garden Program has been administered as a Pilot Program since the creation of the first community garden in Sunnidale Park in 2010. Staff recommend that the pilot program status be removed. The two existing community gardens (Sunnidale and Golden Meadow) are well established and in demand. The pilot has proven successful and it is time to move it into a permanent City service. This will also confirm that community gardens are recognized as a valid parkland amenity.
- 15. Additional municipal staffing resources will be required to manage the operational aspects of the program as the number of community gardens increases from two to seven gardens and beyond. Currently the City relies on volunteer garden leaders (termed Garden Coordinators in the existing policy) to manage the day to day aspects of the garden but this has proven to be challenging to address the maintenance of garden standards, resolving conflicts and offering educational opportunities. Over reliance on untrained volunteer leadership could put the program at risk as it grows. Some education support and volunteer training is being offered until 2020 through Urban Pantry funding, but no additional funding has been identified past 2020.
- 16. Historically, when new gardens are opened, there is a high level of planning and development requiring staff involvement. During the growing season, issues or disputes can arise from gardeners that require more oversight than the volunteer garden leaders can provide. Further operational monitoring is also required to inspect the gardens for opening and closing procedures, plot size maintenance, ensuring approvals are obtained for new garden elements such as sheds, and proper disposal of garden waste. There is also the risk that no one will volunteer to be the Garden Lead, in which case the City will be required to undertake the role. As the number of community gardens increase, it is also in the City's best interests to be more visible in the gardens to maintain a presence as the regulatory body and municipal authority. With increased operational staff presence, there is also an opportunity to partner with community groups to offer additional event programming and educational support.
- 17. Education and training is a necessary element of any urban agriculture system. Community gardens provide an opportunity to strengthen community resilience and public health with increased food skills and food literacy across all socio-economic levels. This educational role is being temporarily provided by Urban Pantry. Urban Pantry has partnered with the Barrie Library to host four garden skills workshops annually from 2018- 2020. They have provided at minimum 192 staff hours for an Urban Agriculture Development Coordinator in each year of 2018-2020 for facilitation and mentorship, and will be providing a full day of community leadership training in 2019.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

- 18. The following environmental matters have been considered in the development of the recommendation:
 - a) The Community Garden Program offers an opportunity to supply food and habitat for pollinators in relative proximity to demonstrate the symbiotic relationship of pollinators and the plants which depend on pollination to bear produce. Each community garden could include a perennial and/or shrub border nearby to support honey bees, wild bees, flies, wasps, butterflies, and moths over the growing season in the following ways:
 - i. Food Support: Pollinator food sources include native plant species as Bee Balm, Hyssop, Goldenrod and Milkweed, Serviceberry, Ninebark and Currants.
 - ii. Pesticide Protection: Protection from insecticides and herbicides is offered already at community gardens, where pesticide use is prohibited under the Ontario Pesticides Act and municipal practices use non-pesticide based turf care practices.

- iii. Habitat Protection: Shelter and nesting sites can be created by planting shrubs for habitat and/or keeping an area of undisturbed, un-mulched and un-watered area on sandy soil for wild bees (twigs, branches, plant stems, fallen leaves, exposed areas of soil), which has been implemented at the Sunnidale Community Garden in the adjacent natural area.

b) Community gardens provide the following environmental benefits;

- i. Biodiversity through cultivating varieties of heirloom seeds which are no longer mass produced for consumption, and the increase in bird and small wildlife species present as natural predators resulting from the organic farming method.
- ii. Reduced dependence on globalized food distribution systems which are dependent on carbon-dioxide generating transportation systems contributing to air pollution and climate change.
- iii. Locally grown food reduces food waste which occurs during processing, transport and storage for food outlets. Food loss further occurs through the rejection of produce by supermarkets due to high "appearance quality standards" which may reject produce due to lack of uniformity and imperfections.
- iv. Community garden help with storm water management similar to urban Low Impact Design (LID) strategies which focus on filtering, temporarily holding and slowing down the absorption of precipitation to offset flooding during storm events. Community gardens provide an additional level of storm water infiltration and water holding capacity through soil retention and vegetative absorption.
- v. By designating public spaces which demonstrate the processes and rewards of working with nature, the City is enabling people to express their value for a connection to nature within urban lands. This allows residents to engage with others with the same interests, building community connections and environmental awareness. Linking food and environment as core cultural values increases public awareness and support for environmental initiatives.

ALTERNATIVES

19. The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1

General Committee could maintain the existing process with respect to creating new community gardens by seeking Council approval on a site by site basis (i.e. status quo).

This alternative is not recommended as there are opportunities to streamline the site selection and approval process. The development of community gardens has already been endorsed in principle, by Council, through the Community Garden Policy and the Climate Change Strategy.

If this alternative is chosen, it is recommended that Council approve the 2019 Community garden location at Eastview Community Park. The Eastview Community Garden location went through a community Public Information Centre in 2018 as reported in Staff Report ENG016-18 and positive feedback on the location was received.

Alternative #2

General Committee could alter the proposed recommendation by keeping the program as a pilot.

This alternative is not recommended as the existing locations have proved successful, there is ongoing demand and public support for the program. Council has also expressed support for expansion, subject to availability of external funding sources.

Alternative #3

General Committee could alter the proposed recommendation by making changes to the Site Selection Process, particularly the site selection criteria.

This alternative is not recommended as the criteria includes the most critical elements of community garden planning and have been applied successfully towards the development of the last three garden locations.

FINANCIAL

20. No changes to the existing garden rental fee structure is proposed at this time, as per Fees By-law 2018-012. Community garden plots are rented out according to rates in the City's Fees By-law (2018-12) as follows:
- a) Single plot - \$20/year
 - b) Double plot - \$50/year
21. All revenue collected from the rental fees at Sunnidale and Golden Meadow, is used to offset the costs of signage (to identify the garden, and to recognize donors) and other minor capital items. Additional costs associated with the existing gardens are included within the operating budgets of various City departments.
22. Existing status of the Community Garden Account:

2019 Account Status	Maximum Golden Meadow Annual Revenue	Maximum Sunnidale Park Annual Revenue	Maximum Shear Park Garden Annual Revenue
\$970.30	\$540	\$750	\$650

23. The construction costs of 4 new garden locations will be funded through the Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant, obtained by the SMDHU and Urban Pantry. Rental revenues for the two existing gardens and anticipated rental revenue for Shear Park location are provided above. Future locations will have slightly different revenues, however it is anticipated that the revenue will be used to erect a garden location sign, as well as signage to recognize donors. The remaining rental funds will be used for long term maintenance of these signs. Additional costs to the City are considered minimal, and are summarized as follows:

Item	Estimated Operating Amount (2018)	Estimated New Garden Build Amount (2019)	Funding Source
Supply and delivery of compost	\$320 (per garden)	\$1280* (8 truckloads)	Parks and Forestry Operations Branch Operating budget
Water supply	n/a	\$60	Parks and Forestry Operations Branch Operating budget
Program promotion, coordination, inquiries, plot registration, coordination with Urban Pantry	Not quantified	Not quantified	Included in work plan for staff in Engineering, Communications and Service Barrie
Yard hydrant seasonal turn on/off and backflow testing	n/a	No additional costs as required for existing ice rink	
Mowing	n/a	No additional requirements	
Washroom facilities	n/a	No additional costs – existing washroom building	
Garbage removal	n/a	No dedicated receptacle required; gardeners responsible to remove own waste	

*Note: This refers to the initial cost required to fill up the newly constructed garden boxes.

24. The expansion of the Community Garden Program will require additional staff time to implement and oversee the program as it is currently structured. Although external funding is proposed to build new gardens, it is not applicable to program development and ongoing operations management. Further, Urban Pantry cannot guarantee community based funding for education or training support beyond their current Trillium Fund Grant. This staff report is not asking for any additional resources, but merely identifying a potential outcome of expanding the Community Garden Program.
25. The City of Kitchener announced on October 30, 2017 that it would be including specific insurance coverage for the community garden rentals for the 2018 growing season. The City estimated the cost at approximately \$4 per plot and stated the City will be covering the cost of that insurance. The Barrie Community Garden Plot Rental Contract currently requires gardeners to sign a Hold Harmless Clause which indemnifies the City of Barrie against any claim that occurs with the use of the garden by the gardener, their family, associates and any of their guests. No increased insurance coverage is sought at this time as this is only meant to be additional information while looking at the future of the Community Garden Program.

26. The funding contributed by Urban Pantry through their Trillium Fund Grant proposes to pay for the following expenses: Garden plot wooden borders, wooden raised plot construction, sheds, triple-mix, tools and a pollinator garden bed. Fencing is not proposed at this time, but will be considered if adequate funds are remaining at the completion of the new community garden builds.

LINKAGE TO 2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

27. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report support the following goals identified in the 2018 - 2022 Strategic Plan:

- ☒ Growing Our Economy
- ☒ Fostering a Safe and Healthy City
- ☒ Building Strong Neighbourhoods
- ☒ Offering Innovation and Citizen Driven Services
- ☒ Improving the Ability to Get Around Barrie

28. Include a brief statement providing additional details regarding the linkage (for example which directions associated with the goal).

a) Fostering a Safe and Health City:

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit notes that while it is recognized that income is the most significant factor contributing to poverty and therefore food insecurity, gardening is a feasible option to improve health on a population level. Complex interventions like gardening can holistically improve both physical and mental health. Gardening supports physical health by increased movement and access to fresh healthy food. Mental health is supported by creating a destination to visit and opportunities to interact with residents, thus decreasing social isolation. Community gardens have the potential to occur in parkland at the neighbourhood level, thus increasing opportunity and access across Barrie for residents to participate. Increased parkland usage results in more people watching the route to the park and the activities in the park, which creates a safer neighbourhood.

b) Building Strong Neighbourhoods:

The Association of Municipalities (2013) Best Practices in Local Food: A Guide for municipalities recognizes that municipalities face resource constraints and that the focus must be on high value initiatives. Community gardens are a high value local food initiative that requires comparatively little municipal resources. Community gardens act as gathering places for community members to socialize and work as a mechanism to reinforce community identity. Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario comments that "Communities where people feel connected have less crime and stronger economic growth". When community gardens are paired with outreach programs, such as horticultural workshops, events and programs these effects can be amplified. Partnerships with organizations such as Urban Pantry, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and the Barrie Horticultural Society provide opportunities to supply extended programming at no additional cost to residents.

c) Offering Innovation and Citizen Driven Services:

The Community Garden Program was initiated in response to demand from the community and continues to expand based on community demand. The current model places the emphasis on gardeners governing their own behaviour and coordinating the day to day management of the garden. The proposed horticultural staff management component reflects a vision to support this model while expanding the program. Urban Pantry also proposed to support citizen involvement by offering "train the trainer" courses to residents to be completed in 2020.

APPENDIX "A"

Proposed Community Garden Program Policy and Site Selection Process

Community Garden Program Policy

Policy Category/Section: R04-CO
Approval Date and Motion:
Effective Date: Month Day Year
Last review date: Month Day Year

Policy Statement:

The City of Barrie supports the use of public and private land for community gardening. City owned community garden sites will be subject to municipal approval, and shall only be used by City of Barrie residents in accordance with the Community Garden Policy and Plot Rental Contract. Gardeners shall sign the Community Garden Plot Rental Contract and abide by the Community Garden Policy.

Purpose/Application:

The purpose of this policy is to govern the use of public lands for community gardens. This policy applies to all City owned lands and lands leased by the City to external parties where permission has been given by the lessee for community gardens on the leased lands. The use of community gardens to grow vegetables and flowers is limited to not-for-profit activities. Fundraising for garden improvements is permitted.

Definition(s):

Community Gardens: Outdoor spaces on designated public lands where Barrie residents meet to grow and care for vegetables and flowers, and where gardeners or organizations pay a small annual fee to the City to register and rent their own plot and take initiative and responsibility for organizing, maintaining and managing the garden area. In the City of Barrie, community gardens include allotment gardens and collective gardens. These gardens are clearly signed "Community Garden" by the City of Barrie.

Allotment Gardens: Garden plots which are rented by individuals for use by that individual.

Collective Gardens: Garden plots which are rented and coordinated by an individual or organization for use by multiple users, which could either be a defined user group or be open to the general public.

Gardener Responsibilities

1. Gardeners or organizations will pay an annual plot rental fee to rent a garden plot within a designated Community Garden Area.
 - a. Each gardener's contact information will be provided to their garden lead and the City of Barrie. The garden lead's contact information shall be shared with other garden leads.
 - b. The period of the plot rental shall be seasonal.
 - c. Plots will be assigned on a first-come/ first-serve basis. Gardeners wishing to reserve their same plot for the next year shall register for that plot by October 31st of the current year. Gardeners may rent more than one plot after June 1, subject to availability.
 - d. Garden plots must be planted by June 1st excepting late rentals. If a gardener wishes to cancel prior to this date, they will receive a full refund. Any cancellations after this date will not be reimbursed. To cancel their plot rental, gardeners shall notify Service Barrie and the garden lead. All above ground material, including stakes, must be removed by the gardener.
 - e. Fall cleanup of the garden is required. All above ground material, including stakes, must be removed by October 31st **unless** the gardener has reserved the same plot for the following year; then only perennials may remain.

2. Gardeners shall keep their plots weeded and tidy, and maintain tidy pathways surrounding their plots.
 - a. If a gardener's garden bed is unkempt, they will be given two (2) weeks notice to clean it up. If they do not comply in two weeks, their bed may be reassigned and their annual fee forfeited at the discretion of the garden coordinator and/or the City of Barrie.
 - b. Pesticide use is not permitted under the Ontario Pesticide Act.
 - c. Fertilizers must be used as per manufacturer's instructions and shall not be left on site unattended at any time. Organic fertilizers are recommended.
 - d. Gardeners will not plant corn and any tall crops where they will shade other people's plots unless the gardener can demonstrate that there will not be a negative effect.
 - e. Illegal plants are strictly prohibited. Growing marijuana (cannabis) is not permitted in community gardens.
 - f. Trees and other woody plants are not allowed on garden plots unless the gardener can demonstrate that there will not be a negative effect. Vegetables, grains, berries, fruits, beans, herbs and flowers (annuals and perennials) are allowed on garden plots.
 - g. Gardeners shall not remove corner garden plot stakes or change the layout of garden borders.
 - h. Gardeners shall not sell garden produce or engage in for-profit business practices. Gardeners may fundraise towards site improvements.
3. Theft of items, in or around the garden, will result in expulsion from the garden.
4. Pets are not allowed in the garden.
5. Gasoline or other flammable or toxic substances shall not be stored overnight in any designated community garden area.
6. All structures shall be approved by the City of Barrie and must be in compliance with zoning and building requirements.
7. Vehicles are not permitted in public parkland as per City By-law 88-260.4 unless they are within designated parking areas.
8. Smoking on City lands is prohibited as per By-law 88-260 Section 4.1.1.
9. Please report any vandalism to the garden coordinator and the City of Barrie. Repairs must be completed in a timely manner in accordance with the Property Standards By-law 2006-262 within 14 days.
10. Any member who feels rules governing the garden have been violated is to provide a written complaint to the garden lead and the City of Barrie.

Garden Lead Responsibilities

Each community garden location will select one person to act as their garden lead who shall be the main contact person with the City.

1. The garden lead will be the person that City staff contact regarding site issues (e.g. tools left on site, site upkeep etc.). Duties include but are not limited to; coordinating overall site upkeep, fall cleanup and compost maintenance.
2. The garden lead will orient new gardeners on operating procedures, horticultural information, coordinating trash removal, mulch, composting activities and cleanup days, answering questions and settling disputes.
3. The garden lead will maintain a current list of gardeners for communication purposes.
4. The garden lead will notify Service Barrie or arrange to repair any vandalism as quickly as possible.
5. In the event of non-compliance with the garden's responsibilities, a written notice from the garden lead will be issued to the gardener. If, at the end of a two week period, the problem has not been solved, the plot may be reassigned and the gardener's gardening privileges revoked.
6. The garden lead will inform the City immediately if, for any reason, the above responsibilities can no longer be fulfilled.

City of Barrie Responsibilities

1. The City of Barrie shall sign and identify community garden areas on site and identify which type of community garden use is applicable.
2. Community garden plot sizes, layout and locations shall be determined or approved by the City. Typical plot sizes shall be 1.5 metres by 4.5 metres. Plots are to be marked with permanent boundaries. All garden designs will be reviewed and approved by the City of Barrie.
3. A minimum of one accessible plot shall be included in all community gardens, where feasible. Accessible plots will be reserved for the use of those with a need for a raised bed until June 1 annually, after which they may be released to the general public for rental if still available.
4. City staff will supply, place and empty recycling and trash containers as part of routine property maintenance.
5. City staff will conduct regular inspections of garden areas. If any contravention of rules is found, the garden coordinator will be notified, and it may result in the cancellation of the gardener's privileges.
6. All produce, crops, or personal property belonging to the gardener must be removed by October 31st, unless the gardener has reserved the same plot for the following year; and then only perennials may remain. After the expiration of the above period, any produce, crops, or other personal property shall be disposed of at the discretion of the City, and there shall be no liability of such disposal.
7. The City of Barrie reserves the right to discontinue the program at any time with written notice to all gardeners.
8. The City of Barrie reserves the right to close gardens for renovations or relocation or remove gardens at staff discretion.

Gardener's Code of Conduct

- Be considerate of neighbours when planting garden plots.
- Pick only your own crops unless permission is given by the other gardener.
- Gardeners are responsible for supervising those individuals they bring to the garden including other adults, youths and children.
- Abide by all City of Barrie By-laws.
- Work to keep the garden a happy, secure, and an enjoyable place where all participants can garden peacefully in a neighbourly manner.
- Use on-site recycling, compost and trash bins as provided. Community Garden groups are encouraged to establish and maintain a composting area.
- Laneways and paths are to be kept clear of obstacles. Tools and personal property must not be left on the site overnight.
- Loud music is prohibited. Please respect the neighbours.

Rationale and Legislative Authority

The Community Garden Program Policy is to provide an objective, transparent guideline for the governing of the Community Garden Program.

Please refer to Appendix A for the Community Garden Site Selection Process.

Department Contact

Wendy Loevenmark, Landscape Architectural Planner at Ext. 4743 or wendy.loevenmark@barrie.ca.

Community Garden Program Policy - Appendix A

Site Selection Process

Application Format

Groups and/or individuals wishing to establish a community garden on city-owned land must submit a written request to the City of Barrie. In order to determine site selection, the request must include the following information about the proposed community garden:

- The geographic location of the proposed community garden in the city.
- The size of the proposed community garden.
- The amount of funding available to construct the garden.

Requests will be assessed by all applicable departments relevant to the location, including, but not limited to, the Engineering Department and the Road, Parks and Fleet Department. Final approval is required by the General Manager, Infrastructure & Growth Management.

Site Selection Criteria

Community Gardens will be approved when:

- External independent funding is provided to construct the garden.
- Sufficient City resources (Operating budget and staff hours) are available to support the development, ongoing management and maintenance of the garden.
- The establishment of the community garden is consistent with the City's overall plans for the land, including the City's current and future use of the site.
- The site is suitable for successful gardening including being clear of all utilities, consideration for access to water, a minimum of six hours of direct sunlight during growing season and able to be developed in accordance with City standards.
- The establishment of the community garden is appropriate for the particular community.
- Where feasible, the garden complies with the universal accessibility design requirements developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), specifically Ontario Regulation 191/11, and the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR).
- The design is compatible with crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles.
- The location has access to the active transportation network, public transit and/or parking availability.

Public Consultation

If the assessment of the site indicates that the proposed community garden is feasible, the community will be consulted. The objective of this consultation will be to confirm public support for a community garden to be placed within their neighbourhood. The applicable ward councillor, ratepayers, special interest groups and other community members will be identified and notified in writing of the proposal. In addition, notification of a Public Open House to obtain public comments regarding the proposed community garden will be mailed to all residents living within 120 metres (394 feet) of the property boundary where the proposed garden site is located. The public open house will include a layout map of the proposed community garden and a feedback form. Feedback will be collected on level of support for a community garden within that park, as well as technical considerations such as final layout, size, number of plots, etc. Public feedback will be considered by staff as part of their assessment in selecting and approving the site of the community garden.