



Operational Guidelines for Community Gardens on City Land Other Than City Parks

The City of Aurora (the “City”) recognizes community gardens as more than places to share one’s passion for gardening. Community gardening is a valuable activity that can contribute to community development and education, increased self-reliance, community health, public open space, wildlife habitat, environmental awareness, and positive social interaction.

The City is addressing food insecurity via partnerships with non-profit organizations through the creation of community gardens as a means to relieve hunger, improve nutrition, and increase access to and distribution of food for its residents.

Definition:

Community Garden: City owned land managed and maintained by a public or non-profit organization, or a group of individuals, to grow and harvest food crops and/or ornamental plants for use by citizens of Aurora.

Community gardens on City land other than City parks may exist in any area of the City approved by City Council or City Administration and should serve one or more of the following purposes:

- Produce edible and ornamental plants for the personal use of Aurora citizens
- Produce edible and ornamental plants and/or food for the education of students and individuals actively participating in local groups or schools
- Grow food to donate to charitable causes

Applicants proposing a community garden must submit a permit application to the Community Development Department, identifying the following:

- Location map and property address
- Name and contact information of person or organization
- All existing and proposed structures and/or buildings on the selected property
- Location and detailed drawings of the site, including any proposed containers, landscaping, fencing, etc
- Description of the proposed operation and activities
- Distance between structures/activities and neighboring properties
- Driveways, access drives, parking areas, and loading areas
- Location and adequacy of sewage facilities (if applicable)
- Stormwater plan (if applicable)
- Proposed operating days/times
- Estimated number of separate plots to be cultivated by individuals

- Buffering and landscaping requirements in accordance with City Code
- Certify compliance with all applicable local, state and federal regulations and permits required
- If planting on City owned land, a hold harmless agreement shall be attached to the application

Community Gardens are subject to the following regulations:

- Lot size and width in accordance with City Code
- Parcels utilized for Community Gardens must comply with all Floodplain regulations and requirements
- All structures must comply with the setbacks for accessory structures in the district in which it is located unless a more restrictive setback is required by City Administration
- The keeping of animals is prohibited
- Sufficient parking spaces shall be identified functional in order to avoid parking in streets or causing traffic congestion
- A community garden may include one (1) sign per frontage, no larger than twelve (12) square feet
- Composting material shall be stored in a manner that is not visible from adjacent residential properties and zoning districts
- Composting areas and structures must be maintained in a way that protects adjacent properties from nuisance odors, the attraction of rodents or other pests, and runoff onto adjacent properties
- Composting material shall only be generated on-site
- Organic waste material for composting may be accepted from outside sources and used on-site, but may not be sold
- Planting of illegal plants is strictly prohibited

Operations of Community Gardens are subject to the following regulations:

- The hours of operation shall be from dawn until dusk and protect neighbors from light, noise, disturbance or interruption
- The site must be designed and maintained so that water and fertilizer will not drain onto adjacent property or public sewers
- All seed and fertilizer shall be stored in sealed, rodent-proof containers
- Gardening tools and supplies may be stored within an accessory building that is in compliance with the zoning district
- A community garden shall be conducted in such a way that no traffic congestion, noise, glare, odor, smoke, vibration, fire hazards, safety hazards, electromagnetic interference, or otherwise, shall be noticeable at or beyond the property line
- Community gardens and their users shall comply with all Federal and State regulations concerning the use and storage of pesticides