



# City of Langford

**Policy Name:** COMMUNITY GARDENS POLICY

**DEPARTMENT:** PARKS, RECREATION AND FACILITIES

**New**  **Amendment**

**POLICY NO:** POL-0174-PARK

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the process by which the City of Langford will partner with a Partner Group(s) on a Community Garden initiative. The policy outlines the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the City, the operational and administrative requirements of the Partner Group(s), and information required when submitting an “Expression of Interest” to the City. This Policy sets the City’s expectation of Community Garden partnerships and delegates the process to staff for execution of the necessary documents.

## BACKGROUND

The City of Langford recognizes Community Gardens as a food security initiative. Community Gardens also contribute to community development and sense of place, health and well-being, increased self-reliance, promotion of environmental awareness, and positive social interactions.

For the purpose of this policy, a Community Garden is an area within a City park or other property which the City has interest in by way of a licence, covenant, or other like agreement which has been designated by the City for use as a Community Garden. These Community Gardens will be overseen by a community association or a non-profit society while the Plots within the garden will be tended to by a Plot Holder.

From time to time, the City will identify opportunities for Community Garden partnerships. These opportunities will be announced publicly, through an “Expression of Interest”, inviting community associations or non-profit groups to submit proposals to oversee the operational and administrative duties of the Community Garden. Successful responses to the “Expression of Interest” will demonstrate how the applicant will adhere to the requirements and guidelines outlined in this policy.

## DEFINITIONS

Terms specific to this Policy that are used throughout the document are defined below. Should there be a dispute of interpretation or understanding of terms, or additional clarity required for an undefined term, the interpretation of the City, in its sole discretion acting reasonably, will prevail.

<b>CITY or CITY OF LANGFORD</b>	Means the City of Langford and its staff.
<b>COMMUNITY GARDEN</b>	Means any area located on municipally owned, licensed, leased, or otherwise lawfully occupied lands designated by the City as intended to be operated in partnership with a non-profit society or community association for the purpose of growing food and other plants in plots by members of the community.

<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Means the person appointed by the City of Langford to oversee the Community Gardens on behalf of the City.
<b>EXPRESSION OF INTEREST OR EOI</b>	Means a proposal outlining the interest of a Partner Group to pursue the overseeing responsibilities of an individual Community Garden opportunity.
<b>SUMMER GROWING SEASON</b>	Means the typical summer growing season for Vancouver Island (Zone 8), May 15 <sup>th</sup> and October 15 <sup>th</sup>
<b>PLOT</b>	Means an identifiable space within a Community Garden area that is to be assigned to a single Plot Holder.
<b>PLOT HOLDER</b>	Means a single user of a Community Garden who has responsibility for gardening a single Plot within the Community Garden.
<b>PARTNER GROUP</b>	Means the registered non-profit society or Community association overseeing the operational and administrative needs of a Community Garden in partnership with the City of Langford.
<b>WINTER GROWING SEASON</b>	Means the typical winter growing season for Vancouver Island (Zone 8), October 15 <sup>th</sup> and May 15 <sup>th</sup> .

#### **CITY OF LANGFORD SUPPORT**

The City of Langford supports community gardens by establishing spaces in consultation with the community, leading the initial construction phase and continuing to work with its Partner Groups during the project's early stages.

Prior to establishing a Community Garden, the City of Langford will:

- Perform community consultation to ensure there is neighbourhood and community support before establishing a new Community Garden on municipally owned or controlled land; and
- Conduct a site assessment for Community Garden suitability and appropriateness.

Prior to turning over the Community Garden to a Partner Group, the City will:

- Clear the land;
- Provide access to a municipal water source;
- Provide necessary power connections; and
- Install perimeter fencing.

The City of Langford will continue to support Community Gardens once they are established by:

- Promoting and raising awareness for Community Gardens using the City of Langford website and any social media platforms the City deems fit;
- Providing contact information to the public for existing Community Garden Partner Groups;
- Providing a staff contact liaison with regards to Community Garden projects and general information;
- Providing the opportunity for grant funding through the City's annual Grant-In-Aid program; and
- Paying for services (i.e. water and power) used in the garden.

## **PARTNER GROUP OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

When operating and administering a Community Garden, the Partner Group must adhere to the following requirements. Failure to do so may result in the termination of the partnership with the City of Langford:

- The Partner Group must enter into a License for Use Agreement with the City of Langford for the development and maintenance of the Community Garden.
- The Partner Group must develop and operate the Community Garden in accordance with the License for Use Agreement and therefore the Community Garden must be maintained to a minimum standard of aesthetic and orderliness and not fall into a state of disregard or become an unsightly premise;
- A minimum of 10% of the Plots in each Community Garden must be designed to include accessible features such as raised beds and sufficient path width to allow access by mobility device users;
- A minimum of 10% of the Plots in each Community Garden must be prioritized for self-identifying Indigenous applicants who are also Langford residents;
- The Partner Group must create their own User Agreement for Plot Holders which specifies the terms of use, management responsibilities, and procedures and must not permit any plot holder who has not signed such agreement;
- Prior to issuing or renewing a License for Use Agreement, the Partner Group must provide proof of, and be able to maintain, \$5 million liability insurance with the City of Langford listed as an additional insured;
- Plot allocation must be made from a waitlist on a first-come, first-served basis to any resident of Langford;
- Plots must not sit empty during the summer growing season;
  - Where a Plot Holder has not utilized or maintained their Plot during the summer growing season, the plot must be reassigned prior to the next summer growing season;
- The Partner Group will be required to pay the City an Annual Fee of \$50 per plot to help offset administration, infrastructure and material costs associated with the City's responsibilities. It is expected that these costs will be passed along by the Partner group to the individual Plot Holders;
- Garbage removal is the sole responsibility of the Partner Group operating the Community Garden;
- The hours of the Community Garden must align with the Municipal Parks Regulation Bylaw;
- Best practices must be used in the management of compost bins to deter pests, the City may require that additional steps are taken to mitigate pest and rodent issues, however the cost and responsibility will be on Partner Group; and
- The Community Gardens are a public amenity and public access should be expected and welcomed. Locked barriers are not permitted.
  - The locked storage of personal items (i.e. tools and equipment) within approved sheds and outbuildings is permitted within the perimeter of the Community Garden area.

## **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

From time to time, the City of Langford may advertise a request for an operator of a Community Garden through an "Expression of Interest". Partner Groups (i.e. interested non-profit organizations and community associations) may submit an application based on the terms set out in the Expression of Interest. Such required information may include, but is not limited to, the following information:

- A detailed overview of the group submitting the proposal, including the organization’s mission, goals, governance, bylaws and experience. Please provide relevant certificates, such as those for non-profit or community associations;
- A draft user agreement between the Partner Group and the Plot Holders and which specifies the terms of use, management responsibilities and user fees. The following must be addressed:
  - Proposed duration for Plot Holders to occupy a Plot before mandatory turnover;
  - Priority for residents of Langford;
  - Process for creating a waitlist on a first come first served with the exception that Langford residents receive priority;
  - Annual Fee for the use of a Plot, including a breakdown of what that the fee will cover;
  - Site regulations that meet or exceed those set out in the Municipal Parks Bylaw; and
  - Provisions for when the Plot Holder may have their membership revoked for non-compliance with either the City’s bylaws, Partner Group requirements or failure to uphold the User Agreement.
- Proposed Community Garden design and layout that promotes accessibility for users with a variety of abilities, and safe means of egress and movement within. The proposal should include the following design features:
  - Compost bins, tool storage sheds, shared tools and other elements necessary for the operation of a Community Garden;
  - Refuge area for users to seek shade or a means of rest;
  - Educational space/signage for promoting awareness and learning opportunities; and
  - Other additions that will be subject to approval of the City, in its sole discretion, upon design approval.

**PARTNER GROUP SELECTION AND NEXT STEPS**

Once the “Expression of Interest” closes, the City reserves the right to work with the successful Partner Group to refine the proposal to ensure all parties and pertinent bylaws and polices are addressed to the satisfaction of the Director. Licenses and agreements shall also be finalized and signed at this time.

- Staff will evaluate the “Expressions of Interest” to determine the successful Partner Group:
  - Submissions will be evaluated based on the submission requirements as set out in the Expression of Interest.
  - Designs and user agreements are to be refined and approved by both the City and the Partner Group.
- The City will require the License for use to be signed by the Partner Group, and will outline the following:
  - The purpose of the license to develop and maintain a community garden;
  - Term of the license, including options to renew at the City’s discretion;
  - Expectations and additional requirements of the City; and
  - Terms of termination.
- The City will announce the Community Garden and operations will commence.

Adopted by Council Meeting Date:	CERTIFIED CORRECT  <hr style="border: 0.5px solid black;"/> Administrator <span style="float: right;">Date:</span>
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