

SAINT PAUL PARKS AND RECREATION  
**POLICY**  
[Operations]

**NUMBER:** DIV. 4.3.1

**PLACEMENT:** Physical Resource  
Management

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** ??/??/??

**UPDATED:** 10/01/12

**SUBJECT:** Community Vegetable Gardens on Parks Property

**PURPOSE:** To outline the rules for the establishment of a community vegetable garden on parks property and establishing an agreement process for groups applying to establish such a garden and/or orchard.

**SCOPE:** All Department staff and partnering agencies or individuals.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** A community garden to be located on parks property should be non-profit, sustainable and fit into the mission of the department and local community. Garden should fit aesthetically and programmatically into the park landscape, and be installed and maintained to guarantee the safety of the users and general public. The purpose of community gardens on park property is to allow citizens of Saint Paul an opportunity to participate in a popular recreational activity, to educate them on growing healthy food options that healthy living habits and provide locally grown food to Saint Paul citizens.

## PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

Groups interested in starting a community garden on park property shall submit a proposal to be reviewed by City/Department staff for approval or denial, including the department Director, managers of Design, Recreation Services, Operations, and any other appropriate agency such as District Council. Sites other than those designated as potential garden sites by Parks will not be considered. Potential sites will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Any approved proposal shall be accompanied by an agreement between the Department and community group.

**Site Requirements:** The following are considerations and/or requirements that should be met for establishment of a garden and continued use of a site. The City reserves the right to provide a variance to these requirements. All costs associated with these requirements are the responsibility of the garden group.

- Location shall be in a neighborhood parks only, community gardens are not allowed in regional parks
- Soils shall be tested for suitability/non-toxicity
- Water must be readily accessible within one-hundred (100) feet
- Parking shall be available within 300 feet for at least one-quarter of garden plots without crossing a major arterial street
- Vegetable gardens shall be located a minimum of forty (40) feet from any bluff crest

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- Adequate southern exposure shall be available without the removal of existing structures and/or the removal or inordinate pruning of existing trees
- Gardens and or orchards shall not disrupt the traditional function of the site
- Garden activity shall not disturb neighborhood residences through excessive noise, inappropriate vehicle parking, or poor maintenance
- The scale of the garden in relationship to it's surroundings must be reviewed and approved by Parks Design staff during the proposal process

**Maintenance and Aesthetics:** The community garden group is responsible for all maintenance within the garden border. All plots must be routinely tended to and well maintained throughout the growing season and after the harvest. Any hardscaping must be pre-approved and kept in good condition. All structures must be pre-approved and temporary in nature.

- On city property, soil must not be tilled closer than six feet from public sidewalks, alleys, streets and adjoining privately owned property.
- All grass areas within the prescribed garden area will be maintained by garden group. Grass will never be longer than 3".
- Garden area must be kept free of trash and debris.
- Any vandalized or damaged hardscaping will be repaired or removed in a timely manner.
- Composting bin areas will be kept in clean condition. Composting will be tended to regularly, i.e. turning, wetting, etc. All compost will be secured in a bin.
- All herbaceous plant material must be removed from the garden at the end of the growing season.
- Along the most public exterior of the garden, participants will install a fence, hedging or planting to create an appealing approach to the garden.
- Signage will accompany each site listing the name of the garden and contact information.
- All available garden areas must be planted or mulched.

Additional situational maintenance requirements will be listed in the signed agreement between the city and the gardening group.

**Agreement:** A written agreement shall be entered in between the garden group and the Department of Parks and Recreation before the garden can be installed. The agreement shall be signed by the authorized representative of the gardening group. Agreements will be in effect for three (3) years and can be terminated by the City if inappropriate stewardship is in evidence. If an agreement is ended, Parks will return the site to turf or original condition. Either party can terminate an agreement for any reason with 60 days written notice. The City will charge the garden group for an annual administrative fee of fifty to one hundred dollars depending on the size of the garden.

**Organization:** Community gardens on parks property shall be non-profit and the garden group in charge must have an elected primary contact and information on file with the Department of Parks and Recreation. Applicants will identify the type of garden they are proposing:

*Demonstration Garden* – a garden used primarily for educational purposes. Demonstration gardens are programmed and limit the participants to those associated with the program, facility or organization running the garden. Food may go to the participants or given away to a local food shelf or facility.

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*Plotted Garden* – a garden in which citizens can purchase the use of a plot for one year. Garden plots should be available to the public through an annual open process and the garden site may be plotted or communal, with plants, plot sizes, and plot fee determined by the garden group. Produce from the garden may not be sold. Fees raised must go toward the annual costs or improvements of the garden.

*Market Garden* – a garden where food is raised and sold for profit. These are not allowed on park property.

All gardens must submit an annual report to the Arts and Gardens Coordinator outlining their activities for the season. The report shall include number of plots, number of gardeners, events, and partners who receive food (such as food shelves).

All community gardens on park property must provide at least one approved educational opportunity event annually to the broader public. This event must be recorded in the annual report.

**Insurance:** The garden group shall provide comprehensive general liability insurance, including blanket contractual liability coverage, personal injury liability coverage and broad form property damage liability endorsement in the amount of \$1,000,000.00. Said insurance shall name the Lessor, their elected and appointed officers, employees and agents as an additional insured, be primary with respect to the Lessor's insurance or self-insurance and be written on an "occurrence" form policy basis. Insurance can often be acquired through the local district council.

**Safety:** If a gardener(s) encounter a crime, fire or other safety emergency in progress at the site, they should call 911 immediately. If gardeners see evidence of a crime committed prior to their arrival at the Property, they should contact appropriate City staff.

**Pesticide Usage:** Pesticides (herbicides, fungicides and insecticides) and fertilizers may not be used on city property without an applicator's license. No chemicals can be applied except by licensed city staff, or by an individual contacted by the City to perform the service and paid for by the coordinating group.

**REQUIRED ITEMS AND/OR RELATED INFORMATION:**

- Community Garden Proposal Form: G:\Div\A-OPERATIONS\HORTICULTURE\Comm. Garden\Forms\application form.doc
- Community Garden Proposal Guidelines: G:\Div\A-OPERATIONS\HORTICULTURE\Comm. Garden\Forms\application guidelines.doc

| SECTION MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES                                                       | SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES                       | EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ensure all employees under his/her jurisdiction are aware of this policy and procedures. | Advise all employees of this policy and procedures. | Adhere to the policy.       |

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| Ensure that supervisors in his/her section enforce this policy and procedures. | Ensure that employees follow this policy and procedures.<br><br>Issue warnings or initiate disciplinary action as needed to ensure employee compliance. | Follow the procedures.<br><br>Ask for additional training if needed. |
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**Owner:** Mark Granlund, Arts and Gardens Coordinator

**Next Review Date:** 10/12

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