

## Community Garden Policy

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### **Town of Minto**

The Town of Minto Community Gardens are outdoor spaces on designated public lands where Minto residents meet to grow and care for vegetables and flowers, and where the gardeners pay a small annual fee to register and rent their own plot. The Community Gardens Committee (here after referred to as The Committee) will take initiative and responsibility for organizing, maintaining and managing the garden area. The Committee must select one person to act as its Garden Coordinator who shall be the main contact person with the Town.

The Town of Minto supports the use of public lands for community gardening. The Town owned community garden site located at the former Harriston tennis courts will be subject to Council approval, and shall only be used by Minto residents in accordance with the Community Garden Policy.

### **Purpose**

The Town of Minto values and supports sustainable community gardens because they contribute to: economical, nutritious, and local food production; an appropriate use of open space; health and well-being; fitness and recreation; positive social interaction; strong neighbourhoods; environmental education; and increased self-reliance.

This policy provides direction to establish and operate The Community Gardens on Town of Minto lands.

### **Significance of the Terms of Reference**

To clarify roles and responsibilities

To ensure a welcoming and accessible community amenity

To create the framework upon which Regulations for the Garden can be established

### **Agreement Structure**

This formal agreement will be used to structure the use of the Town owned land to the selected Community Gardens Committee solely for the purpose of planting, growing, cultivating, and harvesting garden produce in a manner which encourages involvement of the community residents, youth groups or other organizations interested in an assigned plot in the garden.

### **Sustainability Principles**

Pesticides and Fertilizers permitted are as per Organic Production Systems

Permitted Substances Lists: *CAN/CGSB -32.311 -2006*.

In the interest of contribution toward a sustainable community, composting and recycling will be conducted as part of the function of the gardens.

Water is to be minimized on site through the use of rain barrels where possible and water wise practices. Hand watering is the only form of watering on the site. It is encouraged in the morning or evening when the sun is not at its peak.

### **Interaction Education and Interpretation**

In the interest of strengthening the community, the gardens shall include a common area for educational and information, with the possibility to facilitate community gatherings, social interaction and learning.

Increasingly, people are cut off from interaction with the natural environment. Community gardens play a role in reconnecting people with the natural world; provide food security in some cases and an opportunity for social interaction. As an accessible public amenity, the new Community Gardens can help in understanding the importance of natural processes in a sustainable community, and assist in making informed choices and positive actions. This can be achieved through a variety of methods initiated by the committee and could be as simple as peer mentoring.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Gardeners**

1. Will pay an annual plot rental fee to rent a garden plot within a designated Community Garden Area.
2. The period of the plot rental shall be seasonal. Fall cleanup of the garden is required. All above ground material, including stakes, must be removed by October 31 unless the gardener has reserved the same plot for the following year; then only perennials may remain.
3. Plots will be assigned on a first-come/first-serve basis following publication of a notice advising of plot availability in the local media. Gardeners wishing to reserve their same plot for the next year shall register for that plot by October 31<sup>st</sup>, of the current year.
4. Garden plots must be planted by June 1<sup>st</sup>. If a gardener is unable to continue gardening, he/she shall notify The Committee. Gardeners wishing to cancel mid-season shall notify The Committee so that plots may be reassigned. There will be no reimbursement of the rental fee and all above ground material, including stakes, must be removed by the gardener.
5. Pesticides and Fertilizers are permitted as per the above list. Pesticides and Fertilizers must be used as per manufacturer's instructions and shall not be left on-site unattended at any time.
6. Composting is recommended to be done within a gardeners own plot. Gardeners are encouraged to bury their organics. Compost bins will, however, be available on site.
7. Gardeners shall keep their plots weeded and tidy, and maintain tidy pathways surrounding their plots.

8. 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 and deposit forfeited at the discretion of The Committee.
9. 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. Illegal plants are strictly prohibited. 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.
10. Smoking is prohibited within the garden and 9m from all entrances.
11. With the exception of service animals, pets are not allowed in the garden.
12. Gardeners shall not sell garden produce or engage in for-profit business practices. Community plots for donation is permitted based on approval from the Committee.
13. All structures shall be approved by The Town and must be in compliance with zoning and building requirements. Installation of any fencing, boards or any other materials to enclose the individual garden plots requires consent from the Town.
14. Vehicles are not permitted in public parkland unless they are within designated parking areas.
15. Gasoline or other flammable or toxic substances shall not be stored overnight in any designated Community Garden Area.
16. Please report any vandalism to The Committee and The Town. Repairs must be completed in a timely manner in accordance with the Town's Property Standards By-law.
17. Each gardener's contact information will be provided to The Committee and The Town. The members of The Committee will have their contact information shall be shared with other Gardeners and posted on The Town website.
18. Theft of items, in or around the garden, will result in expulsion from the garden.
19. Any member who feels rules governing the garden have been violated is to provide a written complaint to The Committee and The Town.
20. Gardeners shall not remove or alter their designated plots or the shared garden area.

#### **The Community Gardens Committee**

1. Will set the rates (based on the Town's approval) and assign gardeners to the Community Garden Plots.
2. The committee will create a set of Regulations for the gardens, for approval at council based on the contents of this paper.
3. The Committee will provide any recommended changes to this paper and or the garden layout.
4. The period of the plot rental shall be seasonal. The Committee will determine an

- appropriate growing season for the gardeners
5. The Committee will oversee the fall cleanup of the garden as required
  6. The Committee will ensure that the plots will be assigned on a first-come/first-serve basis following publication of a notice advising of plot availability in the local media. Gardeners wishing to reserve their same plot for the next year shall register for that plot by October 31<sup>st</sup>, of the current year.
  7. If a gardener is unable to continue gardening, he/she shall notify The Committee. Gardeners wishing to cancel mid-season shall notify The Committee so that plots may be reassigned. No refund will be offered.
  8. The Committee shall maintain tidy pathways surrounding their plots.
  9. If a Gardener's garden bed is unkempt, The Committee will give the two (2) weeks' notice to clean it up. If the gardeners do not comply in two weeks, their bed may be reassigned and their annual fee and deposit forfeited at the discretion of The Committee.
  10. The Committee will ensure that 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.
  11. The Committee will conduct the regular inspection of garden areas. If any contravention of rules is found, The Committee will address the issues.
  12. All produce, crops, or personal property belonging to the gardener must be removed by October 31, 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 Town and The Committee, and there shall be no liability of such disposal.
  13. The Community Gardens Committee will allocate manpower to provide education and/or resources in gardening techniques for those Gardeners who request it.

#### **Town of Minto**

1. The Town shall demonstrate its support of The Community Gardens by promoting community garden initiatives; encourage the use of the gardens for instructional programming and to sustain local healthy food production; and assist with startup activities as determined by The Town's selection process and subject to council approval.
2. The Town will provide the use of Town lands for the Community Garden.
3. The Town will ensure a water supply to the site.
4. The Town will provide initial assistance with manpower and equipment to construct the garden.
5. Community Garden plot sizes, layout and locations shall be determined or approved by the Town and The Committee. Plot sizes shall be 4 feet by 8 feet or 2 feet by 16 feet for perimeter accessible gardens. Plots will be raised garden beds approximately 32" from the ground. Each plot is to be provided with an identifying number. The

Town will provide the lumber for the raised plots, and the clean fill and soil needed for these plots.

6. The Town will ensure fair and equitable public access to the gardens. Including a Barrier Free access to the proposed site.
7. The Town will supply, place and empty recycling and trash containers as part of routine property maintenance.
8. At the inception of the garden, The Town will provide two portable composters. Additional composters will be provided by the individual gardeners.
9. The Town will rely on The Committee to conduct the regular inspection of garden areas.
10. All produce, crops, or personal property belonging to the gardener must be removed by October 31, 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 Town and The Committee, and there shall be no liability of such disposal.
11. The Town of Minto reserves the right to discontinue the program at any time with written notice to all gardeners.

#### **Gardeners Code of Conduct**

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