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**CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY  
COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

The City of Traverse City Parks and Recreation Commission and City Staff have created a trial community garden program in a few Traverse City parks to begin in 2015. This program would provide an opportunity for City residents to grow fresh produce or plants for individuals, to foster neighborhood improvement, a sense of community and a connection to the environment.

By paying for a community garden plot, the participant agrees to abide by the program policies and procedures and to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City of Traverse City and their officers, agents, and employees from and against all damages, claims, demands, suits, actions resulting from, or because of any damage to property of bodily injury or death of any person arising out of the occupancy and/or use of the garden by the participant, the participant's co-gardener or guests.

Gardens are located in public City Parks and are subject to all applicable ordinances and regulations. The City of Traverse City is not responsible for theft of plants, produce, or belongings left in the park by participants.

**II. HOW TO GET A GARDEN PLOT**

The City of Traverse City invites City residents to participate in a trial program of raised bed gardening in one of four City parks. Garden plots are assigned on a first come, first served basis. If no plots are available in the parks/gardens you select, applicants will be placed on a waiting list for when one becomes available.

On the application for a garden plot, you must list co-gardeners unless they are in your immediate family. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age. Children under 12 must garden with an adult.

**III. PLOT SIZE**

The following raised bed sizes are available in the following parks. All beds will be constructed by the gardener applicant to material and design standards specified by the City. Once installed in the park, raised beds will become property of the City of Traverse City. The following sizes are available:

- Starter Plot (50 sq ft) – 5 x 10 feet
- Single Plot (100 sq ft) – 10 x 10 feet
- Standard Plot (200 sq ft) – 10 x 20 feet

A starter or single-sized plot is recommended for beginning gardeners and/or families of 1-2 people. Standard-sized plots are recommended for families of 2-4 people.

An annual application fee is required based on the size of garden bed chosen. The fees are \$12.50 for a 50 square foot plot, \$25.00 for 100 square feet, or \$50.00 for 200 square feet.

#### **IV. PARK GARDEN LOCATIONS**

F & M Park – Washington and Railroad Streets

- 2 – Starter Plots
- 2 – Single Plots
- 2 – Standard Plots

Triangle Park – Rose and Boyd Streets

- 4 – Starter Plots
- 2 – Single Plots

Grand Traverse Commons – Eleventh and Division Streets

- 4 – Starter Plots
- 4 – Single Plots
- 4 – Standard Plots

Clancy Park – Sheridan and West Orchard Streets

- 4 – Starter Plots
- 4 – Single Plots
- 4 – Standard Plots

#### **V. POLICY/PROCEDURE**

- a) **Maintenance:** Community garden plots must be gardened and maintained year round on a consistent basis. Community gardens are public spaces and must maintain a neat

appearance throughout the year. Active gardening reflects seasonality and includes spring weeding and planting, summer maintenance, regular harvesting, fall clean-up, winter mulch, and periodic check-ins. Gardeners who have untended plots will be notified in writing and asked to remedy the problems with their plot by a specified date.

- b) **Structures:** Seasonal and temporary gardening structures such as trellises are allowed if they do not encroach upon paths, community spaces, or neighboring plots. Be considerate of your neighbors and orient your structures and plantings to avoid casting shade on other plots. All structures should be removed when not in use.
- c) **Best Practice:** Organic gardening is required. No synthetic chemicals including herbicides, pesticides, or chemical fertilizers are allowed unless they are listed on the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) product list.
- d) **Spacing:** Pathways between plots will be 3 feet wide, unobstructed, and level. Cardboard, paper, or burlap paths in plots must be covered with wood chips and leveled. Plants should not grow into or hang over the paths.
- e) **Composting:** Each gardener is responsible for dealing with the garden material generated from their plot. Gardeners should compost within their own garden plot or take material home and dispose of it in a yard waste container. Pack it in and pack it out. Do not dump or pile garden materials in common areas or in park trash containers. Bringing food scraps from home to compost in your plot, including cooked foods, meats, dairy, eggs, or bones is strictly prohibited.
- f) **Water:** Conserve water by using mulch and hand watering plants. Unless the park has a water source, water must be brought in by the gardener. Water is available at F & M and Clancy Parks only.
- g) **Crops:** Crops are for home use, not commercial purposes, and must be legal. No cannabis may be planted. Do not plant trees or shrubs. Do not plant invasive or fast spreading plants such as mint, bronze fennel, comfrey, lemon balm, horseradish, ivy, lesser celandine, marsh marigold, baby's breath, money plant, etc. Remove these plants if they are growing in your plot.

If you have extra produce, please consider donating it to Father Fred, the Goodwill Inn or other local food banks or food assistance programs.

- h) **Assignments:** Plot holders must notify the Parks and Recreation Division if they wish to give up their garden plot. You cannot give your plot to someone else. Garden plots are assigned by the Division staff and only one plot may be assigned per household.
- i) **Termination:** Gardeners are expected to adhere to program policies. Garden managers and staff will regularly monitor plots throughout the year. When gardeners are found to be in non-compliance, they will receive a letter notifying them of the problem and asking them to take action by a specified date. Gardeners who receive two notices in a year must vacate the plot and the plot will be reassigned. If the City considers the violation to be of a serious nature, the City reserves the right to terminate a participant's right to a garden plot immediately

## VI. ADA COMPLIANCE

The City of Traverse City does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. The Assistant City Manager, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, 49684, 922-4440, has been designated to coordinate compliance with the non-discrimination requirements contained in section 35.107 of the Department of Justice regulations. Information concerning the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided thereunder, are available from the ADA Coordinator.

If you are planning to garden and you have a disability requiring any special assistance or raised bed structure and/or if you have any concerns, please notify the Parks and Recreation Superintendent.

I certify that this policy was adopted by the City Commission for the City of Traverse City on June 15, 2015, at a regular meeting held in the Commission Chambers, Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan.



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Benjamin C. Marentette, MMC, City Clerk