



Parks Division
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Community Garden Start-Up Grant Terms of Reference November 2020

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Garden Start-Up Grant is to help guide eligible organizations to acquire funding for the planning, design, engagement and building of *new* community gardens in the City of Victoria, with a priority to support the development of new allotment gardens.

Support required to enhance or improve existing community gardens, including increasing accessibility considerations, can be funded through the City of Victoria's *My Great Neighbourhood Grant*, under the 'Place-making' category (up to \$5,000). See the [My Great Neighbourhood Grant information page](#) here.

For the development of new community gardens on City land, please review the [Community Garden Policy](#) and the guidelines, [Building a Community Garden in Your Neighbourhood](#).

The Community Garden Start-Up Grant is divided into two phases, each requiring its own application. Funding will be awarded during one intake period annually. Applicants can only apply for one part of the grant per year.

I. DESIGN (up to \$5,000):

Planning, design and engagement on the community garden.

II. BUILD (up to \$10,000):

Expenses associated with building an approved community garden.

B. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Community Garden Start-Up Grant are to:

- Help remove barriers to the development of inclusive and accessible community gardens in all neighbourhoods in the City of Victoria
- Support the establishment of at least one allotment garden per neighbourhood, co-located with community facilities or services where possible, and more in neighbourhoods that feature a high proportion of rental or attached housing, where feasible
- Promote community gardening as a valuable community recreational activity that contributes to health and well-being, positive social interaction, neighbourhood building, food production, environmental education, habitat development, and connection to nature

C. DEFINITIONS

In Victoria, there are three types of community gardens:

- **Commons gardens** are communal areas maintained and managed by community volunteers – the harvest is available to the public
- **Allotment gardens** have individual garden plots that are rented, maintained and harvested by members of the garden
- **Community orchards** are groves of fruit or nut trees, and a community organization is responsible for the care, maintenance and harvesting of the trees – the harvest goes to the community

A community garden can be one of or a mix of these different types of gardens.

Community gardens can be built on public land (parks, boulevards, vacant lots) and private land. Community gardening activities on boulevards are required to follow the [Boulevard Garden Guidelines](#). Community orchards or food trees planted by the public on City land are required to follow the [Urban Food Tree Stewardship Program](#).



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D. ELIGIBILITY:

The Community Garden Start-Up Grant is available to registered non-profit organizations in good standing in B.C. or registered charitable organization in good standing with the Canada Revenue Agency. The applicant must be responsible for managing the community garden, either through a licence of occupation with the City of Victoria or a lease agreement with the property owner.

Funding priority will be given to:

- 1) Neighbourhoods without any existing gardens
- 2) Neighbourhoods without any or *few allotment gardens
**(few refers to under 10 plots)*
- 3) Neighbourhoods with higher population density and/or limited access to private gardening space, including neighbourhoods that feature a high proportion of rental or attached housing, where feasible

E. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Part 1: Design

Eligible expenses can include, but are not limited to:

- Cost of hiring a consultant
- Cost of community consultation processes – materials, printing, room rentals, etc.

Part 2: Build

Eligible expenses can include, but are not limited to:

- Commercial contractor or labour required to help build the garden (permits required here)
- Building materials
- Supplies – soil, compost, wood chips, etc.
- Equipment: tools, tool shed, hoses, etc.

Ineligible expenses for both phases include:

- Funding for an individual to coordinate volunteers (please see the Community Garden Volunteer Coordinator Grant)
- Ongoing operational costs (i.e., cost of liability insurance)

F. EVALUATION PROCESS

The intake period will occur annually. Applications will be accepted for the duration of four to six weeks. The City of Victoria will review all applications and evaluate them based on the eligibility requirements, technical details and meeting the grant program objectives.

G. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- **Capacity of Organizations to Deliver the Project (20 per cent):**
The project aligns and advances organization mission and mandate; organization has experience and/or capacity to undertake project successfully
- **Evidence of Need (20 per cent):**
Demonstrated strong evidence of need for the project, project aligns with the [City of Victoria Strategic Plan](#) and [Official Community Plan: Food Systems \(17\)](#)



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Garden applications that support in the following order will be given priority:

- Neighbourhoods without any existing gardens
- Neighbourhoods without any or few allotment gardens
- Neighbourhoods with higher population density and/or limited access to private gardening space including neighbourhoods that feature a high proportion of rental or attached housing, where feasible
- **Community Impact: Inclusion, Diversity and Social Equity (30 per cent)**
The project benefits a wide variety of stakeholders, with a priority on supporting communities who reside in rental or attached housing with limited access to gardening space. Strategies will be or have been implemented to ensure:
 - A wide variety of stakeholder groups have been included from the design phase
 - The project will involve appropriate partners/amplify impact through collaboration
 - Inclusion, diversity, and social equity are integrated into the built environment, the social/ cultural environment and methods of communication
 - Mechanisms for addressing accessibility and social equity are intentional and thorough
 - The applicant identifies appropriate methods for evaluating project results
- **Project Feasibility (30 per cent):**
The work plan is detailed and includes achievable timelines; budget expenses are appropriate, and amounts are identified for proposed activities; budget revenues include adequate funding sources to meet project expenses; other sources of funding are identified as potential or confirmed, including in-kind sources.

Each application will receive a score between one and five in each category. Scores are then weighted according to the percentages above. Not all applicants meeting the eligibility requirements will necessarily receive a grant or the full funding requested. Grants are one-time approvals and are not an automatic ongoing source of annual funding.

H. EXPECTATIONS

Each grant recipient will be required to submit a final report. See the [Community Garden Start-Up Grant Final Report](#) template here. Final reports are due within a year of funding awarded.

If an applicant has been awarded Phase 1 funding, their final report must be submitted with or prior to submitting a Phase 2 application.

If the grant is not used for the stated purpose or proof of required documentation cannot be submitted, the applicant must return the full amount to the City of Victoria.

Time extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the grant review team. If the project is not completed at the conclusion of the extension period, the applicant must return the grant funds in full.