



City of Watsonville

Community Garden Program Guide



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Public Works & Utilities Outreach

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1.0 Purpose

The Community Garden Program Guide is one component of the [Urban Greening Plan](#) and the [Climate Action & Adaptation Plan](#). The goal of the Community Garden Program Guide is to provide

a framework for creating and managing community gardens on City-owned property. The Community Garden Program Guide can be modified and then used for management of community gardens by owners of other public as well as private property, such as schools and churches.

A “community garden” a community garden is a piece of land gardened collectively by members of the community, or in partnership with a non-profit organization.

This Guide describes the roles and responsibilities the City of Watsonville and the gardeners have in the Community Garden Program. This program model relies upon groups of neighbors, community-based organizations and other entities to establish, manage, and sustain the garden sites. This plan recognizes that City of Watsonville has very limited resources to advance a community garden program, and as such, this program model leverages the City’s expertise and other potential non-financial contributions. Subject to available resources the City's role includes:

- Identify City-owned properties with garden potential.
- Sharing information about community gardening opportunities.
- Facilitate partnerships among non-profit organizations, community groups and other agencies.
- Assess and respond to proposals from residents for use of City property for gardens.
- Administer Use Agreements and Garden Plot Agreement / Liability Waivers with approved gardens on City property and gardeners using these gardens.
- Monitors gardens on City property to ensure compliance with the rules contained in the Community Garden Program Guide.

Establishing community gardens is consistent with *Chapter 8 of the General Plan (Parks & Recreation) Section 8.0.10 Community Gardens - Consider Implementation of a Community Garden Program, Undeveloped land that is being held for future use by the City is an example of land that could be used for community gardens*. This program is also consistent with the City’s *Strategic Plan, specifically Goal IV Safe and Healthy Community, Objective 3 Healthy Community*.

2.0 Value of Community Gardens

Community gardens provide people a place to grow produce or other crops for their own use on land that may be owned by the City, other local government agencies, non-profit associations, or private owners. Community gardening can be a valuable community recreation activity that contributes to health and well-being, positive social interaction, neighborhood building, food production, environmental education, habitat development, and connection to nature.

Community gardening includes, but is not limited to, the following types of activities:

- Growing annual and perennial food plants, medicinal plants, and flowers
- Growing Indigenous, cultural and native plants
- Pollinator gardens and hobby beekeeping
- Permaculture projects
- Fruit and nut trees
- Demonstration farming
- Edible landscaping

Community garden projects often include a mixture of these three types or functional areas:

1. **A commons garden** is a communal garden area maintained and managed by community volunteers, where any harvest produced is available to the community.
2. **Allotment gardens** consist of individual garden plots that are rented, maintained and harvested by individual member gardeners.
3. **Community Orchard** is a grove fruit or nut trees where a community organization is responsible for the care, maintenance and harvesting of trees, with food going to the community.

The American Community Gardening Association lists several potential benefits from community gardening:

- Produces nutritious food
- Reduces family food expenses
- Improves the quality of life for people in the garden
- Creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education
- Provides a catalyst for community development and resiliency
- Stimulates social interaction
- Encourages self-reliance
- Beautifies neighborhoods, develops neighborhood pride
- Conserves resources
- Reduces crime
- Preserves green space
- Reduces city heat from streets and parking lots
- Provides opportunities for intergenerational and cross-cultural connections
- Increases fruit and vegetable consumption and increased physical activity among community gardeners

3.0 Starting a Garden

If community members wish to start a community garden on City-owned property, they need to submit a petition to the City's Community Garden Program Manager requesting use of a specific location for a community garden.

1. Submit a petition to the City's Community Garden Program Manager, requesting the use of a specific location for the garden.
 - a. The petition must have signatures from at least five households that want to participate in the garden.
 - b. The petition and proposed site will be evaluated based on site selection criteria.
 - c. If the site is considered suitable, a neighborhood meeting will be organized to gather public input.
 - d. If the property is on a City park:
 - i. The City's Community Garden Manager will schedule a meeting with the interested neighbors and City Parks staff (Parks superintendent and director) to discuss the gardens location boundaries, opportunities for fruit trees, garden entrance and community board location.
 - ii. The proposed garden location will be presented to the Parks & Recreation Commission for their consideration. The decision of the Parks & Recreation Commission may be appealed to the City Council.
 - iii. Anyone wanting to appeal the Parks & Recreation Commission decision must notify the Garden Program Manager within 7 calendar days of the decision of the Commission. The Garden Program Manager will then place the item on the first available City Council meeting for the Council to consider the appeal.
 - e. If the potential garden is on City property (not a park), all documentation will be presented to the Assistant of the City Manager or the Public Works Director for approval. The decision of the City Management office may be appealed to the City Council.
 - f. Upon approval of garden site, the interested parties must form a garden group and elect a Garden Coordinator.
 - o The City shall issue, and the Garden Coordinator shall sign a Community Garden Site Permit (See Appendix A1) which officially permits the use of the site for a community garden.
2. The Garden Site Permit needs to be renewed on a yearly basis and renewal is contingent on compliance with this Community Garden Program Guide as well as other City considerations and priorities. At such time as the garden members at this site elect a new Garden Coordinator, the permit is terminated, and the new Garden Coordinator must sign a new Garden Site Permit.
 - a. The City does not guarantee the long-term use of this property for a community garden. The City may elect not to renew the permit at the end of the term. The City has the right to determine the appropriate use of the property it owns.

3.1 Site Map

Prior to approval for a City-owned property to be used as a community garden, community

members wishing to start a community garden on City property shall submit to the City's Community Garden Program Manager a site map that identifies the following features:

- Identifies boundaries of the garden
- identifies how the property will drain during a storm event
- Identifies a simple plan for storm water pollution prevention and run-off prevention which may include but is not limited to buffer plantings, winter cover crops, mulching paths in winter months and erosion control measures such as installation of biodegradable straw wattles, hay bales or siltation fencing.
- Identifies any natural features within the garden or in the vicinity of the garden which should be protected.
- Identifies setbacks/spacing from City trails of at least 6 feet, and sufficient space for public right-of-way and maintenance which will be determined on a case by case basis.
- Identifies locations for the following:
 - Compost
 - Community Board
 - Main entries and exits
 - Toolshed
 - Gathering area
 - Desired water sources

3.2 Community Gardens on City-Owned Property

Community members may obtain a list of existing and [potential future garden sites](#) by contacting the City's Community Garden Program Manager. Phone and other contact information is found on the City of Watsonville website at watsonville.gov/communitygardens

4.0 Site Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate and approve the establishment of a community garden on City-owned property.

4.1 Location

Community gardens are an acceptable use of land inside City parks, vacant, or underused City property, and property owned or formerly owned by the Redevelopment Agency. Community gardens are also acceptable use of private property including but not limited to schools, businesses, and churches. Whenever possible, the garden should be located as close as possible to the residences of the community members desiring to start a garden.

4.2 Adequate Space

Each garden plot should be a minimum of 24 square feet per garden participant. Garden site should be spacious enough to host a minimum of 10 households - at least one box per household.

4.3 Water and Sunlight

City water must be readily available nearby where a meter can be installed to irrigate the garden. The garden should have an open south face to maximize the plants' access to sun.

Vegetables need, at bare minimum, six hours of sunlight a day.

4.4 Soil

If the site proposed will be an in-ground garden, the gardeners shall have the soil tested for heavy metals and pesticides and determined to be safe for growing vegetables. Soil testing is not required for raised bed gardens that will use soil imported to the site from a reputable landscape supply company or similar reliable source.

4.5 Compost Space

Composting is an essential part of gardening. The potential site must have designated space for a compost pile or bins in the garden area. Mulch, compost or any other kind of soil must be covered to avoid runoff into the stormdrain system.

4.6 Visibility from Neighboring Residences

Easy visual access from the surrounding neighborhood is the best way to prevent crime and vandalism in gardens.

4.7 Accessibility for Mobility Impaired Persons

It is preferable to place gardens in places that can easily be accessed by a wheelchair user and elderly gardeners. Steep slopes and long walks from access points should be avoided.

4.8 Resource Conservation

Each proposed garden location presents a unique set of attributes that will be evaluated by City staff in order to ensure that the garden does not cause negative impacts to its surrounding environment. The site may not disturb or destroy existing native natural habitats such as native trees, riparian, wetland or valuable native grassland habitat.

Gardens shall not result in any water quality impairment and should be located 125 feet or more from the edge of the water of wetlands, creeks, the Pajaro River or other bodies of water.

The planting surface of gardens should be relatively flat ground with little grade so as to prevent erosion and stormwater pollution.

In addition to the guidelines provided regarding water quality and preventing erosion, here are more resource conservation opportunities for community gardens:

- Water conservation: gardeners should use water efficiently by choosing irrigation methods such as drip irrigation or soaker hoses to minimize water waste. Use mulching around plants to retain moisture and reduce evaporation.
- Implement rainwater harvesting systems where possible to collect and reuse rainwater for garden irrigation.
- Organic gardening methods are a requirement. No use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers is allowed. The use of natural pest control methods like companion planting, crop rotation, and attracting beneficial insects to maintain a healthy garden ecosystem are only a couple of examples, for more alternatives contact the Community Gardens Manager.
 - Integrated Pest Management (IPM): the use of integrated pest management strategies can help control pests effectively while minimizing the use of chemical

pesticides. IPM involves monitoring for pests, using cultural and biological control methods, and resorting to chemical options only as a last resort.

- Soil health: community gardens demonstrate the importance of soil health and the use of sustainable soil management practices by adding organic matter, such as compost and cover crops, to improve soil fertility, structure, and water-holding capacity.
 - Compost organic waste such as garden trimmings. Composting helps reduce waste sent to landfills and provides nutrient-rich compost for the garden, eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers. Compost should always be covered.
- Native plants and biodiversity: gardeners are encouraged to incorporate native plants into community gardens. Native plants are well-adapted to the local environment, requiring less water and maintenance. They also support native pollinators and wildlife, enhancing biodiversity within the garden and are a great option in the buffer and perimeter zones of the garden.
- Efficient space utilization: to promote efficient use of garden space gardeners may use companion planting techniques and intercropping, where compatible plants are grown together to maximize space and resources. This approach helps minimize waste and increase productivity.
- Energy efficiency: gardeners are encouraged to use energy-efficient practices within the garden, such as utilizing solar-powered lights or energy-efficient tools and equipment, or manual or hand-powered tools whenever feasible.

4.9 Access Strategies

Community gardens located on public property must be accessible to all. Individual community gardens may request restricted access based on unique conditions that shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, subject to approval by the City.

- Gardens with restricted access shall prepare a program of scheduled public access that includes one or more opportunities for general public access, subject to approval by the City.
- Each community garden shall allow for regular hours of public access with a minimum of weekly hours of access. The hours of public access shall be posted in English and Spanish on the community board or in a location visible to the public.
- All opportunities for public access shall be posted publicly at the garden at least a week in advance. The Garden Coordinator must provide the City's Community Garden Program Manager with the schedule so it may be posted on the City's website.

The following suggested strategies promote public access to gardens that normally allow access to members only. The use of more than one strategy is encouraged:

- Open the gates to the garden when 2 or more garden members are present.
- Schedule public visits for the first Saturday of each month for 4 hours.
- Participate in a City-wide, "open-garden day" event.
- Annual events inviting neighbors and community at large to the site.

5.0 Community Garden Guidelines and Policies

The intent of the following policies is to provide an approved framework for the City and residents to use in the coordination and management of community gardens on public property. All activities related to community gardening shall be conducted without discrimination against any person on grounds of race, creed, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

5.1 Garden Rules and Regulations

Gardeners and visitors must comply with the following rules and regulations: Be welcoming, civil and cooperative with other gardeners, neighbors, and the public. Gardeners agree to respect the peace and quiet of the surrounding neighborhood.

AMPLIFIED SOUND: Amplified sound is not permitted in the garden.

CAMPING: Camping in the garden is prohibited.

CHILDREN: Children in the garden must be supervised by a parent or other responsible adult. Parents and caretakers must ensure that children understand and follow the rules and regulations.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES: No alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs of any kind are allowed in the garden.

COVER CROPS: Soil can not remain bare in the winter. Cover crops should be planted to enrich the soil and prevent erosion.

DOGS: Keep dogs on leash and out of garden plots unless dogs are prohibited at a specific garden. Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in garbage.

EROSION: Gardening must be carried out in a manner that prevents soil erosion.

GARBAGE: Unless the garden has arranged for garbage removal, garbage generated at the garden must be taken out of the garden to discard properly at a waste disposal facility or in garden members own personal garbage bins. Discarding garbage on the ground or in compost or green waste piles is prohibited.

GRAFFITI: Graffiti must be removed by the garden members within 48 hours.

GREEN WASTE: Weeds and plant material should be composted on-site or placed in the green waste collection area(s) to be disposed of properly later. Green waste should not be thrown away in the trash, left in the pathways or improperly dumped.

GUESTS: Guests must follow the Rules of the Garden. Each gardener is responsible for the actions of his/her guests in the garden.

HARVESTING: Harvest only from your own plot or from the communal designated areas. Do not take from any garden plot without permission.

INVASIVE SPECIES: plants including but not limited to blackberry, bamboo, and ivy are prohibited. Only California native mints like pennyroyal and coyote mint are allowed.

LITTER: Any litter on the garden site must be removed by garden members.

MOTOR VEHICLES: Motorized vehicles are not allowed in the garden with exception of motorized wheelchairs.

NO SELLING: Produce grown in this community garden may not be sold. Produce from the community garden is primarily for family consumption or donation. Excess food can be preserved for future use, shared with friends or neighbors, traded among your fellow community gardeners or donated to local food banks.

ORGANIC GARDENING: This is an organic garden. Use organic pest control methods only. No synthetic herbicides, pesticides or non-organic fertilizers are permitted in the garden. To see if a substance is allowed, check the [USDA National Organic Program's National List](#), or look for the Organic Material Review Institute (OMRI) seal on the label even if the label says "Organic" or "Natural".

PLOT: Gardeners must plant and harvest within their assigned plot.

PROHIBITED PLANTS: marijuana, including medical marijuana may not be grown in City-owned community gardens. Cactuses like nopales can only be grown in large pots like cut wine barrels, not directly on the ground and only in the perimeter area inside the garden.

SMOKING: No smoking is allowed in or around the garden.

TOOLS: Garden-owned and donated tools are for use in the community garden only and should be cleaned and returned to the tool shed or secure storage area after use. Tools should never be left out in garden plots or pathways or taken off the garden premises.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS: Report any unsafe condition or suspicious behavior to the Garden Coordinator. In case of emergency, call 911.

WASTING OF WATER: Water waste and run-off is prohibited and if reported on more than 3 instances it may result in the termination of the garden.

5.2 Violations of Community Gardens Program Rules and Regulations

All members are responsible for complying with and enforcing the rules and regulations contained in the Community Garden Program Guide. If infractions are noted, the Garden Coordinator and manager should be notified.

- The Garden Coordinator has the right to revoke the membership of any member who repeatedly fails to comply with these rules and regulations.
 - A verbal warning will be given for a first offense, a written warning for a second offense and a dismissal from the garden for a third offense.
- The Garden Coordinator is authorized by the City to enforce these Rules and Regulations, and in doing so will take action, including dismissal, against any gardener who is in Violation according to the Due Process described below.
- When a gardener violates the Program Rules and Regulations, the violation will be reported using the Violation Incident Report (See Appendix A4) which will be issued to the gardener by the Garden Coordinator. Failure to acknowledge the Violation Incident Report by not signing the Report will be an admission of guilt and may result in the forfeiture of your participation in the Program.

5.3 Due Process

Step 1. Verbal Warning

Step 2. Written Warning – no more than two per year allow to maintain membership

Step 3. Garden Coordinator to give dismissal notice

Step 4. (Optional) Gardener may request for an appeal, in writing (letter or email), within 10 business days of receiving the dismissal notice

Step 5. Dependent upon garden committee recommendation, Garden Coordinator to give final written notice

5.4 Establishing an Appeals Board

- Every individual community garden will establish a committee to oversee the due process as an Appeal Board.
- The committee does not replace the Garden Coordinator but helps with difficult decisions.
- The committee must be made up of at least five currently registered gardeners from that garden.
- The committee should reflect the diversity of the garden as much as possible, including, but not limited to ethnic background, age and length of time a gardener has been at the garden.
- The committee will follow the Appeal Board Guidelines as set forth by the Community Gardens Program Manager.

5.5 Violations Warranting Immediate Dismissal

- Theft of tools and equipment
- Theft of produce and plants
- Vandalism of tools, equipment or City property
- The use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs of any kind in any area of the City's Community Gardens
- More than two written warnings in a calendar year

6.0 Garden Components

6.1 Construction and Installation of Garden Elements

Guidelines:

Community gardens on City-owned property are public spaces and should be designed and built with the public's safety in mind. For this reason, structural garden elements which a person may sit on, stand on, walk under, or crawl under shall be constructed in a safe manner and only with prior permission of the City. Infrastructure regulated by municipal codes shall be installed per said codes.

Policies:

- Construction or installation of fences, gates, tool sheds, steps, shade trellis, benches, potting tables, etc. must receive prior approval by the City's Community Garden Coordinator and Manager in some cases shall be required to meet City building codes provided by the City's Community Development Department. Qualifications for the construction or installation of a garden element will be at the City's discretion.
- A qualified contractor proposing to perform work in a community garden must provide proof of the proper license and liability insurance to the City's Community Development Department for approval prior to any construction or installation activity.
- Caution must be taken when digging in the garden. The Public Works and Utilities Department

must be contacted for location of any existing utilities if gardeners intend to dig deeper than 12" below the existing garden grade.

6.2 Garden Plots

Guidelines:

Garden plots are allocated gardening spaces for cultivating vegetables, herbs, fruits and pollinators. These should be located in areas receiving adequate sunlight. Plots should be uniform and reasonable in size to optimize opportunities for participation.

Policies:

- Plots should be a minimum of 4 x 6 or 24 square feet; the largest plot shall not be more than two times the size of the smallest plot within the same garden.
- Wheelchair-accessible plots are excluded from the plot size requirements due to their unique design requirements. Plots may be level with the ground or in a raised container. Wheelchair accessible plots should be designed according to accessibility standards.
- Plots should be visibly defined, such as with stakes or redwood or plastic headers. Pressure-treated lumber is prohibited, since the chemical preservative can leach into the soil.
- Non-compliant garden plots are permitted to remain until the plot is reassigned to a new garden member at which time the plot must be modified to conform to these policies.

6.3 Tool Shed and Storage Chests

Guidelines:

A tool shed or storage chest may be installed to store equipment shared by the garden members to accommodate garden tools and supplies. Sheds and chests should be sturdy and lockable to prevent theft and vandalism.

Policies:

- Tool sheds must not exceed 120 square feet in size. Proposed sheds must be approved by the City for aesthetics, size and safety.
- All tools and materials stored within the community garden shall be shared for use by all gardeners and may not be taken out of the community garden.
- Community garden tools and storage sheds may not be used for private storage.

6.4 Compost Bins

Guidelines:

Compost bins and enclosures are used to promote decomposition of organic garden waste. A system of compost bins and/or enclosures are required to facilitate stages of decomposition and to minimize the need to haul garden waste to recycling facilities. For residential compost bins and composting instructions, contact the City of Watsonville Public Works and Utilities.

Policies:

- Avoid locating compost bins adjacent to a main pedestrian pathway.
- Gardeners shall manage composting garden waste in a manner that minimizes odor and pests.

- Gardeners should avoid placement of diseased plant material in composting bins or enclosures.
- Pressure-treated lumber is prohibited since chemical preservatives may leach into the decomposing compost.
- No waste from outside the community garden is permitted on the garden composting pile.

6.5 Pathways

Guidelines:

Pathways determine the circulation into and within the garden. Pathway construction should be low maintenance. The selection of paving materials should allow for wheelchair access where feasible. Not all paths need to be designed for wheelchair access. Bark/wood chip mulch on pathways suppresses weedy growth, retains moisture and returns nutrients to the soil through decomposition.

Policies:

- Pathways will be kept clear of weeds, tools and other debris.
- Wheelchair accessible paths must comply with [Title 24 of the California Building Code and the Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) for all new construction and renovations.

6.6 Fences, Gates and Security

Guidelines:

Community gardens on public property are unstaffed public facilities used largely by garden members. As a public facility, the general public is permitted access to community gardens for their enjoyment. Fencing may be required for gardens on City property for safety reasons or to separate the garden from other activities. Installation of fencing with lockable gates may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Policies:

- Fences must meet City building code requirements. Proposed fences must be reviewed by the City for aesthetics, size and safety.
- Should fencing be required or desired, the members of a community garden must provide all materials and labor including any permitting fees that may be required by the City. No pressure treated lumber is to be used for fencing.
- Gardens with restricted access must comply with the Access Strategies contained herein.

6.7 Bulletin and Message Boards

Guidelines:

Bulletin and message boards promote the sense of community through the sharing of information between garden members and with the general public. Bulletin boards should have a portion that is reserved for official garden information only and should be located in a high visibility area.

Policies:

- Gardens on City property shall have a bulletin board that provides the name of the garden and contact information for the garden coordinator or designee.

- General community announcements are permitted. A summary of the garden rules should be posted.
- Any postings that are discriminatory or offensive in nature are not permitted. Postings in gardens on City property shall be in both English and Spanish.
- Advertising is prohibited.

6.8 Signage

Guidelines:

Signage includes identification, informational and wayfinding means. Each community garden should be identifiable with standard and recognizable signage. Other signage common to parks and community gardens should be standardized to minimize visual clutter.

Policies:

- Each garden shall have a sign identifying it by name. Garden names on City property must be reviewed and approved by the City prior to any usage. Signage visible from a public street shall meet the requirements of the City's sign ordinance.
- Design, content and location of signs that fall under the [City's sign ordinance](#) must be reviewed and approved by the City prior to placement.
- Fabrication and installation of signs are the responsibility of the garden members. Community gardeners may fabricate their own signs inside the garden area to label garden elements (e.g., "tool shed", "greenhouse" etc.) or standard warnings (e.g., "stay on path", "do not pick the flowers", etc.). These signs shall be visually compatible with the garden environment.

6.9 Maintenance and Repair of Garden and Garden Elements

Guidelines

Proper maintenance of the garden will result in more successful harvests, a more aesthetically appealing garden site and neighborhood harmony. Maintenance of the garden elements will increase their useful life and result in a more pleasant experience for gardeners and visitors. Certain garden features may need repair from time to time due to normal wear and tear.

Policies

- Each garden member is responsible for the maintenance of his/her assigned plot.
- Each garden member shall participate in the ongoing maintenance of common areas within and around the garden site including but not limited to the duties listed in their respective Community Garden Plot Agreement.

7.0 Organizational Structure

7.1 Governance Structure

Guidelines:

There are several basic organizational needs that must be met on the part of the participants to

ensure the overall success of the garden. The three main components necessary for community garden success are: Passion/Interest, Volunteer Time Commitment, and Knowledge/Curiosity to learn.

Policies:

1. The City will require a designated contact person for each garden located on City owned property. This contact person will be the Garden Coordinator. The Garden Coordinator's role is one of communication and facilitation.
2. The Garden Coordinator is selected by the garden members by a majority vote on an annual basis using direct democracy (one gardener, one vote).
3. The duties of the Garden Coordinator include:
 - a. Sign the Community Garden Permit.
 - b. Collect signed Community Garden Plot Agreements, Waiver of Liability forms and understanding of Garden Rules and Regulation from all gardeners and forward them to the City's Community Garden Program Manager.
 - c. Signup for water and pay the water bill. Collect garden dues from members that may be used for water, supplies, tools, events, or special projects decided upon by the membership.
 - d. Assign plots on a first come, first serve basis.
 - e. Maintain a waiting list of interested gardeners.
 - f. Re-assign available plots to those on the waiting list in the order they appear on the waiting list.
 - g. Orient new gardeners to the space; i.e., explain water use, communal space use, workday expectations, etc.
 - h. Post garden rules, upcoming events and other documentation on the bulletin board in the garden.
 - i. Maintain a list of all active gardeners with their contact information.
 - j. Notify gardeners using plots that appear to be inactive and contact the gardener regarding the status of the plot.
 - k. Coordinate garden workdays to maintain the communal spaces or to work on special projects.
 - l. Call garden-wide meetings at least 4 times a year for the purpose of discussing issues, updates, sharing ideas and goals, holding annual elections for the Garden Coordinator position, conducting workdays, coordinating workshops etc. Any meeting that provides advance notification to all of its members is considered a "garden-wide meeting".
 - m. Facilitate the garden membership in electing or appointing other positions, such as treasurer, secretary, or an events chair to share some of the responsibilities. Other leadership roles for the garden may include membership & outreach coordination, meeting and workday coordination, and common space coordination.
 - n. Communicate with the City as the primary contact for the garden membership.
 - o. Operate the garden in a manner free from discrimination against any person on grounds of race, creed, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Garden members shall by consensus (general agreement or majority vote):

1. Create rules for fair and safe on-going operation of the garden, as needed to supplement the rules provided herein by the City.
2. Designate treasurer who shall collect dues and pay bills for water and any materials or services jointly purchased by the garden members.
3. Institute a means of keeping common areas, the paths between plots, outside of fences that surround the garden, etc. in a safe and tidy condition.
4. Decide on interim use and upkeep for vacant plots until a new garden member is assigned to that plot.
5. Establish a system for informing gardeners when there is information that they need to know or tasks they need to do, making sure that all gardeners have access to this information.

7.2 Community Garden Plot Agreement and Waiver of Liability

Guidelines:

Each garden member is to execute a Plot Agreement and Waiver of Liability as an indication that the member understands his/her/their rights and responsibilities to the community garden. The required Plot Agreement and Waiver of Liability is included in Appendix A2

Policies:

- Membership to a community garden and the opportunity to garden on City-owned property is open to all City of Watsonville residents.
- Each garden shall submit to the City a *Community Gardener Plot Agreement and Waiver of Liability*, which specify conditions for active membership. Members are required to sign the Agreement indicating their intent to comply.
- It is up to the collective body of gardeners within each garden to establish any due's structure they believe is needed to operate the garden.
- To optimize opportunities for participation, the City is limiting each household to one plot only. More than one person may be assigned the same plot.
- All gardens must maintain an active wait list. Assignment of garden plots must be made from a waitlist on a first-come, first serve basis. The updated waitlist should be posted at the garden. The waitlist may also be posted on the garden's website if available. (See Appendix A5) for a sample waitlist.
- Membership can be revoked for non-compliance with the Community Gardener Plot Agreement. If active membership conditions are not being met, then the Garden Coordinator may call to find out the status of the plot and the intent of the gardener.
 - If the membership conditions are still not being met, then the Garden Coordinator may proceed with a 30-day written notice to non-performing garden member(s). If the non-performing gardener does not respond within the 30-day period, then that membership is considered revoked, and the plot shall be reassigned to the next person on the waiting list. See Appendix A3 for sample letter.

7.3 Waiver of Liability

Guidelines:

By signing the waiver, each participant acknowledges the risks involved by participating in the activity and that the participant is responsible for his/her/their own actions. This protects both the public's interest and the community gardener.

Policies:

- Each garden member is required to sign the City's liability waiver which is included in the Community Garden Plot Agreement and Waiver of Liability prior to conducting any gardening activity on City-owned property.
 - The Garden Coordinator is responsible for collecting liability waivers from community garden members. These signed waivers should be submitted to the City's Community Garden Program Manager on an annual basis, following the calendar year.
- All persons invited to share a plot must also sign this Agreement. Garden Coordinator approval is required for adding someone such as a spouse, partner or housemate residing at your address to your plot at any time.
- Garden members shall ensure a safe environment for each other and for visitors to the garden. Visitors to community gardens are not required to sign the City's liability waiver.

7.4 Conflict Resolution

Guidelines:

Internal or external conflicts may arise that cannot be readily addressed and may undermine the function of the garden. Such situations may be resolved through careful adherence to the policies contained herein. Some community gardens may establish a more formal organizational structure, by-laws and additional rules for the garden through a democratic process to resolve and avoid conflict.

Policies:

- Establish ground rules at the start of every meeting to promote respect for each participant. All parties involved must be given an opportunity to provide input at a public forum. If necessary, a neutral person may be invited to conduct the meeting. Establish a committee of garden members to enforce rules, alleviating the burden on any one member.
- Utilize mediation resources, such as [Santa Cruz County Conflict Resolution Program](#) if conflicts are not resolved and effective communication strategies such as [Non Violent Communication](#)
- If the above strategies do not allow the group to reach resolution, the City is available for support and consultation with garden members and may intervene when necessary to resolve issues regarding community gardens on City property.

7.5 Fundraising

Guidelines:

Community gardeners may choose to fundraise for their community garden. Proceeds may offset garden expenses to fund unique elements for the garden (such as garden furnishings, etc.) or be donated to the City for improvements (such as for the purchase and installation of a bench). In-kind

gifts or services may also be donated to a community garden. Fundraising activities on City property, gifts or in-kind donations will require approval or acceptance by the City.

Policies:

- Generally donated garden supplies (hoses, shovels, plants, etc.) may be accepted by the community garden without the City's formal approval.
- Permanent fixtures (benches, decorative mosaic tiles, commemorative plaques, etc.) do require City acceptance prior to installation.
- These policies do not apply to the collection of garden dues established by the community garden members.

7.6 Disorderly Conduct

Policy:

- Inappropriate behavior, such as removing fruits or vegetables from garden plots that are not one's own designated plot, or vandalism in the garden could lead to cancellation of membership in the community garden.
- Gardeners are welcome to bring their children into the garden. Children should be taught the rules of the garden and be supervised at all times.

7.7 Neighborhood Involvement and Program Partnerships

Guidelines:

A community garden group may involve schools, neighborhood organizations, service providers, or other non-profits organizations to offer increased access to the garden, enrich programming opportunities and increase resources for maintenance and garden sustainable growth.

Policies:

- Partnership opportunities permitted in community gardens include but are not limited to: Programs that are integrated with the garden, such as to teach children to garden and then to cook with ingredients that are harvested.
- Programs developed and offered by the community garden in which the community or a partner is educated about an aspect of gardening and best practices, either on or off-site.
- Occasions on which the public is invited to the garden for celebration, harvest, work or education.
- Outreach to neighbors about the activities and events in the community garden. This can be achieved through mass mailings, flyers delivered door to-door and public postings.
- Workshops that are connected to the health and well being of the garden and/or the gardeners.

7.8 Hosting City Lead Conservation Workshops

Guidelines:

A community garden group will be required to participate in and host at least two conservation workshops offered by City's staff in coordination with the City's Community Garden Program Manager. Family members, neighbors, and other community gardeners shall be invited. These

workshops will provide information, resources, and opportunities for collaboration with other gardeners. Workshops include but are not limited to backyard composting, retrofitting our landscape to conserve water, dealing with pests without harmful chemicals, creating organic fertilizers, learning about resource conservation opportunities in the garden and at home, community emergency preparedness and others related to the [City's Urban Greening Plan](#).

8.0 Garden Operations

8.1 Active Gardening

Guidelines:

To properly care for the land, active year-round gardening and care of the soil are required. Gardeners are responsible for keeping their plot and the paths surrounding their plot clean and free of weeds. If active gardening is not occurring and the plot is neglected, the Garden Coordinator shall contact the gardener to clarify whether or not they intend to keep gardening or if the plot can be assigned to the next person on the waiting list.

Policies:

- When a plot has been neglected, the Garden Coordinator shall notify the non-active gardener with a verbal, telephone or email warning.
 - If active gardening does not resume within 15 days, or the gardener has not responded to messages from the Garden Coordinator, or the garden member is not reachable, then the Garden Coordinator shall issue a written 30-day notice (See Appendix A3) to resume garden activity.
 - If gardening has not resumed by the end of the 30-Day Notice, the member's gardening privileges will be terminated. The plot may be assigned to the next person on the waiting list.
- No garden member may transfer their plot to anyone else.
- In case of illness, pregnancy, travel, etc., gardeners should inform the Garden Coordinator. Either party may find a temporary person to garden during the absence; this person must sign a temporary agreement which will be valid for no more than 90 days.
- Gardens shall either plant crops year-round or plant a cover crop in the winter to prevent erosion and enrich the soil.

8.2 Harvesting

Guidelines:

Gardeners should harvest from their own garden plots. Produce sharing between gardeners is welcome with prior consent of the garden plot holder.

Policies:

- No member may remove from or harvest from any garden plot without permission. The unauthorized taking of produce from another gardener's plot will result in the removal of your gardening privileges.

8.3 Maintenance

Guidelines:

Day-to-day maintenance is the responsibility of the community gardeners. Maintenance should include the ongoing efforts to control weeds, maintain healthy plants and trees, remove dead or diseased growth, keep shared garden resources neat and orderly, preserve natural resources and reduce pests.

Policies:

- The community garden site and surrounding area shall be always maintained for safe public use.
- Garden members shall be primarily responsible for their individually assigned plots, unless a temporary maintenance arrangement is made in conformance with the Community Garden Agreement while the individual is on vacation or ill.
 - The Community Garden Plot Agreement includes a provision for a temporary transfer of maintenance responsibilities to another person in order to accommodate periods of illness, pregnancy, travel, etc.
- Common areas are to be the shared responsibility of all garden members. Any graffiti shall be removed within 24 hours by the garden members.
- Each gardener shall maintain their assigned plot within its confines without plants encroaching into common areas or other plots.
 - No plants (except Milpa/Corn) may be higher than 6 feet over soil level in plots except in agreed-upon communal planting areas.
 - Beds may not be raised higher than 3 feet except in cases of access for disabled persons or to keep inoculated mushroom logs underneath the bed. No altering of the dimensions of a plot or of the surrounding area is allowed unless authorized by the Garden Coordinator and City Program Manager.

8.4 Water Service and Other Utilities

Guidelines:

Gardens will only be installed in areas where water is readily available, and where a new water meter can be installed. The City will supply and install a new water meter and backflow prevention device for the garden site. The City will waive the water service activation and connection fee and charge residential rates.

Service line routing beyond the meter (i.e. hose bibbs, irrigation pipe, etc.) is the gardeners' responsibility. Each garden shall pay for the monthly cost of water used in the garden as well as other water usage fees, including water availability and backflow testing fees, etc.

Gardeners should avoid damage to water lines and other underground utilities by calling 811 and getting approval before digging from the Community Gardens Program Manager. The land used for a community garden may contain underground utilities, including water, electrical, gas, telephone, cable, and sewer lines. Gardeners must take special care when digging in the garden, particularly at depths exceeding 12".

Policies:

- The City shall bill the Garden Coordinator for the cost of water used by the community garden. The Garden Coordinator shall collect dues from members needed to cover the cost of water.
 - Water fees shall be paid on time; water may be turned off in case of failure to comply with payments.
- The City shall bill the Parks Department if the garden is located on Parks property and there is public programming available by the garden coordinator that aligns and is approved by the Parks Department.
- Plants must be hand-watered or irrigated early in the day or late evening to minimize water loss due to evaporation. An auto shutoff hose nozzle is required when watering with a hose.
- Use of a minimum 2" depth of mulch is recommended (bark, straw, compost, etc.) to prevent soil erosion, minimize evaporation, reduce soil compaction and moderate temperatures for plant roots.
- Contact the City Department of Public Works and Utilities to locate underground utilities prior to projects that require digging, particularly at depths exceeding 12".

8.5 Irrigation and Water

Guidelines:

Irrigation is the artificial means of supplying water to plants. In community gardens, irrigation is typically achieved through careful hand watering with a hose or installation of drip irrigation. Hose bibs should be located to permit a hose to reach all plots.

Policies:

- Community gardeners must use water in a manner that prevents waste and run-off. Gardeners shall use the minimum water necessary for successful plant growth.
 - Chronic waste of water may result in the water being shut off by the City. Gardens shall be managed for best practices in water conservation (e.g., drip irrigation, time of watering, clustering like plantings in zones). Pollinator plantings should be targeted to drought tolerant species.
- An automatic shutoff nozzle must be used on any hose in the garden.
- Drip irrigation tubing may be installed by the gardeners and is recommended as a water conservation strategy.
 - Any alterations to the irrigation system must be approved by the Garden Coordinator and program manager. No major alterations can be made to the irrigation system on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays because of the risk of damage and the limited availability of City staff during these times.
 - In the event of an irrigation emergency, contact the Garden Coordinator or County Dispatch at 471-1151. Any alterations to the main irrigation line are prohibited.

8.6 Resource Conservation

Guidelines:

Community gardens should exercise best practices for water conservation, watershed protection, erosion prevention, energy efficiency, composting, and waste reduction.

Policies:

- Gardens shall be managed for best practices in water conservation (i.e., drip irrigation, watering early or late in the day, clustering like plantings in zones). Pollinator plantings should be targeted to drought-resistant species.
- Garden waste shall be composted on site or hauled to the City's Waste and Recycling drop-off if it doesn't fit in the compost structure on site.
- All recyclable materials such as wood, metals, plastic, paper, cardboard, bottles and cans shall be collected and recycled.
- Diseased plant material shall be disposed of in the garbage.
- Best practices for stormwater pollution prevention shall be implemented, such as the use of hay bales and straw wattles to prevent runoff from the garden into storm drains or off the site.
- Due to their impact on native habitat, invasive species may not be planted within or around a community garden. An invasive plant list is provided in Appendix A9.
 - Because of the uniqueness and importance of the natural habitats of the Pajaro Valley, community gardens should strive to increase the natural habitats of an area and can do so by planting native trees or plants within the garden setting, such as native plant hedgerows, pollinator plantings, shade trees and/or fruit trees. Proposals for such plantings require prior approval by the City Program Manager.

8.7 Invasive and Prohibited Plants

Guidelines:

Invasive species are one of the greatest threats to biodiversity worldwide, second only to habitat destruction. Most of the plants used in gardens and landscaping do not invade or harm wildland areas. But a few vigorous species can — and do — escape into open landscapes and cause a variety of ecological problems. They displace native plants and wildlife, increase wildfire and flood danger and clog valuable waterways. Prevention is the most effective and resource-efficient way to combat the spread of invasive plants.

Policies:

- Invasive species such as blackberry and bamboo are prohibited. For a complete listing of invasive plants (See Appendix A9).
- Marijuana, including medical marijuana, may not be grown on City-owned property.

8.8 Organic Garden Methods, Supplies and Materials

Guidelines:

For the protection of gardeners, visitors and the environment, all materials used for the purpose of gardening on City property must be organic as defined herein.

Policies:

- Non-organic pesticides and fertilizers are prohibited including, but not limited to, ammonium sulfate, muriate of potash, super-phosphate, highly soluble chemical fertilizers, rotenone, pyrethrum, sevin, malathion, diazinon, nicotine sulfate.
- No herbicides or pesticides may be used, except for organic substances approved by the U.S.

Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program or by OMRI.

- To see if a substance is allowed, check the USDA National Organic Program's National List, Subpart G, 205.601 and 205.602 or look for the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) seal on the label. [OMRI](#) is a non-profit that determines which products are allowed for use in organic production and is generally compatible with the USDA organic program. OMRI's website has a user-friendly search feature.
- Products simply labeled "Organic" or "Natural" are not allowed unless they meet the USDA or OMRI approval.
- Homemade pest control methods are allowed, including but not limited to soap sprays, sulfur, traps, wood ashes, pepper and onion spray, netting and similar materials.
- Care must be taken to avoid entanglement by birds, snakes and other wildlife in any netting used in the garden.
- Use of wood treated with preservatives is not allowed.
- Organic fertilizers are allowed including but not limited to cottonseed, blood, bone, horn and hoof meals, manure, compost, liquid fish or seaweed and similar materials. To see if a substance is allowed, check the [USDA National Organic Program's National List](#), or look for the OMRI seal on the label even if the label says "Organic" or "Natural".

8.9 Materials Storage

Guidelines:

All materials should be delivered, used and stored in a manner that minimizes impact on the surrounding neighborhood, sidewalks, streets and open spaces.

Policies:

- Any blockage of city streets or any portion of the city sidewalk is strictly prohibited except during the active unloading of materials. Temporary stockpiles of materials such as manure, wood chips and garden debris shall be placed on the garden site in a location and manner that minimizes public visibility.

8.10 Public Access

Guidelines:

Community gardens are located on public property that is intended to be accessible to all. The casual park visitor shall be permitted to share in the community garden environment. The following policy recommendations are intended to facilitate public access, particularly where it may be otherwise restricted.

Policies:

- Gardening and related activities may occur from sunrise to sunset.
- Community gardens located on public property should be made accessible to all. Some individual community gardens may decide to restrict access to the public based on their own unique conditions. Such gardens will set aside certain times for public access and post such times on the gate. Public access shall not be limited in any way without prior approval from the City.

- Special events or gatherings may require a special event permit and could include City fees.
- Gardeners shall not restrict City personnel from access to the garden.

8.11 Trees

Guidelines:

Trees are a vital resource that provide a range of benefits, including cleaner air, erosion control, greening of public spaces, wildlife habitat and increased property values. Existing trees near or on community garden sites require special management to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Policy:

- Individuals must contact the Public Works and Utilities Department if a tree needs to be pruned or removed for the benefit of the garden or if a gardener wishes to propose installation of new trees, shrubs, buffer zone plantings, etc.
- Should a community garden group wish to plant trees for the purpose of creating buffer zones, shade, etc., prior City approval is required.
- The planting of fruit trees requires prior City approval.

8.12 Waste Removal

Guidelines:

Community gardens may generate a surplus of organic waste beyond the capacity of its compost bins. Visitors to the community gardens may carry in trash, or illegal dumping may occur nearby. The removal of excess materials from community gardens ensures the safety and enjoyment for both the gardener and the general public.

Policies:

- Gardens located in a City park should coordinate with the Park's staff to remove small amounts of material.
- Regular trash pick-up is not generally provided at stand-alone garden sites but may be ordered and paid for by the garden members.
- Each garden site shall coordinate removal of non-compostable organic material and garbage.
- The City will provide to each Garden Coordinator a limited number of free passes to the Waste and Recycling Drop-off for the recycling of clean garden waste and disposal of trash and diseased plants.

8.13 Illegal Dumping and Hazardous Materials

Guidelines:

Illegal dumping of garbage and hazardous substances is not uncommon to urban parks and may include hypodermic needles and human and animal feces. The removal of illegal dumping that is toxic or contains toxic components (such as paints, motor oil, computers and monitors) requires special handling to prevent contamination of garden properties for the protection of the public's health.

Policies:

- Contact the Public Works and Utilities Department Customer Service at 768-3133 to remove illegally dumped wastes.

8.14 Animals

Guidelines:

Dogs are permitted in gardens unless, by consensus, the garden members adopt a rule to prohibit dogs from entering into the community garden. Owners must follow all garden rules as they pertain to dogs. Bees may also be permitted in gardens by consensus of garden members.

Policies:

- Dogs must be on leash and out of garden plots. Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in the garbage. Service dogs are allowed in community gardens
- If bees are brought on to property, signs must be posted stating bees are kept on the garden property. City approval is required before placing beehives at a garden site.

Definitions

- **City** – City of Watsonville or Community Garden Program Manager or another City Representative.
- **Communal Plot** – undivided gardening space for cultivating vegetables, fruits and pollinators by gardeners as a group
- **Community Garden** – a site operated and maintained by committed volunteers where a parcel of land is used for growing produce, flowers for pollinators, Indigenous, cultural and medicinal plants, native plants, edible landscaping, fruit and nut trees for noncommercial use through individual and shared plots and/or areas. Demonstration gardening or other instructional programming may be offered, and shared tools and common expenses are covered through the collection of membership fees and/or donations
- **City's Community Garden Program Manager** – is an individual designated by the City of Watsonville to oversee and manage the Community Garden Program. They are responsible for coordinating and administering the program, including tasks such as site selection, evaluating proposals, supporting the creation of new community gardens by organizing neighborhood meetings, issuing permits, managing documentation, and ensuring compliance with program guidelines. The Community Garden Program Manager serves as the main point of contact and liaison between for community members and other City staff playing a crucial role in facilitating the establishment and maintenance of community gardens on City-owned property.
- **Common Area** – a space within the community garden that is accessible by all gardeners and visitors such as pathways and areas for materials storage
- **Community Garden Plot Agreement and Liability Waiver** – the document signed by each participating gardener on City property that contains rights, rules. Responsibilities of each gardener and contains a release of liability clause
- **Community Garden Site Agreement** – the agreement between the elected Garden Coordinator and the City allowing the use of designated City property for a community garden as per the City's Community Garden Program Guide

- ☒ **Disability Access** – barrier-free accommodations for persons with a diversity of abilities.
- ☒ **Garden Coordinator** – a community gardener who is elected by the garden members to perform the coordinating role for the management of a specific community garden and who is the primary contact with the City Community Garden Program Manager
- ☒ **Garden Member** – a regular participant in a community garden who has signed a garden plot agreement specifying conditions for membership (see “Membership”)
- ☒ **Garden Plot** - allocated gardening spaces for cultivating produce, flowers for pollinators, Indigenous, cultural and medicinal plants.
- ☒ **Hazardous Materials** – any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released.
- ☒ **Irrigation** – the artificial means of supplying water to plants
- ☒ **Invasive Species** – plants listed in Appendix A9 may not be planted in City-owned community gardens
- ☒ **Maintenance** – the practice of keeping the garden safe for public use and in a usable and aesthetically-pleasing condition.
- ☒ **Membership** – the privilege conferred upon an individual to participate in the community garden after signing the Community Garden Plot Agreement.
- ☒ **Organic Gardening** – the form of agriculture that relies on techniques such as crop rotation, green manure, compost and biological pest control. Organic gardening uses fertilizers and pesticides but excludes the use of manufactured (synthetic) fertilizers, pesticides (including herbicides, insecticides and fungicides), plant growth regulators, sludge and nanomaterials. To see if a substance is allowed in a community garden on City property, check the USDA National Organic Program National List, Subpart G, 205.601 and 205.602. Also look for the Organics Materials Review Institute (OMRI) seal on product labels before use in a community garden on City property. Labeling such as “Organic” or “Natural” is not adequate for determination of organic designation.
- ☒ **Pollinators** – plants that attract bees, butterflies, hummingbirds or other beneficial creatures that transfer pollen from flower to flower, or in some cases, within flowers.
- ☒ **Plot** – see “garden plot”.
- ☒ **Prohibited Plants** – marijuana, including medical marijuana may not be grown in City-owned community gardens, invasive plants and cactus/nopal unless on the perimeter of the garden and inside a large pot.
- ☒ **Waste Removal** – removal of excessive vegetation and/or solid-waste (organic, inorganic or hazardous) accumulation from a garden.

Appendices

Appendix A1- Community Garden Permit

Permit Issued _____
 Permit Expires _____

**City of Watsonville
 COMMUNITY GARDEN PERMIT**

This permit is issued to _____ Community Garden Coordinator (Permittee) for the Gardeners of the community garden located on _____ and is not transferable to anyone else.

General Information:

The City grants permission to establish and operate a community garden on a portion of a City owned parcel of land APN. 000-000-00 per the City of Watsonville Community Garden Program Guide.

This Permit may not be amended, altered, modified, or extended without the signed written approval of Gardener representative and the City of Watsonville Public Works & Utilities Director. Upon the expiration of this permit, the City will review compliance with the conditions of this permit and may renew this permit or issue a new one.

The City may, at its sole and absolute discretion, terminate this Permit upon sixty (60) days written notice to Permittee, and the Gardeners shall have no recourse of any nature whatsoever. City shall have no liability whatsoever by reason of such termination.

The garden members may use the Property for the purpose of performing gardening activities provided they comply with the Guide as specifically authorized by this Permit.

Property Ownership: The City is the owner of the Property. No ownership, leasehold, possessory, or other rights to the Property shall vest with the Permittee or Gardeners by virtue of this permit. Use of this property is on an interim basis, pending the future development or other use of the Property by the City.

Condition of Property: The Gardeners have inspected the property, reviewed soil testing results for the property and are satisfied with the "as is" condition of the Property. City neither makes nor has made any representation or warranty as to the condition of the property.

Garden Expenses: The expenditures for the gardening activities on the property are the sole responsibility of Gardeners and are not reimbursable by the City.

Right of Entry: The City may enter upon the property at any time for any purpose whatsoever including, but not limited to examining the property to determine whether or not Gardeners are complying with the terms of this Permit.

Permit Conditions: Gardeners shall design and install a community garden and shall maintain such garden and all plants and structures contained therein (including, but not limited to, all fences, raised plant beds, planters, tables, benches, and other ornamental items) in a safe and orderly condition.

Gardeners shall neither cause nor permit:

- Discrimination against any person on grounds of race, creed, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.
- The use of the Property for any illegal purpose.
- The storage or use of any illuminating oils, oil lamps, turpentine, benzene, naphtha, hazardous materials or similar substances, explosives of any kind are prohibited. The use of the Property for any commercial purpose (including, but not limited to, the sale or advertisement of any goods or services).
- Any condition on or near the property including, but not limited to, any health or fire hazard

which could constitute a nuisance or could endanger or harm persons, property or the environment.

Upon the violation of any provision of this Permit, the City shall issue a warning notice to Permittee which shall allow the Gardeners ten (10) days to rectify such default. Failure to remedy such breach within such period shall constitute grounds for immediate termination of this Permit

Gardeners shall not perform any acts upon the Property, including, but not limited to, the making of any improvements or alterations to the Property, except those provided for in the Guide. Gardeners shall not perform any gardening activities which damage or lessen the value of the Property. Gardener shall notify the City of any damage or accident occurring on the Property within twenty-four (24) hours of any occurrence.

Gardeners and visitors must comply with the following rules and regulations:

Be welcoming, civil and cooperative with other gardeners, neighbors, and the public. Gardeners agree to respect the peace and quiet of the surrounding neighborhood.

AMPLIFIED SOUND: Amplified sound is not permitted in the garden.

CAMPING: Camping in the garden is prohibited.

CHILDREN: Children in the garden must be supervised by a parent or other responsible adult.

Parents and caretakers must ensure that children understand and follow the rules and regulations.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES: No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs of any kind are allowed in the garden.

COVER CROPS: Soil should not be allowed to remain bare in the winter. Cover crops should be planted to enrich the soil and prevent erosion.

DOGS: Keep dogs on a leash and out of garden plots unless dogs are prohibited at a specific garden. Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in garbage.

EROSION: Gardening must be carried out in a manner that prevents soil erosion. All exposed soil in the garden shall be mulched by the gardeners with four inches of biodegradable mulch or planted with a standard cover crop mix, such as bell beans, vetch, clover barley, oats, rye, or other quick growing cereal crops. If deemed necessary, wattles made from straw and jute shall be placed and maintained by the gardeners around the perimeter of the entire garden area to avoid runoff and prevent water pollution.

GARBAGE: Unless the garden has arranged for garbage removal, garbage generated at the garden must be taken out of the garden to discard properly at a waste disposal facility or in garden members' own personal garbage bins. Discarding garbage on the ground or in compost or green waste piles is prohibited.

GRAFFITI: Graffiti must be removed by the garden members within 48 hours.

GREEN WASTE: Weeds and plant material should be composted on-site or placed in the green waste collection area(s) to be disposed of properly later. Green waste should not be thrown away in the trash, left in the pathways or improperly dumped.

GUESTS: Guests must follow the Rules of the Garden. Each gardener is responsible for the actions of his/her guests in the garden

HARVESTING: Harvest only from your own plot. Do not take from any garden plot without permission.

INVASIVE SPECIES: plants including but not limited to blackberry, bamboo, and ivy are

prohibited

LITTER: Any litter on the garden site must be removed by garden members.

MOTOR VEHICLES: Motorized vehicles are not allowed in the garden with exception of motorized wheelchairs.

NO SELLING: Produce grown in this community garden may not be sold. Produce from the community garden is primarily for family consumption or donation. Excess food can be preserved for future use, shared with friends or neighbors, traded among your fellow community gardeners or donated to local food banks.

ORGANIC GARDENING: No synthetic herbicides, pesticides or non-organic fertilizers are permitted in the garden. Use organic pest control methods only. To see if a substance is allowed, check the USDA National Organic Program's National List, or look for the Organic Material Review Institute (OMRI) seal on the label even if the label says "Organic" or "Natural".

PLOT: Gardeners must plant and harvest within their assigned plot. Gardeners shall maintain a 3 foot walkway of undisturbed vegetation around the interior perimeter of the garden area.

PROHIBITED PLANTS: marijuana, including medical marijuana may not be grown in City-owned community gardens

SMOKING: No smoking is allowed in the garden.

TOOLS: Garden-owned and donated tools are for use in the community garden only and should be cleaned and returned to the tool shed or secure storage area after use. Tools should never be left out in garden plots or pathways, or taken off the garden premises.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS: Report any unsafe condition or suspicious behavior to the Garden Coordinator. In case of emergency, call 911.

WASTING OF WATER: Water waste and run-off is prohibited.

Restoration of Property: Upon the expiration or termination of this Permit, the Gardeners shall promptly remove all equipment and materials from the Property and shall surrender the Property to City in a condition satisfactory to City.

Upon receipt of a Notice of Violation concerning any condition that could pose a threat to life, health, safety, or property, as determined solely by City, City may, upon written or oral notice to the Permittee, of such circumstance, require the Gardeners to immediately vacate the Property without removing any materials or equipment. The City shall thereafter afford the Gardeners a reasonable opportunity to remove such materials and equipment.

The Garden Coordinator shall:

1. Sign the Community Garden Permit.
2. Collect signed Community Garden Plot Agreements and Waiver of Liability forms from all gardeners and forward them to the City's Community Garden Program Manager and provide a signed copy to the gardener with the Garden Rules.
3. Signup for water and pay the water bill. Collect garden dues from members that may be used for water, supplies, tools, events, or special projects decided upon by the membership.
4. Assign plots on a first come, first serve basis.
5. Maintain a waiting list of interested gardeners.

6. Re-assign available plots to those on the waiting list in the order they appear on the waitlist.
7. Orient new gardeners to the space; i.e., explain water use, communal space use, workday expectations, etc.
8. Post garden rules and other documentation on the bulletin board in the garden.
9. Maintain a list of all active gardeners.
10. Notify gardeners using plots that appear to be inactive and contact the gardener regarding the status of the plot.
11. Coordinate garden workdays to maintain the communal spaces or to work on special projects.
12. Call garden-wide meetings at least twice a year for the purpose of discussing issues, sharing ideas and goals, holding annual elections for the Garden Coordinator position, conducting workdays, etc. Any meeting that provides advance notification to all of its members is considered a “garden-wide meeting”.
13. Facilitate the garden membership in electing or appointing other positions, such as treasurer, secretary, or an events chair to share some of the responsibilities. Other leadership roles for the garden may include: membership & outreach coordination, meeting and workday coordination, and common space coordination.
14. Communicate with the City as the primary contact for the garden membership.
15. Operate the garden in a manner free from discrimination against any person on grounds of race, creed, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Notices: All notices or communications given or required to be sent under this permit shall be in writing and sent by regular mail or email to the following:

CITY
 Community Garden Manager
 Leonardo Cruz
 leonardo.cruz@cityofwatsonville.org
 Public Works & Utilities
 Watsonville

GARDENER
 Community Gardener Coordinator
NAME
ADDRESS
EMAIL

Permit Issued By:
 Public Works & Utilities Director

Permit Accepted By:
 GARDENER

Signature/Date

Signature/Date

Appendix A2- Community Garden Plot Agreement and Waiver of Liability

CITY OF WATSONVILLE COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOT AGREEMENT AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

Welcome and Purpose

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in community gardening!

This community garden is under the jurisdiction of the City of Watsonville Public Works and Utilities Department. Please be mindful that the operation of this garden is regulated by the City's Community Garden Program Guide, which can be found in the City of Watsonville website or obtained from the City's Community Garden Program Manager. In addition, aspects of community gardens are regulated by the Watsonville Municipal Code and the California Uniform Building Code.

This garden provides you the opportunity to create beauty, serenity, and abundance within the urban confines of Watsonville and a steward of public land.

You are agreeing to share the use of land, on which you will garden, with your fellow Watsonville residents. On it you may grow, for your non-commercial use, food, edible flowers, and herbs. Community gardening implies self-sufficiency, including obtaining the materials you need and learning the skills essential to gardening.

By signing this agreement, you are participating in a shared agreement with both rights and responsibilities. You may keep your plot as long as you like, granted you abide by this agreement. Community garden members are welcome to use a plot and share care of the garden with the following understandings:

Your rights as a community gardener:

- Automatic renewal is based upon compliance with this Agreement and site specific garden rules.
- Basic amenities such as access and water.
- Equal opportunity and non-discrimination. Reasonably harmonious environment and appropriate conflict resolution measures when necessary.
- Participation in the democratic self-governance of your community garden and annually elect your Garden Coordinator(s).
- To garden in this space and to the non-commercial use of the bounty of your labor.
- You have a right to an orientation to your garden by the Garden Coordinator or other assigned garden office-holder.

Responsibilities standard in all gardens:

- To care for the land through a year-round active gardening and soil care.
- Gardeners shall maintain their plot without plants encroaching into common areas or other plots; and keep paths clean and free of weeds around their plot.
- Gardeners shall not plant or weed in any other person's plot, except as directed by the Garden Coordinator on garden work days* or by prior agreement with that plot holder.
(*Garden Coordinator must provide a 7 days notice to the plot holder prior to the garden work day.)
- No plants in the gardener's plot may be higher than 6 feet over soil level.
- Beds may not be raised higher than 3 feet except in cases of access for mobility-impaired persons. No altering of the dimensions of a plot or of the surrounding area.
- Keep common areas clear.
- Be welcoming, civil and cooperative in regard to other gardeners, neighbors, and the public.
- Commit to 'Organic Gardening' practices. Abide by City rules regarding organic practices.
 - To see if a substance is allowed, check the USDA National Organic Program's National List Subpart G, 205.601 and 205.602 or look for the Organic Materials Review Institute

(OMRI) seal on the label. Labels simply stating “Organic” or “Natural” without the OMRI seal or not included on the USDA National Organic Program list are prohibited.

- Be mindful of water usage. Gardens shall be managed for best practices in water conservation (e.g. drip irrigation, watering early or late in the day, etc.)
- Water waste and run-off is prohibited. Chronic waste of water could result in water shut off.
- Garden Coordinator approval is required for adding someone such as a spouse, partner or housemate residing at your address to your plot at any time. If approved, the new gardener must sign this agreement.
- Plots cannot be given away by a gardener to anyone else.
 - In case of illness, pregnancies, travel, etc. inform the Garden Coordinator.
 - Either party may find a temporary person to garden in your stead; this person signs a temporary version of this agreement to end on a date of no longer than a three month duration, depending on the circumstances.
- Children in the garden must be supervised by a parent or other responsible adult. Gardeners agree to respect the peace and quiet of the surrounding neighborhood. Children and guests should also be instructed to refrain from walking on garden plots, or damaging or taking plants, or fruits thereof, that do not belong to them.
- Dogs must be leashed and may not walk on garden plots. Pet waste must be picked up and disposed of in the garbage.
- Report any unsafe condition or suspicious behavior to the Garden Coordinator. In case of emergency, call 911.
- Reassignment: The Garden Coordinator shall notify non-active gardeners with a verbal, telephone or email warning. If active gardening does not resume within 15 days, or the gardener has not responded to messages from the Garden Coordinator, or the garden member is not reachable, then a written 30-day notice to resume activity shall be issued. Lack of response within 30 days will result in reassignment of the plot.
- The City retains ownership of City-owned property used for community gardens and does not guarantee the on-going use of the property for gardening in the future.
- You hereby agree to your garden’s specific rules, as follows below.
- Agree and sign the Waiver of Liability section of this agreement.

Responsibilities specific to your garden:

You understand that your community garden site will have additional specific arrangements that you agree to as a community gardener including:

- Payment of dues for water and other materials as agreed upon by your garden group.
- Storage of tools and equipment.
- Compost and waste guidelines.
- Prevention of water waste and run-off.
- Workday and meeting attendance; and any other active gardening requirement as determined by your garden group.
- Specific security measures.
- Pathways, common areas, behavior expectations.
- Use of materials and tools; storage.
- Time and work responsibilities.

- Future matters to be decided.

Waiver of liability, release and hold harmless statement:

The undersigned, in consideration of participation in this program, agrees to indemnify and hold the City of Watsonville harmless from any and all liability for any injury, death, loss or harm that occurs by the below mentioned individual arising out of, or in any way connected with, participation in this program. I hereby authorize and give consent to the City of Watsonville, its successors and assigns, to copyright, broadcast, publish and display all photographs and videos taken by them in which I and/or my children appear.

SIGNATURE _____ *Date _____

Name (Print) _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____

Email address _____

Garden name and location _____

Garden Coordinator name and contact information _____

Plot # _____ Dues paid to _____

* For temporary agreements, add an 'effective dates' line to this section.

Appendix A3– Thirty Day Notice

THIRTY-DAY NOTICE

Dear Gardener of Plot # : _____
The gardeners here at **(NAME OF COMMUNITY GARDEN)** have noticed that you have not maintained or sowed your plot for a long time.

The Community Garden Plot Agreement which you signed states the following:

REASSIGNMENT: The Garden Coordinator shall notify non-active gardeners with a verbal, telephone or email warning. If active gardening does not resume within 15 days, or the gardener has not responded to messages from the Garden Coordinator, or the garden member is not reachable, then a written 30-day notice to resume activity shall be issued.

If you clean your plot and surrounding area and inform the garden coordinator of your intentions to plant in the near future, we will be pleased to keep you as a member of the garden. However, if you have not done so within thirty days, we will reassign your plot to the next person on our waiting list; or in the absence of a waiting list, to the next person who requests a plot at the garden. We hope you understand our reasons for this action. We simply want everyone in our community to have an opportunity to garden. In the event that you do lose your plot, feel free to sign up again on the waiting list.

Please contact the Garden Coordinator,
[NAME OF COORDINATOR],
at [TELEPHONE].

Thank you for your cooperation.

Violation of Rules Incident Report

Date: _____

Time: _____

Community garden name and location: _____

Name of Gardener

Name (first/last): _____

Plot #: _____

Description of Violation (Brief description – if needed, continue on back of page)

Reference: Community Gardens Program Rules & Regulations (Include Page Section Paragraph Line)

Witnesses (if applicable)

First Name: Last Name: Plot #:

First Name: Last Name: Plot #:

Action(s) Taken

1. First Warning Verbal Written

2. Second/Final Warning Written Reported to City Staff

Appendix A5 - Sample Waitlist

SAMPLE WAITLIST

All gardens must maintain an active wait list. Interested members of the public may request to be put on the waitlist when a plot is not available. Annually post an updated waitlist of **names only** at the garden. The waitlist of **names only** may also be posted on the garden's website.

The waitlist may be kept up to date with one or more of the following practices:

- Contact each person on the waitlist annually by phone or e-mail to reconfirm her interest.
- Require each person on the waitlist to contact the garden coordinator annually by phone or e-mail to reconfirm his interest and guarantee their waitlist spot.

DATE, NAME, ADDRESS*, CONTACT*

1. 3-12-12 Jane Rose 123 Main Street (e-mail address)
2. 4-8-12 Jeffrey Root 456 Ash Avenue (e-mail address)
3. 4-22-12 Mary Compost 789 Sunny Street #8 (831) 555-1212

* Addresses or contact information should not be made public without consent.

Garden plots will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The garden coordinator may suggest other nearby community gardens to any person on the waitlist. However, doing so does not exclude that person from being placed on the waitlist. Persons on the waitlist have priority to fill in for garden members who will not be able to garden for up to 90 days due to travel, vacation or illness.

Appendix A6 - Tips for Safety and Awareness

The following recommendations are intended to increase awareness and minimize future risks to all garden visitors:

- Trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, do not hesitate to leave the garden.
- Be visible -don't let plants and shrubs block your view into the garden.
- Don't have "hidden gardens" where you cannot be seen.
- Know your gardening partners and the garden's neighbors.
- Avoid keeping a public trash receptacle in the garden.
- Where appropriate, secure the community garden with a gate and lock. Keep supplies locked.
- Block or eliminate areas where people can sleep or camp.
- Work with the Watsonville Police Department on how to keep the area safe. Request assistance from Public Works/Utilities Department 768-3133 for disposal of illegally dumped material, shopping carts, needles and other unsafe materials. In an emergency, call 911. For non-emergency Police assistance 471-1151 Alert fellow garden members and the Garden Coordinator if unsafe conditions occur.
- Remove graffiti within 48 hours.

Appendix A7 -Sign Sample with Standard Rules

Welcome to Sunshine Community Garden

For the Enjoyment of All Gardeners and Visitors, Please Obey the Following Regulations:

AMPLIFIED SOUND: Amplified sound is not permitted in the garden.

CAMPING: Camping in the garden is prohibited.

CHILDREN: Children in the garden must be supervised by a parent or other responsible adult. Parents and caretakers must ensure that children understand and follow the rules and regulations.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES: No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs of any kind are allowed in the garden.

COVER CROPS: Soil should not be allowed to remain bare in the winter. Cover crops should be planted to enrich the soil and prevent erosion.

DOGS: Keep dogs on a leash and out of garden plots unless dogs are prohibited at a specific garden. Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in garbage.

EROSION: Gardening must be carried out in a manner that prevents soil erosion. All exposed soil in the garden shall be mulched by the gardeners with four inches of biodegradable mulch or planted with a standard cover crop mix, such as bell beans, vetch, clover barley, oats, rye, or other quick growing cereal crops. If deemed necessary, wattles made from straw and jute shall be placed and maintained by the gardeners around the perimeter of the entire garden area to avoid runoff and prevent water pollution.

GARBAGE: Unless the garden has arranged for garbage removal, garbage generated at the garden must be taken out of the garden to discard properly at a waste disposal facility or in garden members' own personal garbage bins. Discarding garbage on the ground or in compost or green waste piles is prohibited.

GRAFFITI: Graffiti must be removed by the garden members within 48 hours.

GREEN WASTE: Weeds and plant material should be composted on-site or placed in the green waste collection area(s) to be disposed of properly later. Green waste should not be thrown away in the trash, left in the pathways or improperly dumped.

GUESTS: Guests must follow the Rules of the Garden. Each gardener is responsible for the actions of his/her guests in the garden

HARVESTING: Harvest only from your own plot. Do not take from any garden plot without permission.

INVASIVE SPECIES: plants including but not limited to blackberry, bamboo, and ivy are prohibited

LITTER: Any litter on the garden site must be removed by garden members.

MOTOR VEHICLES: Motorized vehicles are not allowed in the garden with the exception of motorized wheelchairs.

NO SELLING: Produce grown in this community garden may not be sold. Produce from the community garden is primarily for family consumption or donation. Excess food can be preserved for future use, shared with friends or neighbors, traded among your fellow community gardeners or donated to local food banks.

ORGANIC GARDENING: No synthetic herbicides, pesticides or non-organic fertilizers are

permitted in the garden. Use organic pest control methods only. To see if a substance is allowed, check the USDA National Organic Program's National List, or look for the Organic Material Review Institute (OMRI) seal on the label even if the label says "Organic" or "Natural".

PLOT: Gardeners must plant and harvest within their assigned plot. Gardeners shall maintain a 3-foot walkway of undisturbed vegetation around the interior perimeter of the garden area.

PROHIBITED PLANTS: marijuana, including medical marijuana may not be grown in City-owned community gardens

SMOKING: No smoking is allowed in the garden.

TOOLS: Garden-owned and donated tools are for use in the community garden only and should be cleaned and returned to the tool shed or secure storage area after use. Tools should never be left out in garden plots or pathways or taken off the garden premises.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS: Report any unsafe condition or suspicious behavior to the Garden Coordinator. In case of emergency, call 911.

WASTING OF WATER: Water waste and run-off is prohibited.

Appendix A8 - Resources and Contact Information

Resources and Contact Information

Contact Public Works & Utilities Customer Service at 768-3133 for the following information:

- City's Community Garden Program Manager
- Backyard Compost Bins and Workshop
- Waste and Recycling Drop-off
- To Report Illegal Dumping
- Free Water Conservation Devices
- Water Conservation Rebates and Programs

Contact Parks and Community Services 768-6084

- To request a permit for gatherings of 25 or more persons

To report emergencies – 911

- For non-emergency assistance from Watsonville Police Department 471-1151

For Watsonville Municipal Code – www.cityofwatsonville.org or City Clerk 768-3040

Appendix A9 - Invasive Plant Species

Note: The California Invasive Plant Council is continually updating its list of invasive plants of State-wide priority, and this should be monitored and cross-referenced with the list below over time.

Acacia *Acacia dealbata*
Bamboo *Bambusoideae* ssp.
Bermuda buttercup *Oxalis pes-capre*
Big Periwinkle *Vinca major*
Bull Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*
Bridal veil broom *Retama monosperma*
Cala Lilly *Zantedeschia aethiopica*
Cape Ivy *Delairea odorata*
Common Velvet Grass *Holcus lanatus*
Curly Dock *Rumex crispus*
English Ivy *Hedera helix*
Erect Velt Grass *Erharta erecta*
Eucalyptus *Eucalptus globulus*, other ssp.
Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare*
French Broom *Genista monspessulana*
Fullers Teasel *Dipsacus sativus*
Green fountain grass *Pennisetum setaceum*
Harding Grass *Phalaris aquatica*
Himalaya blackberry *Rubis discolor*
Hoary Cress *Cardaria draba*
Jubata and Pampas Grass *Cortaderia Jubata/Cortaderia selloana*
Kikuyu Grass *Pennisetum clandestinum*
Orchard Grass *Dactylis glomerata*
Palm tree ssp. *Palmae* ssp.
Perennial pepperweed *Lepidium latifolium*
Poison Hemlock *Conium maculatum*
Purple Star Thistle *Centauria calcetrapa*
Rabbits Foot Grass *Polypogon monspeliensis*
Russian olive *Elaeagnus angustifolia*
Scotch Broom *Cytusys scoparius*
Smilo grass *Piptatherum miliaceum*
Spanish broom *Spartium junceum*
Striated broom *Cytisus striatus*
Tall Fescue *Festuca arundinacea*
Tallow Tree *Sapium sebiferum*
Tocolote, Malta Star Thistle *Centauria melitensis*
Yellow Star Thistle *Centauria solstitialis*