

LYNN COMMUNITY GARDEN MANUAL

City of Lynn Park Commission



A network of community gardens exists across the city on municipal lands including parks, schools, and public housing sites. Therefore, these gardens fall under the jurisdiction of the City of Lynn. Volunteer garden coordinators at each site are responsible for day-to-day management of the gardens, but it is the responsibility of all gardeners to act as caretakers of the gardens. The following policies were developed by a collective of community garden stakeholders across the city, and approved by the City of Lynn Park Commission.

What is a Community Garden?

Community gardens are cultivated and maintained spaces where volunteers work collectively to achieve a common goal of growing fresh, healthy produce in our city. In order to be successful, community gardens require a high level of dedication, commitment, and an investment of time, energy, and resources. The City encourages gardeners to share ideas, resources, seeds, and recipes; plan garden events; and work together to maintain garden sites as beautiful, safe, vibrant urban spaces.

General Qualifications

1. You must live in Lynn.
2. You must agree to abide by the document, the Lynn Community Garden Manual.
3. You must be willing to share your contact information with the City of Lynn, Garden Coordinator, and other gardeners.
4. You must have an active interest in gardening, sustainability, and healthy living.

Plot Allocation, Registration, and Fees

- Plots are available on a first-come, first-serve basis, with preference given to returning gardeners. Plots are assigned by the garden coordinators in this order:
 1. Returning gardeners
 2. Returning gardeners wishing to change plots
 3. New gardeners
 4. Returning gardeners wishing for up to one additional plot
- Each individual gardener or family shall be allotted not more than one garden plot, with ability to request up to one additional plot if available after all gardeners are accounted for.
- Each garden must be used by a minimum of 4 volunteer gardeners at any given time.
- Each garden shall charge an annual fee for participation of at minimum \$25. The Garden Coordinator will collect and either:
 1. maintain a record of all funds, and will provide copies of these records to the City of Lynn on an annual basis; or
 2. submit funds to community gardens account within Department of Public Works
- Collected fees may be used by each garden, as seen fit by consensus of member gardeners.

In the Garden

Garden Building and Organization

- All produce must be grown in raised beds with a water permeable fabric cover or a geotextile fabric at the bottom of the raised beds.
- The lumber used for the construction of the beds must be untreated, and 10% of beds must be wheelchair accessible.
- All soil within the raised bed must be from approved soil sources as permitted by Lynn DPW.
- The dimensions of each garden plot, and the overall layout of each garden, will be approved by Lynn's Garden Council.
- Tools, soil, seeds and other materials must be provided by the gardeners themselves initially and on an on-going basis.

Planting and Maintenance

- Use of synthetic or toxic pesticides, fertilizers, or herbicides is prohibited.
- Weeds in the areas within and immediately surrounding the individual gardener's plot will be kept at a minimum.
- Edible produce or flowers may be grown in each garden.
- Tall plants (e.g. corn, sunflowers) should be planted thoughtfully and kept to a reasonable height so as not to shade neighboring gardeners' plots.
- Common areas and walkways cannot be used to grow edible produce, unless approved by the Lynn Park Commission.
- No plants shall be used that are listed as invasive or potentially invasive on the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group list of invasive plants, including quickly spreading herbs such as mint, unless they are potted. The planting of trees, shrubs, bushes, and any non-native species is prohibited, unless written consent is provided by the City of Lynn.
- Gardeners are responsible for maintaining their own plots and must be present throughout the duration of the growing season. If gardeners leave before the end of the growing season, they are responsible for finding someone to tend their plot in their absence for the rest of the growing season.
- Gardeners must show activity in their garden before June 15 of the growing season.
- Plots must be prepared for winter by pulling plants out of the ground and leaving each garden clear no later than November 30th and gardens must be cleaned up by this time.

Common Areas & Shared Resources

- Common areas are the responsibility of all gardeners and must be clean, free of all debris and maintained.
- The Garden Coordinator must establish a system to ensure that trash and weeds are removed.
- Pathways must be 3 feet wide to accommodate wheelchairs and strollers.
- Tools must not be kept in the common areas or in the garden plots. With the special permission of the City of Lynn, the gardeners may maintain a locked tool shed at their own expense.
- All gardens, adjacent pathways and fences will be clear of trash and litter; waste must be managed and compost bins must be used appropriately at each site.
- Gardeners will not pick produce or flowers from any plot other than their own unless given permission by another plot user.
- Children under 15 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times when visiting the garden.
- Pets are prohibited from entering the garden.
- Drugs, alcohol and smoking are prohibited in or around the community garden.
- Vehicles are prohibited from parking in community gardens outside designated roads, or unless permission granted from Lynn DPW.

Garden Leadership and Accountability

Community Garden Coordinator

- The Community Garden Coordinator (CGC) is a volunteer leadership position. The CGC will act as the liaison between your community garden, the City of Lynn and other community partners. There will be 1-2 CGCs per garden to manage the gardeners and activities at the site, collect fees, lead the application process, and organize and enforce the individual garden's guidelines.
- If any problems arise in the garden, please contact your Community Garden Coordinator to find a solution first (unless there is an emergency), and then contact Lynn DPW.
- CGCs will be in contact with gardeners on a regular basis to share pertinent information regarding the garden and upcoming events, and to inform gardeners of any violations to the guidelines.
- Should a Community Garden Coordinator wish to step down from their role, they will help responsible for identifying a replacement for their position. Failure of the Garden Coordinator and/or volunteer gardeners to identify a replacement shall result in a suspension of rights to use the parcel.

Violations of Community Garden Manual

- Each garden will be subject to an annual inspection.
- Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in a loss of garden plot (without refund) and/or future gardening privileges. The garden coordinator and/or City of Lynn will issue one written or emailed warning to any gardener who faces the loss of their plot and/or future gardening privilege due to violation of the guidelines.
 - If the gardener fails to come into compliance or arrange a suitable solution with the garden coordinator within 1 month of the date of the written warning, the gardener may be required to forfeit their plot and/or lose future gardening privileges.
- All appeals for plot forfeiture must go before the Lynn Park Commission.

Release of Liability

- The community garden program is a volunteer program.
- Gardeners, their families, friends, and other guests may participate **AT THEIR OWN RISK**.
- No liability of any kind will be taken on by the City of Lynn.
- The City will not be held responsible for injury, theft, or accidents occurring in the garden.

Important Contacts

Lynn Department of Public Works

- Lisa Nerich (lnerich@lynmma.gov; (781) 268-8000)
- For questions about garden logistics, water use, fee collection, Park Commission support, and dispute resolution.

The Food Project

- Hazel Kiefer (hkiefer@thefoodproject.org; 781-346-6726 x44)
- For questions about free garden building and supplies, gardening advice, plant sales.

Lynn Food and Fitness Alliance

- Alex Freedman (lynnfoodandfitness@gmail.com; 781-691-5332)
- For questions about garden and gardener applications, community garden outreach.