

Canmore Community Gardening Society (CCGS)

Communal Garden Guidelines

Approved by CCGS Board of Directors on February 22, 2021

Overview

Our mission – To cultivate a network of community gardeners, share knowledge, and engage people in local food culture!

Since the Canmore Community Garden began in 2011 we have grown in number of members and established garden infrastructure while at the same time gradually eliminating space between beds and allotment plots in which to move around the garden. These Guidelines have been developed to describe processes for the planning and management of the garden, expectations for individual gardeners and communication between gardeners and the Canmore Community Garden Society (CCGS) Board of Directors (BOD) and reduce opportunities for conflict arising from increased numbers of gardeners and limited common spaces.

1. The Canmore Community Garden Society (CCGS)

The CCGS is a registered society within the province of Alberta and is overseen by a Board of Directors responsible to develop and maintain society **By-Laws** for the organization. These **By-Laws** cover topics such as membership, appointment and terms of the Board of Directors, scheduling of regular meetings of Directors and the Annual General Meeting of the members. **CCGS Board of Director Roles and Responsibilities** document provides additional information about Board meetings and the process by which a member may request an item be added to an upcoming meeting agenda. Both documents are available on the CCGS website.

The BOD is responsible for management of the affairs of the society as stated in the By-Laws. This includes overall planning of the garden and its infrastructure, management of Society financial and other resources, maintenance of membership data and dues collection, communication with the membership and stakeholders and in so doing ensures the long-term overall sustainability of the garden. The BOD and individual members of the Board must also represent and reflect the interests and values of the entire CCGS community.

2. Garden Plan and Infrastructure

A critical element of the success of the CCGS is the Garden Master Plan. This plan includes all areas and spaces within the garden, as well as its resources and considers sustainability, CCGS financial and other resources, future projects and enhancements. The plan considers the needs of the garden ecosystem and the entire CCGS community. The Garden Plan is updated annually by the BOD with members' input.

Common resources in the garden include the following:

- Garden beds including communal beds and allotment plots, flower beds and fence garden
- Watering systems including hospital water access, cisterns, hoses and sprinklers
- Hand wash stations
- Compost and mulch
- Fence and gates
- Pathways
- Social spaces
- Garden shed
- Garden tools and maintenance
- Garden Master Plan
- Greenhouses

Members may propose changes or express concerns about the Garden Master Plan. The process is as follows:

- a. Alternatives or changes to the garden plan, concerns with the garden layout, or suggested maintenance may be proposed by any member. The change must be presented at a BOD meeting for consideration. Examples include:
 - adding a new bed
 - removing or remodeling an existing bed
 - changing current use of other areas within the garden.
- b. For any proposed change, the member proposing the change must provide written documentation of change that accounts for:
 - a clear articulation of proposed changes to the garden plan
 - a timeline for when proposed changes would take place (particularly relative to the planting season)
 - what the trade-offs are (if any use of space in the garden negates an existing use of space)
 - who will implement the proposed changes
 - who will maintain and/or be responsible for proposed changes over time (e.g., if building a new communal bed, which team will oversee the bed in the following season).
- c. Members impacted by a proposed change must be consulted about the proposed change prior to a final approval by the Board. Consultation should include members of Garden Teams affected by the proposed change, neighbouring allotment plot gardeners, and/or CCGS members in general.
- d. Unless urgent, a proposed change may be approved by the BOD to be implemented at the end of season or at the start of the following season.

3. General Gardener Responsibilities

There are a few basic responsibilities that ensure the garden operates smoothly and consistently with agreements made with our stakeholders such as the Canmore General Hospital and the Town of Canmore.

- Close gate upon entering and exiting.
- Follow posted pandemic precautions related to social distancing, hand and tool sanitizing.
- Read sign board to be informed of news and updates.
- Deposit any organic material in compost bin.
- Place quack grass in bags and deposit in TOC garbage bins.
- Leave pathways clear.
- Clean and put away any tools and hoses used.
- Turn off hospital water, if the last person using.
- Refill cisterns, if used.
- Lock gate upon leaving if the last person in the garden, ensuring no one is left inside.
- Do not harvest from allotment plots assigned to other members.
- Do not harvest from communal beds, unless a communal gardener.
- No pets in the garden.

4. Communal Garden Teams

The establishment of teams of gardeners each year is a primary means by which the communal garden is managed. Garden teams ensure coordination of gardeners' efforts and communication between the BOD and gardeners and between gardeners. Teams are organized by like or complementary crops (eg. carrots, leeks and radishes or leafy greens). Members may apply for a particular Garden Team when making application to the garden in the spring or be assigned. Garden Team members work collaboratively, decide upon the best way to communicate with one another and share responsibility within their assigned beds or area of the garden. Responsibilities include the following.

- To manage assigned beds or area within the garden, including preparation and maintenance of your beds throughout the season, planting and tending the crop (may include ensuring protection from cold and frost), watering, weeding, pest management etc.
- Arrange work parties or a schedule for individual Team members to ensure your beds / area within the garden are overseen.
- To research and share knowledge regarding optimal growing techniques, pest management etc.
- Determine when crops are ready for harvest.
- Communicate often with Team members on observations, tasks required, your availability to meet scheduled responsibilities in the garden.
- At the end of the season, Teams are asked to collect and share feedback to the BOD for consideration as the Garden Master Plan is updated for the upcoming year.

5. Team Leader Responsibilities

Team Leaders and Co-Leaders are essential to the smooth functioning of the communal garden. At a minimum, Team Leaders and Co-Leaders ensure communication within the team, between teams and the CCGS BOD and coordinate team members' efforts.

Members may apply to be Team Leaders on the CCGS Garden Application Form. Team Leaders are selected by the BOD with the goal of giving all members the opportunity to act as Team Leaders and develop as gardeners as well as broadening the perspectives contributing to the management and planning of the garden.

Team Leaders:

- Model all CCGS Garden responsibilities and practices with the team.
- Orient new gardeners.
- Communicate garden policies and announcements during the season.
- Coordinate efforts to manage your team's assigned beds / area of the garden.
- Ensure permission from CCGS BOD when seeking to expand and/or significantly reshape your team's beds.
- Collect and share feedback from the team at the end of the season.
 - What crops worked
 - What principles should we work towards when drafting next year's garden
 - What practices worked well and ideas for doing things better
- Participate in the Garden Master Plan annual updating, led by the BOD.
- Communicate when crops are ready for harvest with the BOD and other Team Leaders.
- Bring to the CCGS BOD for discussion and decision:
 - Matters requiring financial expenditures,
 - Proposed changes to communal garden common areas including all those listed in the Garden Plan and Infrastructure section above.