

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does my community need a Pop-Up Community Garden or a full community garden?

An intended outcome of Pop-Up Community Garden is to build enough community interest and resources within your community to build a full community garden. As such, we highly recommend a Pop-Up Community Garden for your community if your community meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Does not have a Community Garden
- Is working on or has completed the concept phase of building a permanent community garden
- Has completed a survey or a needs assessment that demonstrates the need for a community garden and has a clear plan to utilize PUG for your community's benefit
- Has an interest in exploring community gardening opportunities
- Has a site on City-owned Parkland (for example, Community League land) that is suitable for a PUG

We recommend moving towards a full Community Garden if your community meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Your community has had a PUG for at least 2 or more years (2020, 2021, 2022 or 2023)
- Your community has a demonstrated high need for community gardening
- Your community has had a PUG for 1 year and continues to need a more permanent garden

What resources does my community need in order to start a Community Garden?

Your community should have a clear idea of the following:

- **Why** your community would like a community garden (for example, high need for gardening opportunities, demonstrated desire for community gardening through the Pop-Up Community Garden program and have completed a survey and public engagement that is widely supported by the community).
- **Who** - establish a garden committee of at least 6-8 people who will be responsible for leading your Community Garden project to completion and sustain the garden year to year. It takes a strong dedicated group of people to sustain and maintain a community garden.
- **What** do you plan to have in your Community Garden? (for example, a basic inventory of the number of beds, type/size of beds, water source).
- **Where** you would like to have your Community Garden (for example, a specific address, land within your community league's licensed area).
- **When** you would like to start using your garden (for example, Spring 2024). Community Gardens can take up to a year to complete depending on complexity.

How long does it take to build a Community Garden?

If all the deadlines above are met and barring any complications in the planning process, it will take approximately six to eight months for a Community Garden to progress from the Project Proposal stage to the building phase.

Are there grant opportunities available for communities interested in gardening?

[Sustainable Food Edmonton](#) is a great resource. They administer the Community Garden Grant annually, with two intake dates and provide up to \$5,000 towards new garden projects.

Can a community group that is not successful in their application for a Pop-Up Community Garden provide a Pop-Up Community Garden at their own expense?

No. The alternative for this community is to enter into the Park and Facility Development Team (PFD) process to develop their own Community Garden. The Pop-Up Community Garden program is based on the current city capacity for site maintenance such as mowing, pre and post site inspections, and water refilling services.

Is access to a water source required?

Access to water at a Pop-Up Community Garden site is vital to ensure the garden's success. However, not every site may have access to water and we certainly do not want that to be a barrier to applying to the program. There are mobile water cisterns that can be provided to your pop-up site if necessary.

Can I add compost to my soil?

Yes of course! Compost is a great way to add additional nutrients to your garden. High quality compost that can be used for horticultural pursuits such as landscaping, gardening, tree and shrub planting and top dressing is available to Edmontonians free of charge. Compost can be collected at the Ambleside and Kennedale Eco Stations. Please note these are self-serve opportunities. More information can be found [here](#).



My community has a Community Garden but cannot keep up with the high demand. Can I request and utilize Pop-Up Community Garden beds to supplement my Community Garden?

As of the 2024 Pop-Up Community Garden season, we will no longer be supplying Pop-Up Community Garden inventory to full Community Gardens to supplement their capacity. Instead, we highly recommend that these Community Gardens reach out to their Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator to find out how to expand the current garden on parkland or to develop a second garden in the neighborhood to support the growing interest in gardening. There are funding opportunities that can help, such as Sustainable Food Edmonton grants.

How do you deal with instances of vandalism or theft in a Pop-Up Community Garden?

Unfortunately, vandalism and theft in Pop-Up Community Gardens does happen from time to time. You can help deter these frustrating incidences by ensuring appropriate signage is present, indicating that this is a community garden. Some gardeners have found success by providing a donation planter box where passersby can help themselves to freshly grown produce if they'd like. Others have offered opportunities for education around sustainable gardening practices and food preservation.

Some additional tips include:

- Avoid planting crops where only one or two items are produced (such as corn). Focus on plants that produce a lot of abundance.
- Hang out in the garden! A vibrant space is the best deterrent.
- Harvest frequently.

After the season closes, when will the planter boxes be picked up?

Planter pick up is tentatively set for the last week of September or early October. An email will be sent to your Pop-Up Community Garden coordinator confirming the dates. Please note, all grown materials must be harvested before the scheduled pick up day.

Our community loves our Pop-Up Garden and we're considering establishing a permanent garden.

Where can I find more information?

Typically, project groups work with a [Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator](#) (NRC) in the beginning phases of a Community Garden Project. Call 311 to find out which Neighborhood Resource Coordinator works with your community!

My community league does not have a licensed area. Can we still apply for a Pop-Up Community Garden or a permanent community garden?

Community gardens can be built on parkland that is zoned AP (defined as parkland that provides the opportunity for the conservation, preservation and restoration of identified natural areas, features and ecological processes) and is owned by the City. Please note not all green spaces are parkland. Please check the suitability of your proposed space with your NRC.

I own/work for an organization with privately-owned land and want a community garden. Can I build a community garden or apply for a Pop-Up Community Garden?

Private companies and other private entities such as not-for-profits that own their land can build a garden on their own land. However, private companies would not go through the Park and Facility Development process to build a community garden on their private land, nor will they be eligible for a Pop-Up Community Garden. Sustainable Food Edmonton can provide private groups with information and best practices around community gardening on private land.

Please note that although private entities wishing to build a Community Garden will not go through the Park and Facility Development process if a development or building permit is required for something they wish to build in their garden (e.g., a large storage shed), the relevant City of Edmonton permitting processes will still apply.

How can individual citizens participate in a Pop-Up Community Garden or a permanent garden?

Individual citizens can be connected to a participating organization through their NRC or another agency. Sustainable Food Edmonton (SFE) can also connect the individual to a garden group.